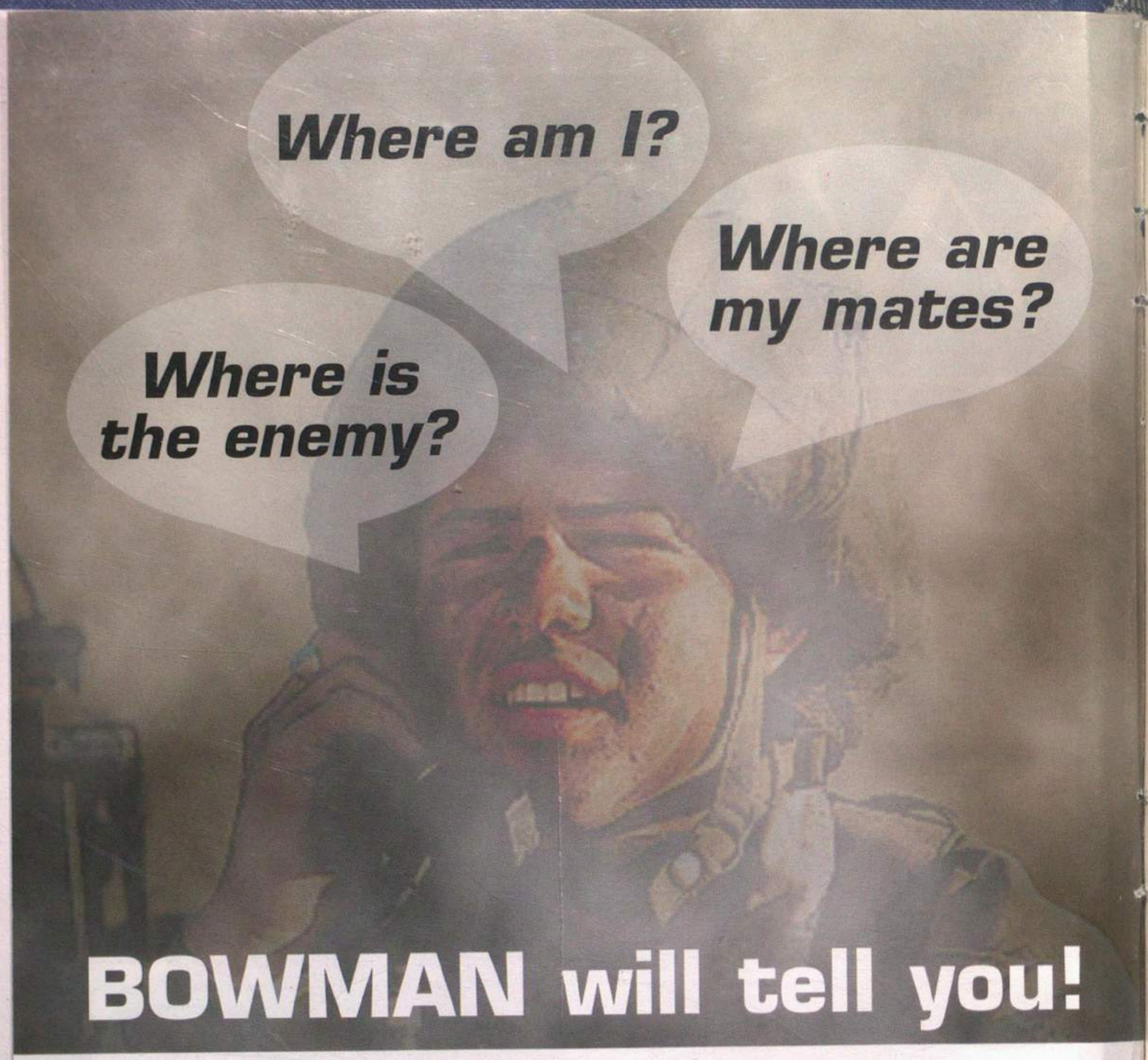
THE Wire

February 2000

The Royal Corps of Signals



BOWMAN will tell you!

Archer Communications is prime contractor and systems integrator for BOWMAN, the world's most advanced and capable military communications system, connecting all branches of land forces and their amphibious and air support units.

- Secure voice and data communications
- Battlefield situation awareness
- The backbone of battlefield digitization

ARCHER COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS LIMITED

Managed by

BAE SYSTEMS

Archer Communications Systems Limited
PO Box 118, Hedge End, Southampton,
Hampshire, SO30 2XW, United Kingdom,
Telephone: +44 (0)1489 773000, Fax: +44 (0)1489 773100

Finding a way through the fog of war

The Royal Signals Magazine

February 2000 Vol. 54 No: 1

The Wire

(Incorporating the Journal of the Royal Signals Institution)

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 STD 01258 48 2087

Subscription rates 2000 (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

CONTENTS

	Page
Editors Notes	1
Movements	6
News from Headquarters	7
Training	9
News from the Balkans	14
News from Northern Ireland	21
News from Regiments	26
News from Squadrons	49
News from Troops	60
Sport	61
The Royal Signals Association and News from the AO's Desk	62
Lost Comms	68
Correspondence	69
Donations	69
The Last Post	69
Late News	72

FRONT COVER
Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal, accompanied by the CO, Lt Col Ian Condie, arrives to inspect the Passing Off Parade at ATR Bassingbourn 29 October 1999

BACK COVER
OCdt Matthews (38 Sig Regt (V)) and Chewbaaka the Ambassador Cheetah, Namibia, August 1999

Corps Officers' Dinner Club Events

Note for your diaries:
- Corps London Dinner - Tuesday 9 May 2000
- Corps Blandford Lunch - Sunday 25 June 2000
- Corps Catterick Lunch - Sunday 17 September 2000

Applications to RHQ for the attention of the Assistant Regimental Secretary

Royal Signals Festival of Music

Supporting the Royal Signals Museum Education Project and Joseph Weld Hospice

Saturday May 6th

Poole Arts Centre (01202 685222)

(Lines open from mid-February 2000)

Massed Bands, Pipes & Drums and Ethnic dancing. A unique programme of Music and Dance, including Gurkha Dancing and Riverdance.

Authors alone are responsible for the content of their articles. The opinions expressed in the articles of this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise, of the Royal Signals or the Ministry of Defence. This publication should be treated with discretion by the recipient.

© Crown Copyright

Disclaimer: No responsibility for the quality of goods or services advertised in this magazine can be accepted by the Publishers or their Agents. Advertisements are included 'in good faith'.

THE ARMY TAUGHT YOU NEVER TO GIVE UP, SO DON'T

So there you are in civvy street doing the same old thing day in, day out. But...why?...If it's the Army you're missing, then how about joining the TA? It's a vital part of the British Army.

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 cap badge and become a member of either an Independent Unit as above, or a TA Specialist Unit. In either, you can maintain and develop 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 2 weekends and a 15 day annual camp. In return, you will earn Army rates of pay and an annual tax-free bonus of up to £1050.

For an information brochure call **0845 603 32 32** quoting ref **WI009**, or send the coupon to: Freepost, The TA, CV37 9BR.

SURNAME _____ MR/MS
BLOCK CAPITALS — PLEASE CIRCLE

FIRST NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

_____

POSTCODE _____

TEL (STD) _____

DATE OF BIRTH ____/____/____

The TA is committed to Equal Opportunities.

http://www.army.mod.uk

TA TERRITORIAL ARMY

BE THE BEST

5 AIRBORNE BRIGADE RE-ROLING TO 12 MECHANIZED BRIGADE

On 1 September 1999, 5 Airborne Brigade re-roled to 12 Mechanised Brigade. Those previous members of HQ 5 AB Bde WOs and Sgts Mess who have presented any memorabilia to the Mess between 1969 and 1999 are to contact **WO2 Wales** on Aldershot Military 4411, Civil 01252 349411 or **Karen Bramley** (4422 or 349422) if they wish to have their presentation piece returned. If no replies are forthcoming by 7 February 2000, then the present Mess Members will decide if the item will be kept on the books of 12 Mech Bde Mess, donated to the new 16 Air Assault Mess in Colchester or donated to the Airborne Museum.

ARMY SPORT CLIMBING CHAMPIONSHIPS

5 MAY 2000
WELSH INTERNATIONAL CLIMBING CENTRE

Entry Details DCI Army 160/99
Or contact WO2 Smith - 94355 8306

THE MAN FROM MANNING AND RECORDS

(Maj S. J. Turnbull R SIGNALS)
(with apologies to all my hard working comrades in the R SIGNALS and INT Corps MCM Div)

Greetings, a Happy New Year and indeed a Happy New Millennium from the staff of the Royal Signals and Intelligence Corps MCM Division.

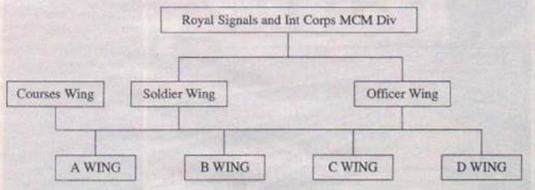
For the New Year it is out with the old (sorry Brigadier) and in with the new, as the top structure of the MCM Division gets a good spring clean to welcome in the 21st Century. Out goes **Colonel,** now **Brigadier, David McDowall** to Command of 1 Signal Brigade, enjoy all that LOA Sir! The new man at the helm of the MCM Division is **Colonel Mike Dyer**. He has stepped up from the SO1Officers job that is, in turn, filled by **Major,** to be **Lt Col, Steve Wallis**. Congratulations, Sirs, on your promotions.

All this excitement leaves the post of SO2 Officers vacant and so yours truly is to step smartly to the right and fill the vacancy.

This sadly leaves the SO2 Man Pol job vacant again, but as with the rest of the Corps, we at the MCM Div have to take our share of the Corps manpower shortages.

MCM DIVISION STRUCTURE

As promised in the first article from the Division, month by month we will take you on a trip to focus in on the parts of the Division to meet the personalities and find out what it is they do. However, before we start this I need to lay down the basic structure within which the parts are held.



As you can see from the diagram, The Division has two main Wings Soldier and Officer Wings. Soldier Wing is then further subdivided with three Manning Wings catering for the Royal Signals, One wing looking after the Intelligence Corps and a Courses Wing, providing the focus for all career and qualification courses in the Royal Signals.

Our tour of the MCM Div will begin with a focus on A Wing.

FOCUS ON A WING

A Wing provides for the whole life career management of Royal Signal Soldiers in the Yeoman of Signals, Tele Op (Data), Tel Op (Sys), Tel Op (RR) and ADP Spec rosters.

A Wing Personalities:

OIC A Wing: Maj (Retd) Bill Cochrane, The Boss of the Wing he keeps an eye on everyone and everyone on their toes. A retired Traffic Officer **Bill** has a wealth of experience of the Royal Signals and the soldiers who serve in the Corps.

AO1: David Greer - looking after YofS, ADP Spec and Tele Op (Data). Sadly David has been away from work for some time and his duties have been spread between the others, with the main effort being taken up by **Maj Cochrane**.

AO2: David Stevenson – looking after Tel Op (RR). **David** supports Aberdeen, which is not a very happy pastime this year! He is due to leave the MCM Div early in January and is being replaced by **Katrina Butcher**.

AO3: Aileen Gordon – looking after Tel Op (SyS). **Aileen** used to be the Promotions Desk Officer for the INT Corps, but then she got better (after the arrival of her first child) and joined the Royal Signals team.

AO4: Stuart Brydson – As Promotion Desk Officer, he prepares all the promotion boards and works with the other desk officers to co-ordinate the timings of promotions. **Stuart** has a number of interesting pastimes including abseiling down the outside of the Hilton Hotel.

AA: Tracy Gagahan – provides clerical support throughout the Wing helping as required. **Tracy** is the experienced member of the Wing having served with the TA in 32 Sig Regt (V)!!

MCM DIV STAFF VISIT TO 16 SIGNAL REGIMENT

On a cold winters morning a group of the staff of the Royal Signals MCM Division, with the head of the Royal Signals Record of Service Wing, set off from Glasgow for a week long visit to 16 Signal Regiment in Germany. After a bit of a false start, when one member of the team forgot his passport! 'Do you need a passport to go to Germany?' The remainder found their way to Rhiendahlen and for many their first exposure to the Royal Signals since they began working at the Division in Glasgow.

An action packed week had been organised by the Adjutant 16 Signal Regiment, **Capt Andy Percival** including: driving off road under the careful tuition of **Cpl Thompson**, camouflaging the regiment vehicles, meeting and discussing the complexities of the Royal Signals trades with the tradesmen themselves and of course the occasional social event and one of two beers.

The party returned to the wind and snow of Glasgow exhausted but exhilarated, having had a great time. They brought back a vast collection of unprintable photographs and the one useable one, which is included with this article.

PROMOTION BOARDS

One of the great mysteries of life in the Royal Corps of Signals, is the methodology used to select soldiers of all ranks for promotion, otherwise known as the Promotion Board. Now these boards are explained by the MCM Div roadshow that finds its way around to much of the Corps each year, but who is listening, when what you really want to know is, 'Where am I being posted next!'

The Promotion Board is a complex business, but if you bear with me over the next four editions of *The Wire*, I will seek to explain how we do, what we do. I will break the process down into four parts:

1. Preparation. 2. Grading. 3. Selection. 4. Aftermath.

Part 1 Preparation: The preparation for a board begins well before the advertised date for the board in the coming year. There are two principle agencies involved: The MCM Division, where the Promotion

Desk Officer has a great deal of administrative work to complete, and the unit. The unit's main responsibility is to ensure that Annual Confidential Reports are completed and sent, to arrive at the MCM Div, by the appointed time. Otherwise, preparation for the board may be delayed, or in the worst case an individual may not be presented to the board at all.

The administrative work that has to be completed in the MCM Div begins in the Manning Control branch. Here the strength of the Corps is monitored on a month by month basis. This includes planned output of trained soldiers from the RSS, discharges and planned Notice to Terminate (NTT). This work identifies the Corps requirements for promotion in each rank and CEQ for the year ahead.

In the Manning Wings the Promotion Desk Officer has to screen all the personnel in each CEQ to determine if they meet the criteria to be presented for consideration at the board. To go forward to the board a soldier must satisfy the criteria laid down in SOinC(A)'s Policy Directive Number 6 (PD No.6). Now these criteria differ to a greater or lesser extent dependent upon which rank and CEQ is under consideration. Details are available in the PD, but in generic terms the following are the key criteria:

1. Has the soldier the required minimum length of pensionable service to be considered?

2. Has the soldier completed at least one full year in his current substantive rank?

3. Does the soldier meet the minimum medical fitness category required for promotion in his rank and CEQ?

3. Does the soldier have a current recommendation for promotion in his latest Confidential Report?

4. Has the soldier completed or passed the necessary qualification course for promotion to the next rank? (ie. EFP1 and 2, RSJCC, RSSC, RSWOC etc.)

If all these requirements are satisfied, then the soldiers are added to the role, to be considered for promotion by the promotion Board. Just when you think all is going well. The promotion desk Officer has completed the role of 250 for the board, called all the files forward from the storage centre and numbered all the files in accordance with the role. Then the Adjt of the Blankshire Signal Regiment faxes through the CR recommendation for Sig Smith who has to be inserted at number 75 requiring the whole role and the files to be renumbered! – happy Promotions Desk Officer! – by the way, where did you want that posting?

NEXT ISSUE – FOCUS ON B WING AND GRADING ON THE PROMOTION BOARD

ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

On Friday, 19 November, twenty-three of the volunteers who man the museum at weekends during the summer opening season were joined by eight members of the museum staff in the Oak Room of the Crown Hotel, for their annual meeting and end-of-season dinner. **Pat Soward**, the volunteer co-ordinator, in his opening words was particularly pleased to welcome **Roger** and **Danny Pickard. Roger**, who has been very ill for the past year, was back to his usual ebullient form and was celebrating his last day as Curator.

Gen Jimmy Hellier, reporting on the deliberations of the Trustees, noted that **Col Cliff Walters** had recently assumed the duties of Museum Director and that a new Curator should be engaged at the beginning of the next Financial Year. In the meantime **Mike Butler** would continue as temporary curator. He mentioned plans to construct a presentation room above the shop as part of the educational package to attract school visits and, on behalf of the Trustees, he thanked the volunteers for their efforts in 1999.

Adam Forty, the Business Manager, also thanked the volunteers for their efforts. He listed the various events to be organised by the museum staff in 2000, the Motor Cycle Expo, Air Show at Compton Abbas, Band Concert, Golf Tournament etc. The special displays, Enigma in 1998 and SOE in 1999 will be followed by an SAS display in 2000. It is planned to have that in place in mid-February and publicity will target parents and children in the area over the half-term holiday. Consequently volunteers have been asked to man the museum on weekends from Saturday, 19 February, to Sunday, 29 October, next year.

In addition to manning the shop and talking about displays to visitors, volunteers also engage in research work in the archives. Scope for this work will increase as the museum now has, thanks to the generosity of the family of **Sig Harold Greenwood**, a computer on which details of the museum's artifacts and documents can be entered. Volunteers are also needed to tape aural history records and a drive to recruit new volunteers is underway in the Blandford area. Anyone living in the area who would like more details should phone **Pat Soward** on 01258 860647.

NAAFI

Naafi wishes you a Happy, Prosperous New Year, and looks forward to providing you with a world-class value for money service in the new Millennium.

Serving the Services and their families Worldwide.

2000

LCPL BARTRIP AWARDED WCIT APPRENTICE MEDAL

The Worshipful Company of Information Technologists' (WCIT) Apprentice Medal was awarded, in October 1999, to **LCpl Marcus Bartrip**. The medal was presented at an Installation Dinner held at the Tallow Chandlers Hall in London. **LCpl Bartrip** joined the Corps on 9 February 1998 and after completing recruit training at ATR Bassingbourn commenced trade training at The Royal School of Signals in May 1998. During the initial theoretical part of the course **Sig Bartrip** achieved outstanding results in all subjects, impressing his instructors by his maturity, intelligence, enthusiasm, determination and hard work. In the practical phase of his training he continued to grasp concepts and practices quicker than most, achieving distinctions in most tests, and was consistently top of his course by a wide margin. In recognition of his achievements he was awarded the 'Lightning Trophy'. In May 1999 he was promoted to Lance Corporal and posted to 8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn. As part of the Award he undertakes a 4-year apprenticeship with the WCIT, at the end of which he becomes a Journeyman of the Company.

JOIN A LEGION OF RUNNERS IN THE LONDON MARATHON

The Royal British Legion is offering 85 would-be Liz McColgans and Ron Hills a chance to go the distance at the Millennium Flora London Marathon Sunday, 16 April 2000. There will be thousands of athletes pounding the streets of London, but if you've missed out on a place through the ballot, you don't have to be left cheering others on from the sidelines.

All you have to do is raise a minimum of £1,000 for the Legion. Your sponsorship money will help the Legion to support ex-Service people and their families, and you will be helped to target your sponsors. Once you've crossed the Finishing Line, in you complimentary Legion running vest and shorts, you and your family and friends can relax at a celebratory Pasta Party at the Legion Headquarters in Pall Mall.

Contact **Clare Lennon** on 020 7973 7309 or at E-mail: clennon@britishlegion.org.uk for information on how you can secure a guaranteed Marathon place through the Legion.

We Want You!

As a specialist computer recruitment consultancy, we have a wealth of opportunities for computing, networking and communications personnel. We have positions based throughout the U.K. for a wide and diverse range of clients.

Should you be leaving the services soon we are able to assist you in finding your new position in civvy street.

Call our ex Royal Signals consultant, Stephen Upsall today or alternatively forward a comprehensive CV.

Telephone: 01892 549898 fax: 01892 549808
Email: cvmail@ispcomputing.co.uk

ISP INFORMATION SYSTEMS PERSONNEL

ISP Ltd, ISP House
98 London Road, Southborough,
Tunbridge Wells, Kent,
TN4 0PW

ISP INFORMATION SYSTEMS PERSONNEL

Careers in
Communications

My clients are world leaders in the design, manufacture & operation of advanced radio, data & telecoms equipment and networks. Opportunities exist in:-

* System Design
* Network Planning
* Project Management
* Test Engineering
* Installation / Commissioning
* Technical Support
* Training

Contact John Darby, quoting ref: 4091H on 01727 818704 or email to johnd@jprecruit.com

For more opportunities visit our website at
www.jprecruit.com

The Courtyard, Alban Park,
Hatfield Road, St Albans,
Herts, AL4 0LA
Fax: 01727 838272

John Prodger Recruitment
Connecting people with opportunities

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS
DECEMBER 1999

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col R. D. Symonds	OCE HQ LAND
Lt Col R. J. R. West	SHAPE Staff (BAE)
Maj A. A. Ewell	DCSA EMS
Maj D. W. Powell	Director Land Digitization
Maj F. T. J. A. Riley	LSP Oman
Maj K. P. Thornber	DPA
Capt B. H. Bryan	Royal School of Signals
Capt D. A. Deegan	33 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Capt M. F. Graham	71 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Capt J. G. Hill	Royal School of Signals
Capt S. P. Moffat	HQ LAND G6
Capt N. M. Peet	39 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Capt D. C. Worden	1 (UK) Armd Div & Sig Regt
Lt I. F. K. Bates	16 Signal Regiment
Lt L. J. Thirsk	HQ CSSG (UK)
Lt A. S. Wilson	The Royal School of Signals
2Lt S. W. Whittley	2 Signal Regiment

JANUARY 2000

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col D. McDowall MBE	HQ ARRC
Lt Col R. Davenport TD	HQ 11 Signal Brigade
Maj H. J. Bardell	HQ British Garrison Nepal
Maj N. J. Bateson	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Maj J. Coffey	35 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Maj P. E. J. Drew	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj R. H. Gladwin	30 Signal Regiment
Maj N. P. Metcalfe	JFHQ PJHQ (UK)
Maj C. W. S. Miller	DCIS (A)
Maj R. A. Sharp MBE	G6 HQ LAND
Maj G. M. Smith	JHC HQ LAND
Maj P. Whitehouse	JSSU Ayios Nikolaos
Capt T. P. Crane	11 Signal Regiment
Capt R. C. Gamble	HQ 11 Signal Brigade
Capt A. H. T. Garrett	HQ 11 Signal Brigade
Capt J. S. Gunning	G6 HQ LAND
Capt J. G. Hill	3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (203)
Capt N. W. Massey	DCSA 1001 SU RAF Oakhanger
Capt J. Mayson	HQ AIRCENT (BAE)
Capt N. M. Rees-Deacon	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt C. I. Russell	7 Sig Regt (Corps Main HQ)
Capt S. J. Short	1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (215)
Capt J. J. Torrell	5 Regiment Army Air Corps
Capt T. O. Wood	Royal School of Signals
Capt A. G. A. Woolaston	CPD ACIS Eng Gp
Capt D. A. Wright	30 Signal Regiment

WOs and SNCOs
DECEMBER 1999

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
A/WO1 FofS A. J. Rickman	LSP Oman
WO2 FofS K. T. Wilson	3 (UK) Div Signal Regiment
WO2 YofS K. Robinson	30 Signal Regiment
SSgt A. A. Chapman	7 Signal Regiment
SSgt N. A. Evans	600 Signal Troop
SSgt R. J. Leach	32 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
SSgt B. M. Raine	35 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Sgt M. J. Allwork	243 Signal Sqn
Sgt M. K. Bowkett	8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Sgt S. T. Brown	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Sgt P. C. Cleet	39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (213)
Sgt M. A. Coles	The Royal School Of Signals
Sgt D. O. Johnston	SSSU Digby
Sgt B. G. Kirkup	21 Signal Regiment (Air Support)
Sgt A. M. Moodie	Disc Support Unit
Sgt M. S. Morgan	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Sgt E. W. Reynolds	15 Signal Regiment
Sgt M. D. Wilford	34 (N) Signal Regiment (V)
A/Sgt S. Day	16 Signal Regiment
A/Sgt C. K. I. Kielty	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
A/Sgt R. S. Love	16 Signal Regiment
A/Sgt S. J. Williamson	AFCENT Sp Gp/Cen Reg Sig Gp

JANUARY 2000

Rank and Name	*Unit to which posted*
WO2 FofS R. Conway	The Royal School Of Signals
WO2 FofS A. Forbes	SANGCOM
WO2 FofS I. Rutherford	The Royal School Of Signals
WO2 YofS C. M. Jones	16 Air Assault Bde HQ
A/WO2 FofS A. M. Duncan	21 Signal Regiment
SSgt R. P. N. Alien	33 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
SSgt M. P. E. Angove	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt S. D. Bartleet	15 Signal Regiment
SSgt J. M. Hamill	Concepts Division
SSgt R. W. Hannah	16 Signal Regiment
SSgt D. J. Hizzett	Glasgow & Strathclyde UOTC
SSgt R. D. Hutton	34 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
SSgt P. Newman	38 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
SSgt A. C. Slack	249 Signal Squadron (AMF(L))
SSgt K. H. Snell	21 Signal Regiment (Air Support)
A/SSgt R. D. Hutton	34 (N) Signal Regiment (V)
Sgt C. Bentley	30 Signal Regiment
Sgt A. S. Caprio	JSSU(AN)
Sgt A. Caulfield	8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (218)
Sgt C. M. Cheesman	30 Signal Regiment
Sgt P. C. Cleet	SHAPE Regional Signal Gp
Sgt C. Coates	1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (215)
Sgt P. P. Corcoran	20 Armd Bde & Sig Sqn (200)
Sgt D. R. Covey	HQ AFSOUTH (BAE)
Sgt H. Dunlop	ACOS J6 PJHQ (UK)
Sgt N. C. Goodwin	15 Signal Regiment
Sgt S. L. Griffiths	7 Signal Regiment
Sgt O. M. Gudge	16 Signal Regiment
Sgt P. D. Lagden	2 Signal Regiment
Sgt A. J. Lloyd	UK National Mil Rep SHAPE
Sgt J. McNeill	16 Signal Regiment
Sgt P. A. Meredith	The Royal School Of Signals
Sgt M. J. R. Mitchell	22 Regiment RA
Sgt R. Parr PHQ	Comms Coy HQ Landcent
Sgt D. W. Peters	2 Signal Regiment
Sgt P. M. K. Richards	33 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Sgt N. T. Shrimpton	The Royal School Of Signals
Sgt G. A. Shuck	30 Signal Regiment
Sgt J. D. Simons	15 Signal Regiment
Sgt J. E. Turnbull	604 Signal Troop
Sgt J. L. White	30 Signal Regiment
A/Sgt C. D. Brotherston	2 Signal Regiment
A/Sgt A. Cecil	259 Signal Squadron
A/Sgt J. D. Parkinson	36 Signal Regiment (V)
A/Sgt D. P. Rogers	The Royal School Of Signals
A/Sgt C. S. Wilson	259 Signal Squadron
A/Sgt M. C. D. Yendell	7 Signal Regiment

NEW APPOINTMENT IN REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

See Inside Back Cover for more details

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS HEADQUARTERS

EXERCISE ROAD RUNNER 1

by Cpl (now Mr) Mark Hawker, Assistant Unit Bard

In the sleepy hollow of Gloucestershire lies the little known unit of JSSU Oakley. In order to raise the profile of this unit, along with morale and money for charity, it was decided to organise some kind of event. The best man was tasked with the job, but in his absence **LCpl** (Now Cpl) **Dai Coomber** took up the challenge. **Dai** decided that in order to prove that we are not just chair-borne, we should do a run along the Welsh Border. A

suitable route and distance for the run was decided on, and a training plan was also put into place. This training plan was talked about at length before being largely ignored.

Day One started with the five runners: **WO2 Steve Prowse, Sgt Steve Trump, Cpl** (Now Mr) **Mark Hawker, Cpl Steve Bottomley** and **LCpl Dai Coomber** preparing for the arduous 180 mile relay from Chepstow to Chester, along the Welsh border. Vehicle support and driving was provided by **Sgt Dave** 'I'd love to help you but I've got a sports injury' **Longmuir.** Background entertainment was provided by a Rubick's Cube and **Steve Prowse**'s anecdotes of life at a mobile unit. The runners coped well with the distance although most agreed, with hindsight, that some hill training would have helped condition the muscles which were now suffering as a result of the Welsh terrain. **Steve Bottomley** put in the fastest leg over the three days, although he was chased for some distance by what he described as a huge snake. On closer inspection the huge snake turned out to be an averagely proportioned slow-worm, which had been dead for several days. **Dai Coomber** surprised us all by leaping into the back of the minibus, looking like a man who had been attacked by a Rotweiller. We soon realised that **Dai** had been spooked by a cute Spaniel with a loud bark and he was promptly thrown out of the minibus to continue his leg of the run. Thanks must go out to **Steve Trump** who drew the short straw and ended up running most of the uphill legs. The only stop he made was to rub some circulation back into his toes on a particularly steep section. **Mark Hawker** attempted to show a local blonde what he was made of by taking his shirt off. He jogged along with stomach in and chest out but his bravado turned to horror as the young blonde turned out to be a man! His shirt remained firmly in place for the remainder of the run.

After three long days the run came to an end and the lads celebrated with a curry. Aching legs and feet stopped the night short, despite **Steve Trump**'s attempts to get everyone into a disco. We're all looking forward to the next event which will be the same route but done as a van push, with only **Dai** taking part. As a result of the run we raised £200 for Imperial Cancer Research and The National Meningitis Trust.

JOINT ARMS CONTROL IMPLEMENTATION GROUP

EXERCISE IRON LIZARD II

Participants:
SSgt Paul Harding AGC (SPS) - Ex Leader
Lt Col Brian Gilfether TA
Maj Nick Keen
Maj Simon Leigh
Maj Bronwen 'Jonesie'**Jones** AGC (ETS)
Maj Alisdair Rodgers
WO2 Neil Taylor
SSgt Terri Lake
Sgt Nicky Thomas AGC (SPS)
LCpl Sarah Jordan RAMC - Team Medic
Mr Matt Parker
Mr Brian Errington - Weddle

Drivers:
Bdr 'Stig' **Blackaller** RA
Cpl Chris Hunt

Following on from the success of Ex Iron Lizard in September of 1998 and the £1500.00 we raised for the Joseph Weld Hospice. I got permission from the powers that be in HQ R SIGNALS to run another sponsored walk, Ex Iron Lizard II. Planned date for this sequel would be May 1999, and would again raise money for the Hospice, which is located near Dorchester. It relies totally on donations from the public and organisations such as ours to raise sufficient funds to maintain and keep open the beds in the Hospice. Planning was made easier this year as I intended to use one of the campsites that I had previously used in 1998. Yet again Tesco's in Blandford and Hall and Woodhouse Brewery provided chocolate, crisps and soft drinks for the walkers. Also at the last minute, Ginsters provided pasties and buffet bars for packed meals at lunch. This gift would be much appreciated by the walkers. Certainly **Matt Parker** did who made it his mission in life to eat as many buffet bars as he could. We also managed to once again use Safeway Supermarket in Penzance for breakfast at a reduced rate, which made sure everybody got a good start to the day. Even the vegetarians among us.

Thursday 13 May 1999: The advance party consisting of myself, **WO2 Neil Taylor, Sgt Nicky Thomas, Bdr Blackaller** and **Matt Parker** deployed to Cornwall early on the Thursday morning. After a pretty uneventful drive with a stop at Exeter, we arrived at the campsite Higher Chellew, Nancledra, before lunch. The owners **Pam** and **Eric Bleasedale** had yet again given their facilities for free. The rest of the afternoon was spent putting up tents in a strong wind. I'm not sure the main party would have been keen on putting up their own tents in the dark, so not being 'jack' we put theirs up as well. Early evening was spent on checking the start and finish points on the route and grabbing a Big Mac in Penzance while waiting for the main party to arrive, which they eventually did later on. On meeting up a short exercise brief was conducted using a local pub as a reference point and somewhere to lay the map out. After the strict rationing of one beer per person it was back to the site for an important H&S brief and then lights out. If you had one to put out that is!

Friday 14 May 1999: Friday did not get off to a good start when we arrived at Safeway's in Penzance to find that they had never heard of Ex Iron Lizard II, and therefore were not expecting us. This was despite checking with them the day before. A quiet word in the manager's ear out of view seemed to do the trick and the breakfasts commenced as promised. The vegetarians tucked into bread and water and the rest of us made do with bacon and eggs. After a read of the papers, take on extra water and sweets it was off to St Ives for the start of Leg 1. This leg would comprise

quite a rocky part, which was described in the manual as hard going to strenuous. 15 miles was the target but I changed the plan slightly and we did a comfortable 12 just to get the legs going. There would be plenty of time to make the mileage up and kill morale later! About half way around the path **Maj** 'Jonesie' **Jones** picked up an admirer in the form of a bearded chap who resembled a Druid. He would continue to follow her for the remainder of the walk. Apart from him the walk did take in some impressive scenery and even the rain held off to allow us to get to Botallack for the finish of Leg 1. Early evening saw a makeshift surgery at the campsite conducted by our able medic **Sarah Jordan**. The patient being **Maj Alisdair Rodgers**, who would be a regular attendee at these sessions. After sorting out kit, issuing 20 pence pieces for the showers, we departed the site for Penzance to be wined and dined at Branwell's Meadery. Vast quantities of food were consumed at reasonable prices ready for the following day. Our friendly Druid even managed to gatecrash dinner! An early night followed the meal, as Saturday would be a long day so lots of sleep would be required.

Saturday 15 May 1999: After breakfast at Safeway and finally tracking down the pasties and buffet bars, which had disappeared on the Friday, we departed for Cape Cornwall and the start of Leg 2. This part of the walk would take us around Lands End and take us just short of Mousehole. We had a stop at Lands End for a picture call, water stop and then it was back to the path. I should point out that the Druid was still with us and insisted he took part in the photo opportunity as well. You can't miss him; he's the one stood next to **Maj Rodgers** and **Maj Jones** at the back. Further on from Lands End, morale took a nosedive as rain clouds were starting to loom and the outlook did not look good. As ever in Cornwall you can never rely on the weather and in good Cornish style the sky's opened and the rain fell. After about ten minutes of continuous rain and with my boots sodden, I spotted on the horizon the minibuses pulling up to a car park just ahead of us. What joy, **Bdr** 'Stig' **Blackaller**, bless his cotton socks, had seen the darkening clouds and using his initiative and his trusty NASA GPS had tracked us down. Morale lifted and the smiles came out and he was due a well earned pint from us for saving the day. We decided on an early lunch and sort some dry kit ready for the afternoon stint whilst we sheltered from the rain. The weather did improve in the afternoon and without further rain stops we pushed on to Mousehole. After another surgery early evening we had to sadly let **Alisdair Rodgers** drop out. He was suffering from a rather nasty blood blister under his toenail, which would eventually require MEDAVAC and treatment back at Blandford. **Sarah Jordan** did volunteer to do the job there with active encouragement from us but being a spoilsport he said 'No'! **SSgt Terri Lake** was also given a 'sick chit' for Sunday after tripping up over a small stone and falling into the heather. Cries from her that she was pushed over by **Matt Parker** fell on deaf ears. That night also saw **Lt Col Roger Batho** joining us. He would be taking part in Leg 3 and was, (his words), looking forward to a long walk. He didn't leave disappointed. Dinner that evening was once again in the Meadery with the management supplying copious amounts of Mead to help us with our aching joints. I'm not convinced it worked but it was worth trying just to make sure.

Lands End
Back row: Maj Rodgers, Druid, Maj Jones, SSgt Lake, Maj Leigh
Centre row: Mr M Parker, Maj Keen, LCpl Jordan, SSgt Harding
Front row: WO2 Taylor, Sgt Thomas, Lt Col Gilfether

Sunday 15 May 1999: After a late breakfast we departed for St Michael's Mount which would be the start of Leg 3. This route would take us from St Michael's Mount to Mullion Cove. I was for most of the walk engaged in conversation with **Lt Col Batho**, **WO2 Neil Taylor** and the Druid, when **Lt Col Brian Gilfether**, our TA representative, decided to overtake and up the pace. Not wanting to be beaten to the finish by the TA, **Sgt Nicky Thomas** and myself then took off in hot pursuit to catch him up and race him to Mullion Cove. Final result of the race was AGC 1 - R SIGNALS TA 0. When **Lt Col Batho** did eventually turn up assisting **WO2 Neil Taylor**, he was heard to have remarked, 'I was under the impression that it was a gentle stroll and not a CFT.' After collecting ourselves together we said goodbye to **Maj Rodgers** and **Lt Col Batho** who, using his car as an ambulance, ferried **Maj Rodgers** and his toe back to Blandford for major surgery on Monday morning. We did say goodbye to the Druid who took a shine to **Bronwen Jones**, but I was sure we would see him again on Monday. That evening an 'O' group was held in a pub near the campsite before finally making it into Penzance for our last evening meal in Cornwall.

Monday 16 May 1999: Using my abacus on the minibus I had to give the bad news to the team that we were still a few miles short of the 75 miles required for the walk. This would mean that instead of stopping at Lizard Point, we would continue around and finish four miles further on. So after breakfast we made the long trek from Penzance to Mullion Cove to start the last and final leg of the walk. No one minded continuing as Monday turned out to be the best day yet. It was blue sky, gentle winds and a calm sea. Once again the scenery was superb and the going was good. Yes, the Druid had turned up again and **Terri Lake** had rejoined us after her R&R on Sunday. We all stopped at Lizard Point to partake in a cream tea and lunch for those who wanted it. Four miles further on, at the Finish, the backup crew was already there ready to ferry us back to Blandford and bring an end to Ex Iron Lizard II. **Maj Jones** also came clean and did mention that the Druid we had in tow all weekend was in fact her husband!

Thursday 7 October 1999: After many months of trying to get money in, and people on leave etc. I finally managed to get a majority of the team together for a photograph of us handing a cheque over for £2000.00 to **Mrs Caroline Nickinson**, the fund raising manager for the Joseph Weld Hospice in Dorchester. The Druid was no where to be seen. With the money raised on Ex Iron Lizard in September 1998, the total amount raised by HQ R SIGNALS was £3500.00. A big thank you to all those who sponsored the team and thanks also to the following organisations and people for helping: Tesco's-Blandford and Dorchester, Hall and Woodhouse Brewery-Blandford, Higher Chellew Camping and Carvavan site-Nancledra, Safeway Supermarket-Penzance, Branwells Meadery-Penzance and Ginsters.

Outside HQ R SIGNALS
LCpl Jordan, SSgt Lake, WO2 Taylor, SSgt Harding,
Mrs Caroline Nickinson, Matt Parker, Maj Keen, SSgt Thomas

NEWS FROM TRAINING

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT

FORWARD

The Regiment welcomes the incoming Commanding Officer, **Lt Col R. G. Nicholson** and his wife **Ann** and two boys. He arrived on promotion from HQ 8 Bde in Northern Ireland. The CO may be forgiven for thinking that 11 Sig Regt is just a hive of inter Squadron activity and Regimental sport. In his first two months he has seen the three trainee squadrons compete for the military skills challenge, The Gordons Cup, won by 1 Sqn; the Harrogate Cup Competition, won by 3 Sqn after a long year of hard fought competitions; the Drill Competition won by 3 Sqn, and the Inter – Sqn boxing night won by 2 Sqn. On the sporting side, the Regiment's Junior Mens cross country team won the Army relay championships and the Senior Mens Modern Biathlon team came third in the British Championships. If that was not enough, the Regiment's Senior Mens, Senior Womens and Junior Mens cross-country teams stormed the 5th Division Championships by winning every category entered. On the Netball front, after coming third in the Inter-Units competition all of the players were selected to represent the Corps team, which came 4th in the Inter Corps competition, only losing to the two finalist teams. Maybe things will slow down in the New Year.

Lt Col Nicholson presents Sig Siddall
with the Drill Competition Trophy
on behalf of the winning 3 Harrogate Sig Sqn

NATIONAL BIATHLON CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Regimental Biathlon Team were in action at the National Championships held at Bath University on 27-28 November 1999. Understandably the competition at this level is extremely high but the Regiment acquitted themselves with honour coming third in the Senior Mens (20 – 34 years) and sixth in the Masters Men (over 34 years) categories. The teams were as follows: The youngsters; **SSgt Mick Openshaw, Sig Paul Angelidi** and **Sig Pete Simon**; The Oldies; **Maj Phil Brown, Capt Pete Griffiths** and **SSgt Jon Heaton. SSgt (FofS) Rob Young** also competed as an individual. Also in the Masters Men class **Mr Mick Flaherty**, the team coach, achieved tenth place overall, including the second quickest swim for 100 metres on the day. The sport requires the competitors to complete two staged events, a run of up to 3000 metres and a swim up to 200 metres depending on the age group. Times are converted into points as in Modern Pentathlon

1 SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Jeff Drummond**, Royal Canadian Signals
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Andy Harriot**

Well, life is finally getting on top of the SHQ element of 1 Sqn. The OC has had to go and recuperate in the majestic mountains of Nepal for a few weeks and the Sergeant Major has booked in to Headley Court Health Spa and Country Club until the stress of the Millenium is over. The 2IC will shortly be off to over-winter in yet another top-class ski resort somewhere in Europe, all in the name of Army sport you understand. So that leaves the Squadron in the capable hands of our new arrivals. Big 'Welcomes' to **Capt John Williams**, who comes on promotion from 21 (AS) Signal Regt, changing his pace stick for a leki pole and taking over the adventurous training side of things. Also to **SSgt Dave Bousfield**, the luckiest man in the world as Troop staffy to several hundred soldiers, and to **LCpl Rigg**, in Whitespear Tp. With 'Hellos' also come 'Goodbyes' and these go to **SSgt Aidie Chapman**, and **SSgt Lindsey Manktelow** who have both gone to seek life elsewhere. We wish them luck in their new postings.

RHINO TROOP

Tp Comd **WO1 Andy Terry**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Dave Smith**

Welcome in to **SSgt Dave Smith** and his good lady **Jane** who join us on promotion from 1 Mech Bde. With a new Troop Comd, new things were to be tried. As we have soldiers awaiting further stages of their trade training, it was decided to put them to the test with an initiative and leadership Exercise and so Ex Rhino Initiative was created. Five teams, each consisting of four people were given 12 tasks. All tasks were to be

carried out totally using their own initiative. Points were awarded for imagination for such tasks as acting as a shop mannequin, eating lunch for free 20 miles from camp, and swimming in the sea (not an enviable task in October). Special mention goes to **Sig Gavin Phoenix** who not only swam in the sea but produced the photograph of himself doing the front crawl unlike one of the other teams effort of trying to pass a holiday snap in Ibiza off as Bournemouth beach, good try!! Also congratulations to **Sig Alan Moffat** who when tasked to pull a pint tackled it by pulling a pint of milk along the floor? All the teams showed excellent team spirit and initiative. As for the free lunches I don't think a certain burger bar or pizza restaurant will be so obliging next time!! Scores were totted up and after a close fought contest the winning team was The Randy Rhino's with the Dunwells a close second.

The winning Team
Sigs Gavin Pheonix, Elliott Keightley, Tanya Holdsworth
and Lisa Wiles on board their £1.5m Yacht
(Take off your shoes please)

HARROGATE CUP HOCKEY – A PLAYERS PERSPECTIVE
Sig Ward – Lightning Tp

After being asked (!) to organise the team for our Troop, I asked for volunteers, stressing that previous experience was not necessary but that enthusiasm and a sense of humour were. Our first game, against Beaufighter Tp, was hard, but thanks to our supporters singing and cheering we went one goal up, scored by **Sig Firth**. A second goal by **Sig Fulton** ensured our first win. On the same night we played Kohima Tp. The opposition tactics involved packing their defence so we were unable to score but we still qualified for the semi-final as group winners. Rhino Tp were our opposition and this proved to be our closest game yet. Rhino Tp looked certain to get a shot on goal but gallant defending prevented that. We managed to qualify by the number of penalty corners we had been awarded. The final loomed and the team prepared to meet our sister troop, Ulster, in what promised to be an entertaining match. We picked up their star player and marked him out of the game, only allowing him room to swing his stick (just). The game was played in the best of spirit, with Ulster Tp scoring in the first half. We kept our heads up and, with Corps player **Sig John Edge** dictating play, piled up the pressure, landing shot after shot. All our efforts were stopped by a combination of good defending, and some lucky, or brilliant, saves by Ulster Tps' keeper **Cpl Karl Hannah.** Ulster Tp ran out winners of what had been an enjoyable and well fought competition.

Maj Duncan presenting the Cpl David Howes Memorial Trophy
to Sig Mark Rodgers – Captain of Ulster Tp's Team

ORIENTEERING COMPETITION

On Wednesday 24 November the penultimate competition of the Harrogate Cup competition took place. With 3 Sqn leading the competition and hoping to win the boxing (being the last event of the Harrogate Cup) there was not too much pressure on the individuals representing the Squadron team, or so we thought!! That was until the new OC Ulster Tp, **WO1 Skimming** got involved. It then became a matter of national importance with practice upon practice and training upon training. Once the competition was underway, the outcome seemed a foregone conclusion, as both of the Squadron teams knew the whole Dorset area inch by inch! (thanks Sir!). The teams of four comprised of three males and one female with the Ulster Tp team winning the competition and the Lightning Tp team coming Third which obviously meant that 3 Sqn won the competition overall. Congratulations go to both teams who were:

Ulster Troop	Lightning Troop
Cpl Simmons	**Sig Hubble**
Cpl Campbell	**Sig Austin**
Sig Lucas	**Sig Korzenewski**
Sig Bassett	**Sig Abbott**

Thanks must also go to **Cpl Simmons** and **Cpl Francis** who, with a little, but necessary, unwanted help from various people, organised the event.

ANNUAL DRILL COMPETITION – *by Sig Siddal 3 Sqn*

It all started one cold autumn evening with all the potential drill pigs stood with rifles on the windy Blandford square. With the help of **SSM Tasker, SSgt Crowder** and **LCpl Reynolds** we began to practice the pre-determined format with a few extra turns added in for good measure. You would think to add panache but in reality it was to remind us of the basics!! We had tick-tocking and chocolate flip-flops all a round. As we persevered the team began to emerge, and **Sig Fox** was honoured with the unenviable task of right marker. **Sig Thomas** held the middle together whilst **Sig Siddall** (I want to be your drill instructor) commanded the squad. As the last days approached by natural depletion our star 24 were ready. The SSM, the switched on man that he is had secured us all Combat 95 kit straight from the shelves, not a Phase 1 scuff or tear in sight. It had to be said that 1 Sqn were a real threat with the amount of time and preparation they had been putting in. On the day we were first on to the square with the rest of the Regiment watching on in support. We really had pulled out all the stops. All the turns were executed beautifully and the parade was almost faultless. As we watched the other two Squadrons after us we stayed in hope that our performance had been enough to retain the drill trophy. We all waited with baited breath as the CO announced that 3 Sqn were the winners, as we had suspected 2 Sqn had come a close second. The sense of pride and achievement had been worth those cold and unpleasant evenings in the long run.

EXERCISE LIGHTNING FOLLY 2 – 08/10 OCTOBER 1999

On Friday 8 October 1999 the second of the 3 (Harrogate) Sqn exercises took place on Salisbury plain training area. The weekend was conducted as per previous exercises giving the 80 (volunteer!) Phase 2 trainees a taste of 'outdoor soldiering' of which they had been deprived since basic training. Everyone deployed straight after work on Friday, this meant the bashers were put up after dusk, which proved rather amusing when inspected on Saturday morning. It came and everyone was soaked, cold and despondent after a whole night of persistent heavy rain. It had been so bad that even the exercise OC, **WO1 Sartorius** was contemplating cancelling until someone reminded him that all the participants were potential technicians!!

After breakfast had been consumed and the strong winds had dried everyone off, the eight sections of ten personnel set off to their first stand. The eight stands comprised mainly of interest subjects of a military bearing such as: traps with **Cpl** 'SAS boy 1' **Rogan** - 9mm pistol training with **SSgt** 'Chippy' **Chapman** (or Forest Gump to his friends); Battlefield unarmed combat with **Cpl** 'Snowboarder' **Cattle** and **LCpl** 'Lenny' **Reynolds** and not forgetting a little input from **SSM** 'Ninja' **Tasker**; fire building by **Cpl Mechan** and rabbit skinning by **Cpl** 'SAS boy 2' **Whittaker**. On Saturday evening the night navigation took place. Surprisingly, everyone returned by the midnight cut-off, obviously **SSgt Crowders** lesson from earlier on in the day had been taken in, nothing to do with them pacing fields and hills!

After further analysis,
the Signaller found WO2 Tasker's joke most amusing

On Sunday morning the coaches miraculously arrived early and everyone was shipped to the ranges where the Phase 2 trainees had their first opportunity to fire the 9mm pistol since joining the Army. As always, this was well received by the trainees even though some failed to understand the concept of aiming the weapon at the target and not the runners warming up for the Blandford Tower Run! Never mind eh! With that another successful exercise came to a close. The permanent staff eagerly await the next one in March!

GORDONS CUP MILITARY SKILLS COMPETITION 1999
Report by SSgt Butler, Whitespear Troop

The Gordons Cup Military Skills Competition took place in Blandford on 30 October 1999. Old sweats will remember that the competition used to consist of a weighted assault course and log run of a very strenuous nature. This format has now changed to a military skills competition which still keeps the traditions of the Gordons Cup alive. Each Squadron entered two 8-man teams to produce a winning section and an overall winning Squadron. The following events were selected for the competition:

Shooting skills	Weapon Handling
Leadership Skills	Small Arms Trainer
Military Knowledge	Equipment Husbandry
Log Run	Map Reading

The competition proved to be physically and mentally tough, but very enjoyable. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Military Training Instructors in Whitespear Troop for assisting and umpiring the competition. The results of the Gordons Cup Military Skills competition are as follows:

Winners	1 Squadron
Runners-up	3 Squadron
Third	2 Squadron

REPORT
by Sig Burke-Smith and Sig Corbett, 2 Squadron.

It was 0645hrs on 30 October 1999 and while the rest of the camp slept off the night before the two teams from 2 Sqn lined up to collect their weapons to begin the Military Skills Competition, The Gordons Cup. The competition consisted of various stands to test the military skills of the Squadrons entered. It started with a kit inspection before each individual team moved on to the round robin of stands. We were only given the kit list about a week prior to the inspection, however nobody looked at this until the night before and by then **LCpl Rayden** of Rhino Tp had managed to buy all the whistles available on camp. This was where **Sig Hussan** used his initiative and saved us from embarrassment on the parade square, by turning up with a musical whistle sweetie! This would have worked smoothly had **Sig Granger** not felt a little peckish prior to the inspection. Although 2 Sqn had the highest morale in the competition it was not enough with **Sig Fitton** and **Sig Granger** scoring one and five respectively on their APWT at the Small Arms Trainer, but at least they were still smiling when they left the stand. The competition rounded off with a log run which proved to be the best event in everyone's opinion. It was one lap around Craddock sports field climbing over two flat bed trucks and under two camouflage nets and finishing with a road race ending outside RHQ, 11 Sig Regt. All things combined, the aggression, shouting and the competitiveness of the three Squadrons made this the best event of the day. Congratulations to 1 Sqn who were the overall competition winners.

Lt Col Nicholson presents Sig Hodgson of Rhino Tp
with his award for being part of the winning team

ARMY CROSS COUNTRY RELAYS 3 NOVEMBER 1999

The Regiment bagged another Army level trophy when the Mens Junior Team stormed the Cross Country Relays at Tweseldown Racecourse in November. Although the field was depleted by a few teams not turning up, 43 Major Units, 17 Female and 4 Junior male teams took part in the two races. 11 Sig Regt entered two teams in the main race plus a female and Junior team in the other race. The Junior race started well for our teams with **Sig Pete Tucker** handing over to **Sig** 'Shep' **Sheppard** with a 30 seconds lead. A lead which they would build on when **Pte Tom Grady** took over on the last leg it was up to five minute lead. **Pte Tom Grady** then ran the fastest leg of the day (15.08) to beat 7 RHA by 6mins 35secs. This time puts them firmly into sixth position in the senior men's race. The ladies race which was ran at the same time as the juniors was a much closer affair. **LCpl Sophie Morris** led off setting the fastest female time of the day (no surprises there!!) **Sig Becky Greenhalgh** ran a fabulous race holding on to the lead for at least a mile until the eventual winners (HQ 4 Div) took the lead. **Sig Helen** 'Any sport I'll excel' **Caplin** and **Sig Lisa Wiles** (I'm just not talented enough!!) both ran strong races but could not hold onto second place, which was snatched from them in the closing stages. It was a fine and valiant race resulting with a third. All the runners besides **LCpl Morris** are juniors. In the senior race the two under strength teams ran well to come 8th and 18th respectively, a special mention must go to **Sgt Stu Maughan** who got the 20th fastest time of the day.

Members of Rhino and Kohima Troop win
the Gordons Cup on behalf of 1 Squadron

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT BASSINGBOURN

1 SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj J. M. Norris**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Slaney**

Maj John Norris is collecting a variety of hats, amongst them CO, Regt 2IC and lately Visits Liaison Officer for the visit of the Colonel in Chief in October. He is not busy at all, much. The 2IC, **Capt Mick Boyle** is still finding time to compete in fitness freak competitions such as an Iron Man in Germany which he completed in ten hours. The Squadron welcomes the arrival of the new SQMS, 'Andy' **Crawford** as he wades into the depths of mass issues every two weeks. A fond farewell to **SSgt** 'Andy' **Harriott** who leaves on promotion to take on the SSM job at 1 Squadron, 11 Sig Regt, Good Luck.

ALPHA TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt A. K. Crapper**
Tp Sgt **Sgt B. Clark**

The Troop is just about to wave goodbye to the third course of the year and inherit the fourth just two days later! The next intake will be an interesting one as we see what fun we can all have with a two-week millennium break in the middle. Since the last issue of *The WIRE* the Troop has raised well over £2200 for two worthy causes. Firstly in June, the Troop raised over £1600 for The Princes' Trust, by climbing the equivalent height of Snowdon on the Regiment's climbing wall. More recently, the recruits raised £600 (and counting) on 'The Tregantle Challenge', a strenuous Tab across Dartmoor. All this as well as producing the Corps' finest! On a serious note, the Troop says a fond farewell to **Lt Jamie Balfour** (15 Sig Regt) and **Sgt** 'Geordie' **McBean** (249 Sig Sqn). At the same time, welcome to the new Troop Commander, **Capt Alun Crapper** who joins us fresh from Kosovo.

BRAVO TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt C. Thompson-Smith**
Tp Sgt **Sgt P. Matheson**

The Troop welcomes **Capt Craig Thompson-Smith** and sincerely hopes that his admin is slightly better than the recently departed **Capt Charlie Roberts** who moves on to an easy life with the RAF. Other new faces in the Troop include **Cpl Langridge** and **Cpl** 'Happy' **Ramson.**

CHARLIE TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Allan**
Tp Sgt **Sgt D. Honeyman**

Charlie Troop has been very busy organising and raising money for the Leukaemia Research Fund. After the initial idea from **Sgt** 'Dave' **Honeyman** to do the Three Peaks during the Adventure Training week, we finally managed to complete Ben Nevis and Mt. Snowdon, as well as a little canoeing, rock climbing and drinking.

Prior to Adventure Training, sponsor money had to be raised for the event by all 47 recruits. Due to the large amount of money being raised no mountain was too high. Leaving Bassingbourn in the early hours of Sunday 18 July, making that long journey to Jockland. We awoke early Monday morning with faces like welders benches due to the 'teeth with wings', i.e. midges. It was like a frantic 'bug-out' to the coach as it was a midge free zone (so much for a lie in), as we departed for Ben Nevis with the recruits pointing out of the windows at any hill asking, 'Cpl is that Ben Nevis?'

On arrival we couldn't see the top due to the sheer height of it being above cloud level. We departed, slowest groups first heading up the path, which was more like the M6, which we thought we had left in Carlisle. The going got tough and the tough got going, some three hours later and shedding a twin in sweat we at last reached the top. Some lucky recruit had to carry the Leukaemia sponsor banner for the top, which was big enough to be seen from bottom, if it had been towed by a plane. When the photograph was taken it wasn't only the flash from the camera that dazzled the Troop Commander, **Capt Liz Allan,** but the flash we made for the café in our relevant groups taking a mere 1hr 45mins to replenish our liquid intake with lager. We then departed this conquered mountain heading for the midgy capital of Scotland (tent site) to see if our rear party had been eaten.

Now we had conquered the pinnacle known as the Nevis we were off to conquer his little brother Snowdon, in Wales. However, due to some careless driving by a 19 year old Glaswegian student we were delayed by five hours and due to the Training Team's positive attitude and medical experience were able to aid the medical services. Stabilise the casualty ready for air lifting, about one and a bit hours later he was cut from the wreckage he was airlifted to the nearest hospital and finally we were back on the road for the other half of our adventure training.

We arrived at Capel Curig late that night and on Wednesday morning we arrived at the bottom of Snowdon in the Honeyman tour coach. Thinking the train would be cheap we were shocked to discover it would cost £11.20 each one way, so we then decided to walk as the army budget was tight. Meanwhile the other half of the Troop were rock climbing and canoeing with **Cpl Taylor, DG IR Horton** and **Cpl Brace-Girdle** the resident GTI'S. Thursday we then swapped around and on Friday **Sgt Honeyman**'s mystery tours set off on the last lap of the journey. Home to ATR Bassingbourn to prep for deployment on our Final Exercise. The Troop raised over £2,000 for Leukaemia Research. Well done Charlie Troop. Finally, a sad farewell to **Capt Liz Allan** who leaves us for Foxtrot Troop, good luck. Also congratulations first to **Cpl** 'Tez' **Blakely** who has picked up his promotion to Sergeant and secondly to **Cpl Dave Knowler** on his recent marriage to **Emma**, we wish you all the best for the future.

DELTA TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt I. Bates**
Tp Sgt **Sgt S. Parke**

Another day, another recruit. The joys of ATR Bassingbourn continue with each day throwing up its own unique problem. On average there are around 40 of them every 12 weeks, both male and female. The last intake which passed out on the 17 September (now Blandford problem) was **Cpl Berrey**'s eighth and last full intake. He is due to escape, fully unscathed and still with two stripes to 21 Sig Regt. Hot on his heels is **Cpl** 'Daz' **Lythe** recently arrived from 14 Sig Regt (EW) who was promptly dispatched to Litchfield on his ATRA instructors course. Congratulations to **Capt Ivan Bates** on his recent promotion. Now 16 Sig Regt eagerly await the arrival of 'Lord Lucan' or not as the case may be. Both **Capt Bates** and **Cpl Singleton** managed to get away from the rigours of CMS(R) for a week of sailing on the Solent. However, on their return the pair of them convinced the rest of the training team that it is possible to still be seasick after being back on land for 12 hours. **Cpl Bob Perry** has his thoughts fully focused on his forthcoming trip to the education centre for his EFP 1. **Cpl** 'Daz' **West** continues in his efforts to provide 'many an interesting' night in the Cpl's Mess as PEC. That's of course if there isn't a problem or forty. **Sgt Sam Parke** hasn't mentioned Pirbright yet, but we're sure six weeks drill would be eagerly anticipated by anyone.

ECHO TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt A. Flay (PWRR)**
Tp Sgt **Sgt R. Turner**

The Troop continues to improve its approach and methods of training, and have been involved in a number of activities including the forward projection of a local community project by six months as a result of one day's hard work by the Troop members. Having just completed another CMS(R) and sent 39 recruits to 11 Sig Regt, we are now starting all over again. This next twelve week push will take them through to 23 December 1999 without pause for breath. All staff continue to strongly represent the Regiment and Corps in a diversity of sports such as football, rugby, and orienteering, with some success. Finally, we would like to wish **Cpl Fadzilah** all the best with his EOD detachment.

FOXTROT TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Allan**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Purdue**

Foxtrot Troop are in the middle of a big turn around with the departure of **Lt Coshott** to RMC Shrivenham, and the arrival of **Capt Allan** from C Tp. The Troop also welcomes **Sgt Craig Purdue** who at the moment is recovering from a heart attack after receiving the bill for his Mess Kit. A sad farewell to **Cpl Stoker** who is posted to Ireland, good luck.

Battlefield Tours
for
Regimental Associations, TA's & Serving Units
Regimental Battle Honour Tours 4 days **£149**
Ypres, Somme, Arras, Cambrai 3 days **£99**
Normandy & Arnhem 4 days **£149**
Tailor-made & Self Drive Itineraries
Galina International Battlefield Tours
40 Bridge Street Row Chester CH1 1NN
Tel: 01244 340777
Official Tour Operators to the Normandy Veterans Association

263 (HARROGATE) SIGNAL SQUADRON ARMY APPRENTICES COLLEGE, ARBORFIELD

OC **Maj Steven France**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Mick Senior**

The Autumn term commenced on 6 September after a three week Summer recess. Unlike the start of previous terms however, this time the 'running around like headless chickens' syndrome was less apparent. This was largely due to the fact that the new intake, Intake 99C, had been programmed to arrive aweek later, giving the staff time to prepare for their induction into the College.

Before the beginning of this term, most of us attended the wedding of **Cpl** 'Muz' **Murray** and **Sharon Proctor** on 14 August which was held in Arborfield with much merriment. We wish them both the happiest of married lives together. And then this term we say farewell to **Sgt Mark Wigmore** and his family who are off to Blandford - we wish them all the best as well and thanks to **Sgt Wigmore** for his hard work and contribution to the Squadron. In his place we are pleased to be able to retain **Sgt Mick Yendell** for another term and our heartiest congratulations to him and his family on his recent promotion.

NEWS FROM SCOTT TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Tom Jeffries**
Tp Sgt **Sgt** 'Waggy' **Wagstaff**

After a very busy end of term fraught with seemingly concurrent activities like Adventure Training, March & Shoot competition, Basic Leadership package and support to the Passing Out Parade, the new term kicked off at a thankfully more agreeable pace. The Troop Staff have changed over to instruct the new junior intake and congratulations once again to **Cpl** (now Sergeant) **Paul Millington** posted to 1 (UK) ADSR on promotion. **LSgt Matt James,** having joined us from 1 WG, is still mastering the intricacies of the Recruit Junior Instructor's Development Course at the ITG Instructor School, which all Phase 1 Instructors have to attend (ideally before joining the training unit). In the meantime **Sgt Wagstaff** has held the fort whilst **Capt Jeffries** has been claiming sick leave through a shoulder operation and impersonating Napoleon!

BASIC LEADERSHIP - *by AT Martin*

At 0330hrs the Troop was woken up and told that we had five minutes to get into our coveralls with our NBC smocks back to front. That was the last time we saw daylight, or anything, to come to that, until later on in the morning, because we were blindfolded. In this condition, we were led around in all different directions to ensure our complete disorientation. At about 0730hrs, when our NBC smock hoods and blindfolds were removed, we found ourselves in alien surroundings (Bramley Training Area). We were then split into groups and briefed by our instructors. Having been given a map and compass, we were told to be at a given location by a certain time. Once at the destination, we were taught basic survival techniques like fire making, shelter building, water purification and many more.

Later that day, we 'tabbed' to the High Wire Confidence facility where we had a go on all the contraptions in order to develop our personal selfconfidence. After the high wire activity, we were given a demonstration on how to humanely slaughter a chicken and prepare it for eating. We then had the opportunity to slaughter some chickens ourselves. As a first time experience, it was like something out of a horror film seeing all the blood and guts of the chickens we were preparing for our next meal! That night we went on night navigation and were told that our performance would determine how much breakfast we would be allowed in the morning, so we all put in 150% effort!

The next day saw us doing command tasks in the morning and a memory retention competition (MENSA challenge) in the afternoon. The latter was to see how well we worked when we were tired and hungry. The competition consisted of moving between checkpoints and remembering information acquired at each checkpoint to formulate a complete message without being allowed to write anything down. This had to be done as fast as possible as it was a timed competition. Then the finale of the exercise was an inter-section log race which involved carrying a railway sleeper around a two and a half mile circuit. We returned to camp absolutely exhausted but with a glowing feeling of satisfaction.

EXERCISE SARAH SANDS 30 SEPTEMBER - 2 OCTOBER 1999
by AT Le May

We departed from camp at 1930 hrs, dressed for war with all our exercise kit. Most people got their heads down, so we weren't that tired when we arrived at Longmoor Training Area. The coach pulled into the drop-off point at 2030hrs, after which we unloaded our webbing and bergans from the coach onto our backs. The three sections proceeded to the harbour area, well, at least two sections did - **AT Brownsword**'s poor eyesight leading to map reading problems meant that the Troop were finally all in the harbour area by midnight.

The first night went smoothly with a professional but relaxed atmosphere and included 'stagging on and off' sentry duty. First light was at 0630hrs at which time we stood to for 15 minutes. The rest of the day was then spent digging shell scrapes, being on sentry duty or out in the heather revising our RTR skills (Return fire, Take cover, Return appropriate fire). We then had to take our RTR test during which we were able to fire blank ammunition for the first time in our training. Saturday night was one to be dreaded. Most of the night was spent on patrolling and conducting standing patrols, observing suspected enemy positions. Just before first light, the NBC threat level was upgraded and at 0600hrs we were subjected to an NBC attack. To top it all, it rained and this added to the confusion and chaos. After carrying out decontamination drills and filling in our shell scrapes, with our NBC dress category still at 3 Romeo, we completed a 2km 'tab' to our next harbour location. There we removed our NBC gear and proceeded to get a brew on.

Members of Scott Troop in the Battle Prep Area
(L-R): ATs Barney, Martin, Le May, Dean and Lee

Our next activity was performing section attacks against live enemy. 1 Section were the first to encounter the enemy and showed by their return fire that they didn't want to waste any rounds. 2 Section then proceeded to be point section and demonstrated that they were second to none by overcoming and disarming the enemy, showing no fear and claiming victory. 3 Section then had their turn at trying to be as professional as 2 Section but failing to do so in the end. When the excitement had subsided and all the Section Commanders had individually debriefed their sections, we were collectively debriefed by our Troop Sergeant, **Sgt Wagstaff,** who congratulated us on our efforts on the exercise. We then headed for the extraction area. The exercise came to an end with a sermon in the field by our Padre, after which it was back to camp for some well-earned food and rest.

Moffats School
Boys & Girls 7 to 13

at **Kinlet Hall, Kinlet, Bewdley, Worcs** DY12 3AY
Small Classes • Stability • Expert help for Dyslexia/SpLD • Sports & Riding in our 110-acre grounds • Many Artistic & Cultural Activities • Hospitality & fun for those in at exeats / half-terms • Our own escorts to all UK airports • An Ethos of Discipline, Kindness & Tolerance
Tel. 01299 841230 - www.moffats.co.uk

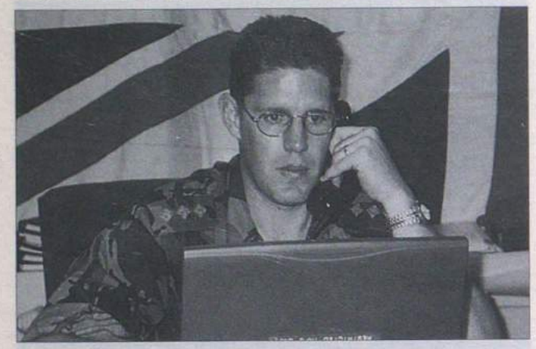
NEWS FROM THE BALKANS

MULTI-NATIONAL BRIGADE (CENTRE) HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON OPERATION AGRICOLA 2

OC **Maj P. D. Peel**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. P. M. Mitchell**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

I think it was T. S. Elliot who said, 'The first condition of understanding a country is to smell it.' With sewers flooding us out and thick dank smog engulfing us, you can imagine what sort of 'understanding' we have reached over Kosovo. Whilst noses may be clamped shut, heads are up as '209' head into the second half of our tour in Multi-National Brigade (Centre). Firstly a fond farewell to **Capt Colin Vaudin** who left us in October and headed off with a new pencil case and a 'Lion King' lunch box to start staff training at AJD. Remember **Colin**, 'If it isn't hurting.....'



Capt Colin Vaudin pretends to be hard at work in G6
He claims that he's not a computer geek!

Secondly a warm welcome to his replacement **Capt Peter Young** who joined us from Cyprus. He is recovering well after the initial shock, and the doctors say he should be back on solids within a couple of weeks. Also a quick hello to **Capt Wendy Kirby** who joins us on attachment.

HEADQUARTERS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt J. G. Griffiths**
Tp SSgt **SSgt J. Smithurst**

The summer sun is fading as the year grows old, and darker days are drawing near. Meanwhile, the members of HQ Tp continue to provide the absolute finest in Command Support the British Army can offer, to the staff of HQ MNB(C). Surprisingly, nothing radically exciting has occurred since the Troop's last ode to *The Wire*. The first real rain of the tour saw many of the Troop awoken at 0430hrs as the drains and sewers overflowed into the basement sleeping accommodation. Whilst the Tech Sgts rolled over and went back to sleep, everyone else set about trying to stem the tide of stinking water creeping into the basement. However, salvation soon arrived in the form of the Defence Fire Service. Or so we thought. After taking a quick look at the rapidly rising levels, they professed to be able to do nothing, and promptly left. (They did actually return that afternoon to sort things out). Meanwhile, various methods were adopted to try and halt the tides and prevent them from taking control of the basement. Needless to say, none of this worked and most people ended up bailing out for new accommodation.

The Troop, under the guidance of **Sgt Neil** 'Media Mogul' **Hunt**, has been very busy working in the local community, distributing aid and assisting in local schools and day care centres. At a nearby school, a great deal of effort has been expended running basketball lessons, aerobics classes, distributing penny whistles, giving away pencil cases and a host of other activities. An incredibly hectic 36 hours were spent when lorry loads of equipment arrived with members of the Charity 'Aid Reaching Children'. **Sgt Hunt** and his gang of willing volunteer's mission was to give away the £40,000 of hospital equipment and clothing to deserving locations, in time to let the charity volunteers still catch their return ferry out of Greece. **Sigs** 'Blackbeard' **Garbutt**, 'Chalky' **White**, **Mainka** and **Jackson**, and **LCpl** 'Blind Date' **Needham** were among the team who delivered vast quantities of kit to hospitals, medical centres, refugee camps and the homeless. Not wishing to feel left out, **LCpl** 'Mad Druid' **Langley** also got in on the action delivering buggies to local parents along with the Adjt and the rest of the crew. Well done guys!

Ably supported by the OC and Troop commander, an excellent performance was produced by the members of the Troop who resoundingly beat a Norwegian Army 5-3 in a closely contested exhibition game of football. **LCpl Strasse** 'Rear Party' **Street** gave a particularly good show of running around like a dervish, proving that just because your Regimental number starts with a 1, it doesn't mean that you can't mix it with the best of them. Finally, a welcome must go out to **SSgt Jase Smithurst**, as no one can remember if it was included last time, and he'll sulk in the corner if he gets missed out.

ROVER TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt J. E. Toze**
Tp SSgt **SSgt M O'Brien**

The tour continues merrily along as we head into the season of cheer (allegedly) and look forward ever longingly to the hand-over to 7 Brigade in February. Meanwhile the stress of Balkan life continues to take its toll on the minions of Rover troop. Leading the way into ward 6 at DKMH comes **SSgt Mick** 'Eddie Stobbart' **O'Brien** for whom the bell of dementia has begun to toll. Having left his trailer in a different camp, his daysac at the POL point and the mail and satphone at the wrong locations, he has now taken to wandering the corridors in his tartan slippers heading for a smoke without his tobacco. Well it comes to us all.

The Troop has also taken receipt of **Sgt Ian** 'Geordie' **Pearson**, who promises to maintain the tradition of madness amongst the Troop hierachy whilst he plays junior yeoman at main. Up on the hills the rebros are battening down anything which stands still for long enough, after witnessing the 14 Sigs aerial tentage display team in action. In addition the Suvi Bunar crew have wired themselves into a 150 Kilowatt generator, and are eagerly looking forward to more exploding tv action. **Sig** 'Rudolf Nuryev' **Jones** continues to struggle starting the panzer, although it helps to engage the drive and take it out of gear. At Swebat **Cpl** 'Hairy palms' **Vickers** and the dirty mac detachment continue to prosper, although the self-sacrifice they have made in vetting all restricted material has yet to be fully recognised. Commiserations must go to **Sig Cheryl Boon** and **Sig Debbie Myers** on their failed attempt to run over the troop commander in their panzer, better luck next time. Congratulations to all those who came off the Lance Corporal board, the shock is still visible on **Sig Nick Graham**'s face. Welcome to **Sgt Sally** 'Cockney' **Howson** who joins the Troop from the terriers.

Finally the Troop takes its hat off to a few carefully selected individuals whose actions continue to broaden the smile, firstly the BALO stunt driving team of **Sig Linsey** 'No keys' **Rakocevic** and **Sig** 'Rollbar tester' **Edwards**. Secondly the nameless 14 Sigs soldier who was blown over inside a portaloo on Goles, and thirdly **RQMS S. Conway** for calling the brigadier a 'Greedy t**t' at the squadron dinner night (I nearly fell off my chair).

(P.S. Lt Griffiths did not get his jumper from Millets, it's from army and navy stores staff).

280 (UNITED KINGDOM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj S. G. Hutchinson**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) McKenna**

KFOR OPERATIONS

The Squadron is now firmly established in its role of supporting HQ LANDCENT as HQ KFOR. Time seems to have flown by since the deployment began in September and the eyes of those deployed are now very firmly set on the end of tour date of April. The deployment itself can be considered to be a case of 'history repeating'. In late 1996 the Squadron deployed to Bosnia in support of HQ LANDCENT which had taken command of the IFOR/SFOR mission from HQ ARRC. The Squadron commitment to Bosnia formally ended in November 1998, although we still have a small detachment remaining in Banja Luka. For the Kosovo deployment we have once again deployed in support of HQ LANDCENT who have again replaced HQ ARRC in command of the KFOR mission. The Squadron mission is similar to that which we performed in Bosnia with IFOR/SFOR in that we are overseeing the commercialisation of the strategic and operational communications infrastructure of the region whilst being deployed into seven different locations. The locations are as diverse as Pristina, Pec, Mitrovica, Urosevac and Prizren in Kosovo (at HQ KFOR and at each of the multi-national Brigade HQs), Skopje in Macedonia and Thessaloniki in Greece. Our Squadron mission is truly multi-national, working as part of a NATO Signals Group with the latest, state of the art communications equipment.

A TALE OF FIVE NATIONS

The Squadron deployed to Kosovo as augmentees to LANDCENT, which was the HQ chosen to replace the ARRC. We were to man commercial equipment for the new HQ and take over the communications links from our Krefeld neighbours, 7 Sig Regt, after their long tour. Much of the Squadron manpower went into forming the ad hoc Troop that deployed detachments to the MNBs to operate and maintain the NATO equipment in each location. This article concentrates on the life of those at the Brigade HQs, the larger crews at MAIN and REAR will be visited in future articles. Each detachment consists of three soldiers, some of whom are accompanied by civilian technicians from Spacelink, the satellite contractors, others have German AUTOKO radio relays providing the bearer system. With only three men at each location it was important that the detachments set about integrating themselves with their host nations and their respective G6 staffs. Between them they are now experiencing a variety of living conditions and levels of support, and have the opportunity to get a flavour for how the difference nations work and, in many cases, play.

MNB(C) PRISTINA CITY

After deploying to Kosovo on 26 September 1999 it became apparent that the O&M teams were not going to be responsible for all the comms assets that at first were through and so the MNB(C) team was reduced to a team of 3, including **Sgt** 'Val 'No hair left to pull out' **Valentine**, **Cpl Stu** 'Oops, the sitrep' **Wilkinson** and **LCpl** 'Nobby 'golden blanket' **Styles**. The move into 19 Mech Bde was relatively uneventful with a smooth transition between the ARRC CRONOS and NATO CRONOS. **LCpl Styles'** leaving for R&R meant that we were blessed with the company of **Sig** 'What planet am I on' **Smiejkowski**. This has brought the impossible to the Pristina det, an up turn in morale! The number of instances of **Sig Smiejkowski** having the det in agony with laughter are too many times to mention but, needless to say, whoever has the pleasure of the 'Smie' after his next move will love him, until they kill him.

MNB(E) UROSEVAC

The US Detachment personalities are **Sgt Mick** 'F disk it' **Kenning**, **Cpl Andy** 'Bouffant' **Wilkinson** and **LCpl** 'Jackhammer' **Cook.** On arrival at Camp Bondsteel our initial reactions were that of amazement as to the size of the camp. After about 45 minutes we had discovered the PX and the Burger King, although the queue for the Burger King was almost as big as the camp, which currently has a perimeter of approximately 6 miles. **LCpl** 'Jackhammer' **Cook** was bitterly disappointed that Burger King didn't have a 'soft play area' and consequently hours of grumbling were endured while he put his boots back on! Our home for the first two weeks was a tent and, in typical American style, it was the biggest tent we had ever seen. Due to the sheer size of the tent, and the fact that it was only to be our temporary accommodation, we tolerated a number of visitors in the form of small rodents. However, the sound of trumpets blaring, followed by Kenny Rogers singing about how proud he is to be American, before 0600hrs every morning was an entirely different matter and something our predecessors forgot to mention.

Shortly after we had successfully set up comms we moved to our '4 star air-conditioned' living accommodation. Unfortunately our visitors followed us. One night both **Sgt Kenning** and **LCpl** 'Jackhammer' **Cook** were awakened from their slumber by what sounded like a hysterical screaming banshee. This was in fact **Cpl Andy** 'Bouffant' **Wilkinson**'s reaction to finding a very tiny mouse on his pillow. After a gruesome battle, and with the help of the base of the fire extinguisher, **Cpl** 'Bouffant' **Wilkinson** reduced the mouse to a bloody pulp. However, the mouse saga continued the next day when we all sat hungrily and eagerly awaiting the ceremonial unwrapping of the seemingly untouched birthday cake only to find upon opening that the mice had got there first! No stone was left unturned in our quest to find the culprit and our living accommodation now resembles Fort Knox. The MNB(E) boys had the opportunity to meet President Clinton when he visited the Camp on 23 November.

MNB(W) PEC

When the MNB(W) det departed Pristina for Pec we had no idea what was in store for us. The det, consisting of **Sgt** 'Ross' **Menzies**, **LCpl** 'Gaz' **Thompson** and **LCpl** 'Kez' **Brown** arrived in Pec to find that the camp, which was to be our home for the next six months, was in fact in the middle of the city. We were eager to have a look around and see what facilities and accommodation we would have. The accommodation appeared to be very spacious, but unfortunately, due to local power being rather unreliable and a lack of back up generators, power was to be a luxury that we would hope for and rarely get. There was no gym, no running out of camp (the camp is only about 300m x 200m, so boredom sets in by about the tenth lap), and water of the hot variety is like gold dust. However, the food in the cookhouse is of very good quality and if you like pasta, fruit and fresh bread, then you're very well catered for. The installation of the CRONOS LAN in order to replace the IARRCIS was a tough job, but after some extensive hard work we were successful although, due to Ptarmigan being the bearer system, it was a little slow. However, once the commercial VSAT was installed this problem was solved. Due to there being a lack of gym facilities, 110 steps are frequently incorporated into our PT sessions along with circuits in our improvised circuit training room on the top floor of the building. PT takes place for the MNB(W) boys five out of seven days of the week and any more than two days off a week and you're on remedial! Overall we are doing really well here and morale is normally at the highest level possible. There is one thing, however, which is puzzling the det and that is 'aren't the Italian shower cubicles in Corimecs designed for one person and not two?'

MNB(N) MITROVICA

After a two week wait in the glorious halls of heaven, otherwise known as Film City, Pristina, the O&M team for MNB(N) departed the city for the sleepy hollow town of Mitrovica, the HQ for MNB(N). Upon driving into the camp we looked forward to the prospect of living in barracks as opposed to the tented accommodation we had become accustomed to in Pristina. At first it was somewhat strange walking around the camp and being greeted with numerous 'bonjours', although we soon learnt to reply 'en Francais'. Then we were introduced to our Ptarmigan predecessors from 7 Sig Regt who were initially rather taken aback by the fact that our 3-man team was to replace their 20 to 30 personnel. It was soon apparent that the capability of the commercial kit, together with our technical expertise, was sufficient to do the job! The it was our turn to same the 'fantastic French cuisine (not)!' Well our first meal was the famous exquisite dish consisting of kidney beans and mushy brussel sprouts. It was soon realised that bread and cheese was the safer option and two months later this had become the stable diet for the O&M Team at MNB(N). It was comforting to find, only hours after our arrival, that there was gunfire and some explosions down in the city, and upon looking outside from the vantage point, we were pleasantly greeted with the French riot police's CS gas. We soon learnt, however, that this was to be a regular occurrence and it put a different light on the town of Mitrovica. After overcoming a few initial teething problems we have had our comms equipment running now for about two months. Now we have the task of installing the KFOR SECRET Wan followed by some R&R.

GREEK SP BDE KOSOVO POLJE

We had heard a few nasty rumours about Kosovo Polje, the Greek Sp Bde HQ, so when we arrived there we were pleasantly surprised by the 'garage', the place that was to be our home for the next 6 months. However, at 1400 hrs it was time to sit down to a Greek Army style meal which consisted of cold cabbage and runner beans in an oil sauce. The next morning **Cpl** 'has anyone seen my stomach lining' **Roberts** was on his way to the Med Centre at KFOR MAIN HQ with dysentery. Pot noodles were soon to become our stable diet until, thankfully, we were presented with a stove from the Greek Sp Bde and fresh rations from KFOR MAIN HQ. On the communications side work was going well, our det being the first to remove IARRCIS and install the civilian computers. We discovered that the Greek soldiers were generally fairly easy going with strange working hours that included an afternoon siesta between 1400 and 1500hrs every day. In fact they appeared so laid back that **Sgt** 'Dougie' **Icke** was beginning to worry about the security of the camp, the main problems being that the sentry located on the roof brought himself off duty whenever there was any bad weather. This, together with the fact that only 40% of the camp was fenced and that during a 7 Sigs versus Gr Sp Bde football match a couple of local Serbs managed to stroll in through the gates, was a matter of some concern for us. In addition to trying to increase camp security, we were faced with the task of winterising our living accommodation. First we set to work on building a moat around the garage to prevent us from being flooded out which had nearly occurred on several rainy mornings. We then realised that we would have a distinct lack of furniture as soon as 7 Sigs would leave so **Cpl** 'Blue Peter' **Roberts** set to work on the construction of items ranging from shelves and pen holders to a kitchen sink! Not to be outdone by, but not possessing any carpentry skills, **Sgt** 'Dougie' **Icke**, along with Ginge paid a visit to the det in MNB(W) only to return with a vehicle full of goodies. These were incorporated into our dining-room, which was soon to look more like an Officers' mess. It was no wonder we became known as the 'wombles' and that it became a punishable offence for a det member to leave camp and return empty handed. Now with a TV, video and gym from the welfare services, we are very happy with our home and all agree that we have made a great start to the tour.

SFOR OPERATIONS

BANJA LUKA DETACHMENT, BOSNIA

280 Signal Squadron in Bosnia, surely not, is this just a rumour? With Kosovo in the headlines and Bosnia now out of the public eye, five men still work behind the scenes to make comms in Bosnia work for all. They are 'The Lost Boys' of Banja Luka! They have been here for so long now that they are not sure where they originally came from. If it were not for the occasional e-mail from the Squadron Ops Room jolting them back into life, and making them recall the days when we were actually at home with our parent unit we would surely be lost forever! The Lost Boys are **Sgt Tom** 'The Buddha' **Atkinson**, **Cpl Matt** 'Cat Badger' **Baber**, **LCpl** 'Stressed' **Harrison**, **Sig Nick** 'Kennard' **Abbott** and **Sig Steve** 'Stunty' **Lloyd**. After watching countless hours of the Discovery Channel, **Cpl Baber** is going to leave the main stream military to become a wildlife

researcher in the South American jungle, his speciality being Badgers and Chimps!? **Sig Abbott** is trying to stay in the country long enough to qualify for a medal, we don't think he'll make it! **Sgt Atkinson** and **LCpl Harrison** are on the second part of a back to back tour which we think may have mentally affected them both. **Sgt Atkinson** has become a very mellow, nothing is too complicated to solve, no problem too small kind of guy, we just need to find him, however, he seems to appear as if by magic when needed, very strange! Congratulations to the newly promoted **LCpl Harrison** when we get back the beers are on him! All's quiet in the Banja Luka Det; the most entertaining thing that's been happening here was the opening of the new bar; The Foundry. All attended the eventful evening, which was opened by the GOC MNC(SW), **Maj Gen Viggers** with a free drink for everyone. The opening has improved the social life on camp by far. The entertainment, which is run by the XL group, has something on very night including bingo, discos, film nights and, just recently, a FETISH party…hum, enough said on that. We are not sure all the people who turned up had to make their costumes if you know what we mean! The imagination of the participants was greatly expressed, with a few weird and wonderful costumes, which raised quite a few eyebrows but the night was enjoyed by all. The det attended but, because of working hard as they always do, did not dress up for the occasion!

DAVID BEATS GOLIATH (AGAIN)
by Sgt (SI) Bob Dunford APTC

On Sunday 28 November 1999, 7 Sig Regt and 280 (UK) Sig Sqn competed in the Krefeld Station Clay Target Shooting Competition held at Brüggen Clay Range. The two team captains, **WO2 Karl Weaver** (7 Sig Regt) and **Sgt Bob Dunford** (280 (UK) Sig Sqn) rounded up a team of five representing each unit. 7 Sig Regt went for a very high ranking team, including three Skill at Arms Instructors. 280 (UK) Sig Sqn opted for the younger team with a very wide range of trades. The 280 (UK) Sig Sqn team was **Sgt (SI) Bob Dunford** APTC (Capt), **LCpl Steve Bennie** REME, **LCpl Bones Reeves** REME, **LCpl Robbo Robinshaw** RLC and **LCpl Pete Evatt** RLC – spot the Signaller! The day consisted of a sporting layout of 40 birds in the first round and 20 birds in the second. The teams were mixed so no one knew who was winning until the end of the day. The Squadron team had some big troubles on the practice round, however, they settled in with the first round. **LCpl** 'Bones' **Reeves** was having a bad day, just like Karl I suppose, whilst **LCpl Steve Bennie** has found something he is good at apart from drinking. **LCpl Pete Evatt** ended up breaking more clays by shouting at them and **LCpl** 'Robbo' **Robinshaw** pulled one out of the bag after a bad start in the practice round. The team captain, **Sgt (SI) Bob Dunford**, started well and got better as the day went on, probably because losing is not in his vocabulary! The final score; victory to 280 (UK) Signal Squadron by a total of 147 points to 117. Remember somewhere someone is practicing and when you meet him in face to face competition he will win. (again, unlucky 7 Sig Regt).

COMPOSITE TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Stewart**
Tp SSgt **SSgt R. Nolan**

With the deployment of the unit to Kosovo, the Troops left behind on rear details were formed together into one Composite Troop commanded by **Capt Stewart**. The work for rear details is always a hard one, made no less so for the Squadron finding itself in the middle of a re-organisation programme, the aim of which is to have all the equipment ready for the return of troops from Operations in preparation for IDCM next year . On the arrivals front, we welcome to the Squadron **Cpl Andy Pursglove**, **LCpls Mallett** and **Pearce** together with **Sigs Henley** and **Kimberley** and also welcome back from Bosnia **LCpls Cunningham, Jackson** and **Hillson**. Farewells go to the following: **Cpl Kev Butler**, Sigs (soon to be LCpls) **Jo Ellison** and **Foulkes** and, not least **Sig Leeworthy**. Good luck and best wishes to you all. Congratulations go to **LCpls Dave Pendleton** and **Junior Sears** on their selection for promotion to Corporal and for **Sig Bernard Brennan** for his promotion to Lance Corporal. We would also like to take the opportunity to congratulate **Cpl Bernie Barnett** for his selection onto the British Bob Ski First Team. Good luck to him and the team in the forthcoming championships.

A proud LCpl MacDonald of 280 (UK) Signal Squadron accompanied 7 Signal Regiment to Rhineberg Military Cemetery on 11 November 1999 and, at the designated hour, while the Regiment stood in remembrance he played a lament on Bag Pipes

MULTI NATIONAL DIVISION (SOUTH WEST) HEADQUARTERS & SIGNAL REGIMENT BANJA LUKA

CO **Lt Col David Hargreaves**
RSM **WO1 (RSM)** 'Brummie' **Lawes**

The past two months have seen a complete change over at the top of the Regiment with **Lt Col Ian Griffiths** handing over to **Lt Col David Hargreaves** and **WO1 (RSM) Terry Crane** leaving 20 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (200) making way for **WO1 (RSM)** 'Brummie' **Lawes**. Aside from leaving dinners the Regiment has been gripped by charity fever with PTI **LCpl** 'Dougie' **Douglas** devising his own 24hr sponsored hellathon and **Capt Chris** 'Spritely' **Crowther** spurning the RAF's Trooping flights and leading a sponsored run from BLMF to Paderborn.

BLMF 24 HOUR SPONSORED EVENT – *LCpl 'Dougie' Douglas*

As a young soldier who had recently lost his mother to lung cancer, and who found himself working in the BLMF gym, I felt I should take it upon myself to devise a charity event that could involve individuals of all physical abilities to aid in raising funds for the people who aid cancer sufferers in their own personal struggle. The team of 36 was split into three groups with each individual exercising for two hours. The challenges were to row the distance across the English channel (21 miles), step up Mount Everest (29029ft) and cycle round the M25 (120 miles) as many times as possible in 24hours. With the amount of people based in BLMF the names soon came flooding in, only two hours had passed from the notices going up to having all 36 names! The next task was to brief the individuals and set a roster for who was doing what and when. There were surprisingly few moans when the names for 0200-0800 were read out. Sponsorship money was collected from far and wide.

When **Sig** 'Jaffa' **Jefferson** went on his adventure-training week no one was safe from his ruthless sponsor requests. When the event came around all gathered to see the first team start their 6hr stint. A great sense of team spirit was formed in a short period of time. All participants put in a superb effort but a special mention should go to **Sig Bernie Ellis** who completed the furthest distance in his 2-hr period. He managed to cover 80.4kms while the furthest in a 30min stint was **Flt Lt Mardon (NZAF)** covering a massive 21.3kms. Some outstanding efforts were made on the rower too; **Capt Al Fawcett** covered just under 30kms in his two hour period. On the stepper however the distance war was fought hard between the graveyard shift boys. **Cpl Llody Jones, LCpl Dougie Douglas** and **LCpl Matt Coverley** promised they would not race each other. However, with two of them being PTI's and the other Para trained all thoughts of non-competitiveness went out the window. However it was **LCpl Douglas** who came through, also being the only individual to complete the height of Everest. An equally fierce battle was fought between the officers. **Lts Rhidian Jones** and **Paul Randell** took great pleasure in pushing **Capt Stokoe** all the way with their efforts on the stepper, with **Lt Jones** coming out on top. The total distances covered in 24hrs were:

The rowing team crossed the channel 10.4 times
The stepping team climbed Everest 10.2 times
The cycling team went round the M25 4.3 times

The money is now flowing in thick and fast and we hope to have raised DM6500. This money will then be taken to London and presented to the Imperial Cancer Research Fund by those members of 249 Sig Sqn who took part in the event, on behalf of all those who helped raise every penny.

A RESERVIST'S PERSPECTIVE - *LCpl Griffin 38 Sig Regt (V)*

I arrived in Bosnia in early July and was posted up to Banja Luka Metal Factory to work in Mobile Troop with 1 Mech for about six weeks until they ended their tour and 20 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (200) and 249 Sig Sqn AMF (L) arrived. Working alongside regular members of Mobile Troop I have learnt lots from the lads, who have all worked hard to show and teach me things I wouldn't have normally learnt in my TA role. While I've been here I've been quite busy and I have been out and about in the local area on many details. Amongst these the most interesting was being tasked to work with 14 Sigs for a few weeks in which we seemed to cover most of Bosnia. I also spent time as the CO's driver for several weeks and on a hill top rebro site at Radalici as a Det Commander. Again the lads had to show me round some of the kit I hadn't touched in the TA, but it was not long before I was settled in at the site. Overall I've had a very good tour while serving with the Regiment and I would recommend it to any TA soldier.

Lt Rhidian Jones on the foothills of Everest

MND (SW) SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Iain Standen**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Ken Marsh**

Goodbyes and hellos to **WO2 (YofS) Kerr** who leaves **WO2 (YofS) Hughes** holding together Bosnian comms for the remainder of the tour.

MOBILE TROOP – *by Cpl 'Sammy' Samuel*
Tp Comd **Lt Paul Randell**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Steve Griffiths**

The tour has only been four months(with cries of 'thank god' from many) and it's been a varied four months. On arrival in theatre most people reached for the sun cream and shades, but by the time that the redeployment flights were due the winter clothing and thermals were getting well used. Within Mobile Troop we have managed to fulfil our role and any tasking sent our way, with the most notable event work wise being the successful 'Light Forward HQ' set up which has given the green light for all armoured signals vehicles to be pulled out of theatre. No more 43's in Bos from now on!! There has been a lot of in theatre training with **Staff Steve** 'Don't mention his height' **Griffiths** pushing the troop to come up with many varied ideas to keep everyone on their toe's. **Cpl Matt Witham** deserves a line or two for his 'Super Tom' event. This was a close run event and was finally won by **Sig Matt Coverley**, although he was nearly beaten by **Sig** 'Yoda' **Scott** who came a close second. **Sig** 'Jaffa' **Jefferson** won the best instructor award. Other memories of the tour we shall all take with us include **LCpl 'Oz' Ozmond**'s sponsored Three Circles team run, **Sig** 'Crusty 12 crashes' **Wellers** award of 'Driver of the Month' presented to him by the GOC and **Cpl** 'Robbo' **Robertson** and **LCpl Kev Rutherford** deciding which of the 300 plus letters to reply to after putting an advert in the Mirror for pen pals.

TROOP RANGE DAY – *by Sig 'Crusty' Weller*

The day began with an early start and after a long drive we arrived at the range, a typical Bosnian affair littered with lots of debris consisting of about six cars and numerous empty paint and fuel cans. The activities started with an introduction to Dutch firearms including the Glock pistol forcing many of the troop to adopt their hard as nails pose especially **Cpl Sammy** 'I never take my ops vest off' **Samuel** and **Sig Elvis** 'I saw this in Bad Boys' **Jones**. The safest place during firing was probably behind the target! As well as the Glock we also fired the Dutch version of the Colt Commando 5.56 which compared to the SA 80 was a much easier weapon to control. We then went on to do a local weapons introduction, prompting more 'do I look hard with this?' photos. After a bit of trip flare/mine training and some lunch provided by the ever resourceful BLMF cookhouse and a GMPG refresher we were ready to fire and get some serious rounds down with **Cpl Matt** 'I love this gun' **Witham** and **Cpl Robbo** 'Get some' **Robertson** leading the way. The day finished with a fire team falling plate competition at 100m. This was followed with many arguments of 'I knocked down more plates than you' and 'I got at least 20' by many of the Troop who were involved. Finally it was time to tidy up and start on the long drive back to Banja Luka.

The Troop says a fond farewell to **Sgt Jase Raybould** and **Sig Russ Welburn** who war dodge to go on skiing holidays in Norway, **LCpl** 'Ben' **Whitley** and **Sig Jim** 'The Names Bond' **Gallagher** who sadly leaves us for a pre-xmas break at Colchester. Never mind Jim, you almost had the Brig fooled! Also congratulations from the troop to **Cpl John Reardon** and his wife **Sarah** on the birth of their baby girl whilst we were out on tour and to **Sigs Tina Ainge**, 'Scouse' **Bennett, Mat Coverley, Bernie Ellis,** 'Harry' **Ramsden** and **Kev Rutherford** on their selection for promotion to Lance Corporal. Are there any siggys left out there in the Corps??.

The crew of VSC501 Brown deployed on Op Joint Resolve

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP - *by Sig Olly Mason*
Tp Comd **Lt Rhidian Jones**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Jim Crabb**

Driving up the hill towards Radaljica presented **Cpl John Walsh** and myself with our first view of the hilltop site that for the next four months we would call home. The sparse Hesco walls that surrounded the site, along with the wooden lookout towers were reminiscent of a fort. Once inside however it was a completely different matter, the site was constructed of corrimecs joined together by a long, covered corridor, containing all mod cons, showers, sky television, and a well equipped Gym to name but a few. Our job on the site was to provide a RRB link on two VHF Nets as well as a Euromux phone Relay facility. As both of us were Radio operators we were not familiar with the relay kit and consequently expected that the third member of our crew would be. When **Sig Mark Harris** turned up a few days later, and was asked by **Cpl John Walsh** to show us how to work the relay equipment he told us that he had no idea either as he was a radio op as well!! This aside we quickly became familiar with our detachment, and soon worked out how to use the Relay kit. The first month was spent sorting out the detachment and getting used to the place, and therefore passed quickly. Likewise the second month was equally hectic with people going on R&R, and during the third month, with the onset of cold weather we winterised our equipment. However as the sun turned to rain, and then snow, time started to drag and we all began to look forward to going home. For the vast majority of the time our senses of humour prevailed and we remained in good spirits. With comic interludes, such as the time I was instructed by the site commander and **Cpl Walsh** to bake flapjack. After five minutes I was evicted from the kitchen as the two Det Commanders enthusiastically set about the task. Or the time in which **Sig Mark Harris** patiently waited on the roof with a huge pile of snowballs for twenty minutes until I went outside for a cigarette, needless to say his dedication paid off and I barely escaped with my life. The great trick when spending a long period of time on a isolated hilltop site seems to be in keeping oneself occupied, and thanks to the gym, television and welfare books this is not such a hard task. Once the novelty of being in a new place has worn off and R&R has come and gone the final slog is always the hard part, however with good humour and a forward looking mind it's really not all that bad.

7 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col D. A. H. Jones**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. Smoothy**

BIG BREW DAY
AND THE PADRE'S PEDALLING PILGRIMAGE

SSAFA's Big Brew Day was celebrated at all locations in Kosovo as well as back in Krefeld. Staff Officers were coerced into buying tea thanks to most of the soldiers in the Regiment who assisted at the various stalls. The chefs had done us proud by making hundreds of doughnuts to sell which then subsequently travelled great distances across Kosovo. Some survived the journey better than others. The Italian SAN were selling them as rock cakes. Their greatest achievement was to sell a cup of tea for 20DM. The German SAN meanwhile had to give a list to the German General of all those Officers who did not buy a cup of tea. That's the spirit. At KFOR Main there was hardly time for the kettle to boil.

Having recovered from this day it was the **Padre Lee Gandiya**'s turn to prepare for his return home. He has spent most of the tour on the road visiting soldiers or telling everyone how much fitness training he does when nobody is around. To prove the latter he finally came up with a plan. The idea was to cycle around Kosovo visiting all locations of 7 Sig Regt personnel and conduct a field service before saying goodbye. Most people thought he was joking until the bikes appeared, were serviced and marked KFOR by **Sig Ransom** and the go ahead was obtained by **Maj Stuart Hodges** from KFOR G3 Ops who must have raised some eyebrows.

En route
The Padre-Revd Lee Gandiya, the RSM-WO1 Steve Smoothy, the CO-Lt Col David Jones and Lt 'Pierre' Farrimond

The **Padre** and **Lt** 'Pierre' **Farrimond**, his accomplice, began their journey at 5.50am at the Goles on a Tuesday morning at the beginning of a hot summer's day. When they arrived at Pec at 6.30 that evening the CO's search party was just about to leave. It had been 147km in second for **LCpl Todd** and **Sig Brampton** in the support vehicle but it had provided much entertainment because the Padre was collapsing at every opportunity. Day Two was all about coping with being saddle sore. They made it to the German SAN in Prizren in good time to spend an hour in the showers before spending a quiet evening dreading the thought of the big hill on the way to Urosevac tomorrow. Day Three was the home stretch but there was one hurdle that was still in the way. After over an hour cycling uphill, the downhill at last arrived and the race to the US SAN began for a Burger King lunch. With much licking of lips the duo headed back to Pristina for an interview with BFBS. Next was a heroes welcome courtesy of 231 Sqn at KFOR Main, where they had lined the route before rolling slowly back to Ech to be welcomed by HQ Squadron, having cycled 351km. There had been no intention to raise any money but the interest generated brought offers of sponsorship as well as a few sweepstakes. **Lt James** kindly had gone collecting and put up a map of Kosovo in KFOR Main which plotted the location of the cyclists. These two events together raised over 2000DM for SSAFA and left the Padre unable to sit down.

CP7

The Regimental Ops team says goodbye to Ops Officer, **Maj Tim** 'Scarface' **Allen** and welcome to **Maj Stuart Hodges.**

231 SQUADRON FILM CITY, PRISTINA
Sqn Comd **Maj Paul Bosher**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Chris Ward**

For a couple of months it looked like we would never deploy. All we heard were the war stories from the heroes of 232 Sig Sqn while they were sitting in Macedonia waiting for the big push across the border. Then as we got into June we got the nod and our advance party of **Maj Paul** 'Tact and diplomacy' **Bosher, WO2 (SSM) Chris** 'Gadget man' **Ward, WO2 FofS** 'Elvis' **Ruxton** and **Sgt** '232 Reject' **Drewitt** deployed at short notice as part of the high powered recce team looking for sites for HQ KFOR Main. Meanwhile, the Regt Recce officer, **Capt Jim** 'Every Opportunity' **Boyle** stayed back with the rest of the Squadron until a site had been found!! That's how it works isn't it? Welcome to **SSgt (YofS) Jase Budding** who arrived at 0800hrs in Lt Wts and was on a coach to RAF Bruggen by 1000hrs dressed in Combat 95 - straight out of the packet. Farewells go to his brother **SSgt Carl Budding** who left on promotion to 21 Sig Regt, **WO1 FofS Alex Scott** who left on promotion to 1 (UK) Div and finally to **WO2 Hodge** 'Death from Above' **Arthurs** who went to Aldershot on promotion. Just as we get rid of a couple of social hand grenades, we get a new Foreman and Yeoman!

KFOR MAIN MAN SITE
OC **Lt** 'Mrs Merton' **James**

Sig 'Blondie' **Walker, Sig** 'Buzz Lightyear' **McKay, Sig** 'Spin' **Baines** and **Sig Reddy** 'Aim, Fire', managed to get the chance to go on a one week patrol around the Serbian village of Slivovo with 4 Armd Bde. This was a great experience and a chance to break the routine of shift working with some real soldiering. Our main tasks being VCP's, house searches, and general 'hearts and minds' patrolling. The village and surrounding countryside were very picturesque with dogs, pigs and cows roaming free. Although the villagers were very friendly towards us, they were less friendly to the animals. The dogs were beaten, the pigs slaughtered and the less said about the cows the better! Unfortunately, after five days, the attachment ended and reluctantly we had to return to KFOR MAIN to carry on with the more routine task of stagging on a radio set, but we will leave with some excellent memories and a great experience from our first tour since leaving Blandford.

Meanwhile in the Message Centre under the watchful eye of **Sgt Tony Downing**, the faxes keep on coming. After months of waiting in Macedonia, the original crew of **LCpls John McGee, Ritchie Applegarth, Sigs Matt Childs, Rory Grant, Ronnie Barker, Louise Allen** and **Emily Constable,** eventually got the green light to cross into Kosovo. We opened for business in Film City, Pristina on 19 June 1999 and spent the first few days adjusting to our new surroundings, cursing the Lineys and Techs and generally getting things ship shape, in readiness for the arrival of the staff. We also had to assist with getting the MAN site up and running, under the direction of **SSgt Archie Gemmell** and **Sgt Andy Mapstone**, with **Lt Ben Howarth** looking on. **Sigs Rory Grant** and **Matt Childs** both gave themselves hernias moving Cossors and Trends from the wagon into the building while **LCpl John McGee** supervised, and **Sigs Louise Allen** and.**Emily Constable**....well, they watched.

We gained a few new operators during the following few weeks, by way of **Sig Andy Reddy, Sig Matt Ruddy** and **Sig** 'Smudge' **Smith**. Members of the crew were also involved in the Squadron project, repairing and cleaning up a local junior school, under the direction of the SSM, **WO2 Chris** 'Where's my MBE?' **Ward**. Towards the end of the project, **Sig** 'Piccasso' **Childs** was once again called into action, and came up with a Mickey Mouse design for the entrance to the school. We all like to think that we have made a difference in some way, and that the kids who use the school can now get back to normal, doing the sort of stuff all our sons and daughters take for granted.

Members of the Squadron at Klina School

R & R has now come and gone and the end of tour is fast approaching. Apart from a little DIY surgery by **Sig Matt** 'The Blade' **Ruddy**, things have been relatively quiet. I'm sure that **Matt**'s scar will turn into some kind of war wound once he starts talking to the ladies back home! It's been a good tour and the crew has gelled nicely together. Some people have learned a lot about themselves and have come out the other end better for it. We are now looking forward to getting back to the real world, and some well earned leave. Who knows what next year will bring? (Falklands - Hot off the press)

SRG AND RADIO
OC **Lt Steve Jones**

Welcome to **Sgt Dean Wilson** and congratulations on his recent promotion. It didn't take long before the staff realised that there was a fleet of Taxis with secure mobile comms available for day trips! Once they did, the demanding role of the SRG Troop meant that everyone got the chance to visit most places in Kosovo and beyond. The KLA livened things up for us, with their impromptu parties which meant that gunfire was a common sound as the alcohol took effect and they carried out 'Beirut unloads'. It also meant that the COMKFOR wanted a proper TAC HQ stood by ready to go at short notice. With **SSgt (YofS) Jase Budding** on R & R, **Sgt Tony** 'Many Hats' **Downing** had to get a comms plan together while **Sgt Dean Wilson** and **LCpl Mick Devlin** waved a magic wand and pulled the manpower, vehicles and equipment out of a hat. After some hard graft and more long hours, the TAC HQ was ready for unveiling to the endless stream of Staff Officers and Brigadiers. They all left very impressed, knowing that at last they had seen a proper TAC HQ.

SAN 678 AT THE GREEK SUPPORT BRIGADE
OC **Lt Ben Howarth**

The arrival in theatre of the Greek Support Brigade in mid August saw the creation of the Greek SAN and the personnel to man it was pooled from all four of the deployed Regiments. However, on the initial recce of the site in Kosovo Polje, a British Environmental Health Team deemed the site to be uninhabitable due to the fact the site was used as a slaughter house prior to the Greek occupation. A bit of a clue might have been the strong smell of dead animals and the numerous bones left lying around the place! After ten days or so the EHT satisfied themselves that the Greeks had done enough to clean the place up and it was finally given a clean bill of health. It was then a mad rush to get the SAN in and working. One of the main problems encountered, was with the erratic power supply in the building. After some minor equipment deaths, **LCpl** 'Laughing boy' **Ross** had the situation under control. The SAS/MC crew of **LCpl Steve Ritchie, Sig** 'Maintenance' **Wood** and **Sig Jimmy Murray** had to endure the loudest generator in the world. However, **Sgt Pete Asplen** came up with a cunning plan and by using an old car exhaust solved the problem and we all got good nights sleep. The SAN CP is now established and manned by **Sig Thomas** and **Sig Turpie** who have quickly gained a knowledge of TACSAT, a bit of LAN software and how many sugars **SSgt Andy Saunders** takes. The RR crew of **Cpl Dave Pope, LCpl Andy Ackers** and **Sig Matt Parvin** have found that they not only have to provide the links, but also the mains power for the rest of the site. A recent edition to our ranks has been **Sig Walter Keown** our DE, who is now back from R & R, who made an immediate impact on his first day back when he sent our Land Rover works ticket on a tour of Kosovo. Fortunately, the Canadian who found it 10kms away, gave it back to us.

SAN 870 AT THE FRENCH BRIGADE
OC **2Lt Mayne**

As the end if the tour here draws near, SAN 870 continues its endless quest to provide comms for the French Brigade based in Mitrovica. The end of July saw a change of OC for the SAN as **Lt Noakes** departed for a well earned rest, and the start of an arduous adventurous training expedition. Despite being relieved to go she left many good acquaintances, and many of the French have missed the bunches in her hair which were a famous site around camp. **2Lt Mayne** fresh from his Troop Commanders course came to take over, and rapidly had to start revising all his language skills that hadn't been in practice for over eight years. There have been many people coming and going from the SAN but the main players have remained throughout, including **SSgt George Farrar, LCpl Al Ryall,** and **LCpl** 'Monica' **Cooper**, who now has an all female SAS/MC crew consisting of **Sig Constable** and **Sig Clarke**. Our LAN manager **Sig Brown** continues to be busy as the French Staff seem to change on a weekly basis, so he continues to be called out at all times of the day to answer highly technical questions such as, 'How do I put paper in the printer!' Fortunately he has managed to keep himself sane by acquainting himself with as many of the female G6 counterparts who we work with as possible. However, he has now been replaced by **LCpl Dainty** as the powers that be have decided to send him back to Germany before the French drive him totally around the bend.

Relations with the French continue to go well spearheaded by **LCpl Beacher** and **Sig Collins** at the Relay site, and by **LCpl Gauchi** and **Sig Maskell** in the Bar. As well as smaller events such as the odd game of soccer, Mitrovica was host to a Royal Signals 'v' the French rugby match. This was attended by the **SOinC Brig Burton**, and unsurprisingly the Signals were victorious with a 10-0 victory, which I am reliably informed was all thanks to SAN 870's star player **Sig Howard**. The welfare situation has improved dramatically with a steady flow of videos now coming up to Mitrovica, and we now have a fully functional gym. But most important of all is the weekly BBQ we have, with food provided from the cookhouse in Pristina, which gives everyone an extremely welcome break from the cuisine that is served up by the French. The highlight of September's entertainment was the first (and probably the last) SAN 870 annual conker competition with a 5DM entry fee and the top prize of a slab of Fosters. In total, 170DM was raised by the evenings events which was donated to ADRA, which is one of the charities working locally to re-house people within Mitrovica. The money was put to good use with the purchase of a Bread Oven for one family, and a Gas Heater for another. As the promised return from theatre date looms closer all of the SAN's personnel are looking forward to returning home, but above that everyone wants to be able to get away from the French cookhouse and back to good old British food.

SAN 872 AT THE GERMAN BRIGADE
OC **2Lt Lyons**
Included in with 16 Sig Regt.

SAN 874 AT THE US BRIGADE - *By LCpl Brewington*
OC **2Lt Noble**

As a Class 3 Tech fresh from Blandford, being told I was posted to a SAN in Kosovo came as quite a surprise. However I did not get much of a chance to think about it. We had previously driven the vehicles to Southampton and after a couple of days leave, we assembled in York ready to fly from Leeds-Bradford to Thessaloniki. The first thing that hit me when the doors were opened and I stepped off the plane was the heat, it was the middle of the night and the temperature was that of a good summers day in the UK. The next big thing to happen was the issue of ammunition, body armour and morphine. It was at this point, just before the Kosovo border, that reality kicked in and feelings of apprehension replaced those of excitement. Looking at the faces around me, I wasn't the only one to feel this way. We finally ended up at 7 Sig Regt Ech in Pristina. **Sgt Sam** 'Snakehips' **Faulds** smiled as he told us our first task was with 5 Airborne Brigade in Lipljan. When we got back to Ech we heard a rumor that the US Bde would require a SAN in a couple of weeks when, they finally decided to join the operation and leave their ship. When this was confirmed it was decided that a three hour recce would be a good idea. **Sgt Faulds, LCpl Rickard** and **Cpl Billy** 'Happy-go-lucky' **Morris** returned THREE DAYS later. They brought with them tales that would make even the bravest of men fall asleep, and of course some camp cots and some MRE's. When we eventually got to the US Brigade there was a lot of hard work to be done to make it habitable but it was well worth it. Conveniently most of this hard work was done when **LCpl Tim Ralley** was on R&R. Thankfully he was at home when his daughter **Haley** was born and was given a much deserved extra week off. Needless to say we all had our 'two' cans when he returned with the good news. The only real problems now are the fact that the generators don't like generating but **LCpl Chris** 'it's the fuel pump' **Weston** somehow manages to keep power to the TV, video and fridge etc... oh yeah and the vehicles. Recently our old SAN OC, **Lt Jackson,** was replaced by **2Lt Noble** whom we welcomed with a few donuts. I don't think this gesture was fully appreciated, until a few days later when he felt better.

SAN 876 at the ITALIAN BRIGADE
OC **2Lt Lawson**

Welcome to **2Lt** 'Alison' **Lawson, SSgt** 'Big D' **Robertson, LCpls Dave Hallway,** 'Manic' **Mundy, Ricki Currren, Sigs J.P. Phillips, Kate Leaning, Matt Burkin, Ian Walker,** and **Dave Harmison**. Goodbyes though to **Lt** 'Pierre' **Farrimond, SSgt Stef Newton, LCpl** 'Where's the beach?' **Rhodes, Sig** 'Jo' **Guest, Sig** 'Dick' **Turpie**, and newly promoted

Cpl Rose. As you can see SAN 876 has had quiet a turn-around in manning, this seemed to brighten things up a little.

With the Italians on the move again this time with their Brigade Ops room going to the other side of the river, needless to say, there was only on thing on **Cpl** 'Shark' **Wilson's** mind - watch my fibre! We soon found out that the present Garibaldi Bde which we had supported since the start was going home to make way for the new Ariete Bde. The General's leaving party was very memorable with the SAN crew (entertaining as ever) leaving the party with almighty applause from the General downwards. We left on our knees, singing the HiHo song from Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. The SAN has also been involved in some G5 work. A number of Aid agencies had requested our help, so we set about various tasks. These included cleaning up a park and a war torn school (where **Sigs Andy Porter** and **Adam Gallard** using their very own special methods to remove windows). We also errected five massive tents in local villages so that they could be used as schools.

It's not all work and no play here, generally we have a BBQ every weekend with food supplied by 7 Sig Regt Ech thanks to **Sgt Tam Buskie** - a big thank you from everyone here for that. Themes have been introduced to these nights ranging from a 'Rolf Harris' night to a Spanish night. While in Pec the Italian Bde have started up their very own radio station, MNB West FM, and asked us Brits to have an hour show daily. This slot was hosted by **Cpl** 'Biff' **Smith**, **LCpl Chris Rhodes** and **SAC Bevers**. **Sig Matt Burton** has taken over the role now **LCpl Rhodes** has gone home. In the last few weeks, a Sunday show has been released, starring, **SSgt 'Big D' Robertson** and the Ginger Princes - **LCpl Dave Hallway** and **Sig Stu Cragg.** The smoothest DJ's in Kosovo with their silky tunes and razor sharp humour.

884 PRISTINA APOD
OC **Lt Emma Fawcett**

There have been many changes since our arrival, as we have moved four times while the Engineers, who have worked extremely hard, have established a more permanent camp. The Russian contingent are also based here which has been very interesting, with their political acts of defiance every so often, by way of blocking access to the site - just because they can! A recent departure from the SAN was **LCpl** 'Scouse' **Fearns** who just managed to disappear before the OC came back from R&R - suspicious! He was replaced by **Cpl** 'Silverback' **Hawkins** who brought with him his wry humour much to **Sig** 'Text Message' **Robbs** delight. Feeling outnumbered by the boys in blue, we made our allegiances with the only other Army unit on the camp, 53 Fd Sqn RE. It is there custom that at the end of an evenings entertainment in the bar they sing. It was on such an occasion that we found a hidden talent when **Sig** 'HEEED' **Harley** surprised everyone by singing the loudest and longest rendition of Miss American Pie that we had heard for a long time. **LCpl** 'GI Jane' **Moses** is a late arrival to the SAN replacing **LCpl** 'Bandi Asif' **Smith** who leaves us to complete his Class 1 course. We said goodbye to him in true SAN 884 style, with help from personnel from the other dets in Pristina. Don't worry **LCpl Smith**, the photos are safe with me! The SAN has thrown itself into helping G5 projects, one is called Oscar (1 x puppy) saved after its mother was killed. Particularly keen fathers are **Sig** 'Loverman' **Vasey** and **LCpl** 'Rat Boy' **Limbert**. The second project is an Albanian school local to the APOD. Most of the SAN were involved and **Sig Vasey** in particular acquired a young friend who talked him into parting with his beret and cam cream. What do they say about working with animals and children? The SAN did all they could to avoid it, but finally the dreaded 'which end will it come out of next' lurgy arrived. **Sig** 'M C Hammer' **Stephen** was the worst hit, resulting in being a stone lighter as he emerged from the medical centre isolation ward! On the whole, the SAN has enjoyed its time at the APOD. Working with the RAF has definitely been an experience. The OC has even managed to catch **Sgt Howes** out by acting more insane than he does.

3 DSR RADCON
IC **Sgt Jim Watt**

Since we last put pen to paper, RADCON has been downsized with vehicles and personnel repatriated back to the UK. Amongst those that we have sent on their way are **LCpls** ' I do all the work' **Lyon** and 'Wrath of the Lord' **Danter.** For those of us who remain, work and life goes on. **LCpl Kenny Irwin** and his RRB, were saved from the indignity of serving their entire tour in Macedonia when they were extracted from their hill to Pristina, under a cunning plan devised by **Cpl Guido Giddens.** We now have only one RRB to resup, which has cut down on our workload and has allowed us to send **Sig Stu Ions** patrolling with the KRH, who survived this clash of cultures. We continue to hold our own against our 7 Sigs hosts in the quiz and sporting stakes, which is the highlight of our social week. The end is now in sight and by the time this is published we shall be back in Bulford, no doubt saying 'I wish I was back in Kosovo!'.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj D. W. Somerville**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Forshaw**

TORNADO TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt Graham Wills**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Neil Cooper**

Since the Troop last added their edition to *The Wire*, there have been some changes to the Troop. However, we still remain in Kosovo acting as the key Ptarmigan Comms troop operating just West of the capital Pristina. We have received some new faces and characters recently, most importantly being that of **Sgts Carter** and **Hulse** who have the arduous task of filling **Sgts Uttley** and **Cassidy's** shoes. **Sgt Carter** has joined us fresh from ATR Bassingbourn and has picked up the trait of shouting at everything that moves out of step or doesn't have razor sharp creases. Finally **Sgt Hulse** has joined us from 16 Sig Regt and has already enforced his own high cleanliness standards on to the Troop with many a raised eyebrow. **LCpl Shilton** has joined us straight from training to become the Troops Tech and has already broken everything he has touched... no change there.

We are still playing an important part in the Kosovo mission and remain in Pristina. Over the last month we were given the order to move from our home in the clouds at hill '1097' and move down to an abandoned Serbian Barracks on the outskirts of the City. A lot of planning and late nights were had before the move but thanks to everyone including **Cpls Keiron Slack** and **Bob Green** the move went relatively well except for one major reason, our Switch rolled on to its side. Whether it was **Sig Chris Brown** trying to achieve what Evil Kanevil failed to do, or maybe just a ramp shaped piece of rock, I don't think we will ever find out. Nevertheless the Switch was beached on to its side, with two rather shaken signallers in the front who were luckily unhurt.

The rest of the move went very well and we are now situated on a large area of hard standing surrounded by Canadian infantry, Royal Engineers and most importantly BFBS. The weeks are passing quickly and towards the beginning of November we aim to be back in sunny York for some well earned rest and relaxation with our loved ones. The tour has been a great learning process for all. By the time you read this we will be in cool garages rather than hot trucks. Finally congratulations must be given to **LCpl Richard Scott** who has recently come off the board to get promoted to Corporal, and will fit in easily with the rest of the elite troop Corporals.

ROMAN TROOP – MITROVICA
Tp Comd **Lt Adam Honor**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Chris Symonds**

Roman Tp arrived at the barren bomb damaged wasteland that is known as the Goles feature in early August. Immediately work commenced creating a flurry of activity in order to get the location as homely as possible, sooner rather than later. The first of our shower 'productions' was soon proven to have greater airborne aerodynamics than showering practicalities as during one of our first 'light breezes' the construction took to the air like a well designed kite! The Goles accommodation came in various shapes and styles. Starting with the popular more traditional 9x9 through to the Wigwam design preferred by **Cpl Findlay** and ending finally with the dark and damp conditions provided by the several underground bunkers. All accommodation however, whether large or small, came with a varied selection of mice and rats. The latter provided amusement for the troops when **Cpl Mandy Foster** ran semi-naked around the Node Home due to a rather large specimen which was running riot amongst the contents of her tent.

Our exceptionally 'picturesque' location has become something of a tourist attraction. During our stay we have seen a constant flow of visitors from various countries, numerous Corps and every rank under the sun who have come to wish us well and view the spectacular bomb damage of our luxurious site.

Whilst on operations the Troop said a fond farewell to **LCpl Eyre** who will be moving onto educate the up and coming soldiers of 11 Sig Regt in Sys Ex. We would like to wish him all the best for the future. The Troop would also like to welcome **Sgt Jim Davidson** who joins the Troop from 259 Sig Sqn in Cyprus. The Troop are now planning and looking forward to it's return to the UK with staggered dates of mid October and early November. Finally we would like to congratulate **LCpl Nealey** on his recent miraculous promotion.

11 SIGNAL BRIGADE PROJECT TEAM COMMERCIALISING KOSOVO

A report from Theatre by Capt (TOT) Jim Hiorns

In September, Commander 11 Sig Bde was tasked with delivering PJHQs CIS strategy for the Balkans. Ultimately these changes will result in reduced troop deployment and fewer tours in the Balkans. The need to meet this task has led to the formation of a small project team consisting of the SO2 Ops - **Maj Jim Foulkes**, the SO3 Ops - **Flt Lt Farid Khan**, and the SO3 CEC - **Capt John Hiorns**. Following a hectic hand-over of current work to an already overworked and underpaid **Capt Jim Sykes**, (his words - he loves it really) and a trip to UNTAT, the team deployed to Kosovo on 22 September 1999. Not long after this we were joined by a CPDLO from Germany, **WO2 (FofS) Colin Mackay**, and converted him to CPDLO Balkans.

Since then life has been a series of short periods out here with HQ MNB(C), currently 19 Mech Bde Sig Sqn, and vital trips back to UK (or in one case Paris!) for meetings with contractors or DPA. Whilst there has been every concern for our welfare and wellbeing, we do have the impression that actually there should be more thought given over to the spouses left behind; in the first two weeks of our deployment they have managed between them to write-off two cars and damage a third!

In November **Flt Lt Farid Khan** left for the UK thinking he had managed 30 concurrent days in theatre to qualify for his first medal (without actually serving with the RAF yet). It was with relish that someone informed him that the days of arrival and departure don't count! Fortunately the Pristina Bar football championships finished with a win for our man from the RAF and a first medal for the good Flight Lieutenant (a skill he honed in his student days - he tells us). Amazingly, a second medal has been awarded to our man in blue in recognition of his dogged persistence and commitment to his camp cot to win the 'staying in bed the longest and claiming he had been to do some PT before work' championships. On the subject of medals, he has a long way to go to catch up with **Maj Simon** 'Seven Medals' **Meadowcroft** from 2 Sig Regt who took over as the SO2 J6 with the NSE. There is no truth in the rumour that he immediately ran up a telephone bill of DM 1.5 million phoning back to York to convince the remainder of the Regt Ops team that he really had deployed himself this time.

Finally we had better give mention to **WO2 (FofS) Ian Outterson** who will be taking over as the SCIDA once he has been briefed fully by the CPDLO and accreditation guru **WO2 (FofS) Colin Mackay**. He also has the thankless task of sorting out mobile and PTT telephone bills so for those that know him, he is even more 'follically' challenged now. At present his main concern is trying to persuade the SO2 J6 to reduce the number of trips he is having to make to the OSCE building with **Maj Simon Meadowcroft** following his discovery of lots of young secretaries in that building. Seemingly he now insists in personally clearing all frequencies with the OSCE since they assumed the role from KFOR! More news will follow in the next edition with an update of the ongoing Projects both here and in Bosnia.

COURT AND SOCIAL
The Headquarters Christmas Party

It is well known fact that 11 Sig Bde always lead the way – well that's the reason we give for having our Christmas party on the 3 December. This year it was organised by our Chief Clerk **WO2 Shaun** 'What me write an article for another Corps' Magazine?' **Flannery** AGC. The venue chosen was the local Golf and Country Club. The day started well enough with the farewell visit of the GOC 5 Div, **Maj Gen R. V. Searby**, who during his flying visit found time, amongst other things, to join us for a sherry and mince pies. Following the visit and a bottle of sherry later we made our way to the Shropshire where on arrival we were met by **WO2 Flannery** who offered everyone a free drink. One does not like to shatter illusions but the free drink was inclusive and not from his pocket.

As the 24 Regular TA and civilian members of the Headquarters sat down the first thing to do was open a present which had been left on their respective chair. The presents were to the value of £5 and had been bought by someone else in the Headquarters, as a variation on the bran tub. Once opened the delight in some was evident! The gifts ranged from edible under garments for the Bde YofS, **WO1 (YofS) Graham Pardew** to a box of apples and potatoes for **Maj Peter Williams**. It is left to ones knowledge of the individual to guess who's first words were 'Oh my God.' or 'The numpty who bought this should have realised it was £5 in value not 5lb in weight,' (before seeing the rather nice bottle of wine hidden behind a large potato). It would be attention grabbing to say the extra drinks were served by a Bunny Girl and that one of our clerical support team, **Vicky** 'When do I get mentioned in *The Wire*' **Sutherland** did a table dance wearing her present of pink bunny girl ears and tail. But we cannot, as it would be lying! It was an excellent party, as was the food, with many choices of dish with each course. However, one raw red meat eating young man, who shall remain nameless, ordered the stew in error, not realising it was the vegetarian dish! Being a man of strong character and principle he refused to change no matter how many times we offered. All in all and excellent but noisy occasion - letters of apology have been sent.

HAIL AND FAREWELL

The Bde Comd, **Brig Jonathan Cook** found time, between trips to Kosovo, Bosnia, Egypt, Germany and NI and winning his class in the 5 Div orienteering Championship, to attend the Christmas Party. While there, he took the opportunity to say farewell to those who were leaving. **Maj Jean Payne** leaves us after six years to join the TA All Arms Watch-Keeping pool. The Commander took time to highlight her achievements, her Adventure Training exploits, her three operational tours and her banditry on the golf course. We wish her and **Andy** all the best for the future. **Capt Jim Sykes** was also bid farewell and the Commander remarked on the number of career moves he has made over the last years; such as wandering around hotels in his underclothes and having a son who practices karate, on the Commander! We will all miss his cheerfulness, helpfulness youthfulness and generosity. We hope he is not to disappointed by not being posted as Trg Maj to one of our TA units and wish him and **Vicky** all the best in their next posting. We look forward to meeting his replacement **Capt Richard Gamble** who **Jim** tells us has a penchant for fast horses, slow women and wearing the tightest jeans he can get into.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

XV HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND & 15 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col J. G. T. Rafferty**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) A. Balsdon**

EXERCISE LEWAIGUE FINN DATED 05-19 SEPTEMBER 1999
by Sgt Chris Hood

Two weeks adventure training was organised for HQ Sqn, 15 Sig Regt on the Isle of Man in September 1999. Cries a plenty from those attending of rain and snow storms soon fell on deaf ears as the organisers were doing a sun dance. A total of twenty-two personnel attended this gruelling two-week training camp which on their arrival brief they would enjoy. The two weeks consisted of ten volunteers of all ranks, from the **RSM Al** 'Tight Shorts' **Balsdon** to **Sig** 'Foxy' **Shields**. They would soon familiarise themselves with sea-kayaking, canoeing, mountain biking, climbing and abseiling around the Isle of Man. The first great challenge came when the RSM had to convince **SSgt** 'Tractor' **McCulloch** that cycling thirty miles across hill and vale was not very far, needless to say 'Tractor' did not agree with him the next day as he was doing his John Wayne impression. Next to overcome his fear of adventure training was **LCpl** 'Sealegs' **Lafferty** who after kicking and screaming was placed in a kayak by the instructors and told to paddle, and keep the kayak straight. **Sgt Hood** duly arrived at Port Erin to collect the kayakers only to ponder the question to the instructors 'Who can't you get out of the water?' **LCpl Lafferty** had grown fins and scales, one-nil to adventure training instructors. The climbers meanwhile had moved down to Dhoon Bay under the able instruction of **Capt** 'Spiderman' **Howell-Walmsley,** after walking two miles to the climb site **Capt H-W** was greeted by ooohhs and ahhs when he explained the climbs which would be followed by a quick thrash in the Irish Sea! **Cpl** 'Don't look down' **Redford** stalled on his ascent but, after lots of not looking down successfully, reached the summit only to be told he had to look down to abseil to the bottom.

Cpl Angie Richardson - Great PR picture

Cpl Redford duly reached the bottom only to be faced with icy cold Irish Sea, two-nil to the adventure-training instructors. The final task was for the teams to compete in the team building competition at the Adventure Centre.

After the teams had been set challenges of both a physical and mental nature they were soon off in pursuit of the coveted Adventure Centre Trophy which turned into the Battle of the Millennium. **Pte** 'Cook for five thousand' **Cranny** started with an exhibition of sharp shooting never before seen on the island to elevate his team towards the title. The opposing team duly replied with a scintillating performance on the obstacle course to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. The CO, **Lt Col Rafferty,** visited the adventure-training site and was surprised and impressed with the professionalism of the adventure training. To summarise, the two-week camp achieved the aim of relieving the stress of Province commitments and also spurred on some future adventure-training instructors.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON OFFICERS & SENIORS v JUNIOR RUGBY MATCH - 26 NOVEMBER

The Officers & Seniors challenged the Juniors of the Squadron to a 'Friendly' game of rugby, which had all the pre-match banter of an England v Scotland footy game, scores of 40 plus being forecast by both teams and bets of fantastic figures being placed. The game kicked off at an incredible rate of knots. The Seniors, ably captained by **WO2** 'Freddie Mercury' **Downie**, dominated the tight play and using a well worked forward move drove **Capt Hargreaves** over for the first try. The Juniors replied with a try by **Cpl Jay Waites** and some very nifty footwork by **LCpl** 'Foxy' **Fox.** At the interval the score was 5-5 and both teams had suffered casualties, **LCpl Byron Marshall** had a hand that was DEFINITELY the wrong size and shape having broken his wrist and **Capt** 'Chippy' **Carpenter** visited the medics for stitches to the head. The second half erupted with the seniors using their forward bulk, in the shape of **Capt Chris Lamb** and **SSgt Paul Dunn**, to drive the juniors to within a metre of their own line and **Sgt Loz Hill** going over after a quick penalty move. From here on in the Juniors passed the ball wide as **LCpl Babs Woodhouse** combined with 'Foxy' and **Cpl** 'Fred West' **Deas** to send **Cpl Jay Waites** under the posts for another blistering try. In the dying moments of the game the junior forwards combined well with the backs to send **Cpl Ash** 'I've never played before' **Ashley** over for the final score. The Juniors deservedly won 19-10 in a game that produced more blood than a Mike Tyson title fight.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON EXERCISE SKYE FINN 1999 (9-17 OCTOBER 1999)

Ex Skye Finn 1999 was a 225 Sig Sqn hill walking expedition which took place on the Isle of Skye, Scotland over the period 9-17 October 1999. The aim of the exercise was to cover the island, loosely based on a north to south route. However, this was all weather dependent, as it involved a lot of ascent and traversing along the Trotternish ridge.

Day One: The first day saw the team arrive at the Squadron around 7.30am with eager anticipation of the nine-hour minibus drive that lay ahead, the team consisting of the coach, **LCpl Andy Liddle, Capt Robin Carpenter, 2Lt Elizabeth McClellan, Sgt Sue Jackson, Cpl Dave Hill** and **LCpl Helen Waites.** We departed at 7.45am with **Dave** at the wheel, who prided himself on the fact that he never broke the speed limit. Needless to say, we only just made the ferry. On arrival in Skye we headed for the campsite in Portree, which was shrouded in dark, ominous clouds, that filled the group with loads of confidence. We set about the tasks of 'making camp' with haste only to find that one of the two man tents came equipped with a one man flysheet. However, **Capt Carpenter** is not one to be outdone by the elements, so he made do with his semi-tent for night one. Needless to say, the rest of the group weren't wringing out their sleeping bags the next morning!

Capt Carpenter (Intelligence Corps!)
Prior planning and what was it...?

Day Two: Sunday was a day for early risers, nobody had slept much the night before and we were all up early to find a 'fresh' gale force Easterly blowing with some rain to match. We had a hearty breakfast and decided today was no day for the mountains. We made a trip across the bridge to pick up our interpreter and last member of the team **Sgt Jimmy Fox**. On return to Skye we found that the weather conditions hadn't improved and the prospect of another night near the arctic wasn't appealing. It was at this point that we decided to review our options and came up with a couple of mobile homes for the same price as the campsites. The campsite was stripped and we were on the road within five minutes. The lovely **Mrs Campbell** welcomed us with open arms and a gas fire, so we made our new camp at Uig.

Day Three: The third day saw a break in the weather, although still very windy, the rain had cleared. We all dusted off our walking boots and set about getting ready. We were dropped off at a car park near Maoladh More at the start of the Trotternish Ridge and set off to the summit of Meall na Suiramach (543m). With the summit photo taken we quickly descended into the bowl of Coire Mhic Eachainh and contoured around the shoulder of Srou Vourlinn to an area called the Quiraing, an interesting area of rock formations. After some dinner and a skimming competition on Loch Harsco we headed for the pick up at a village called Brogaig, the minibus was a welcome sight.

Exercise Skye Finn
(L-R): LCpl Waites, Sgt Jackson, 2Lt McClelland, LCpl Liddle, and Sgt Fox (kneeling)

Day Four: The group was smaller for today's walk with some people suffering from blisters; we set off from Glen Conon Farm and headed up a soggy path for about two and a half miles to the edge of the Trotternish Ridge on the shoulder of Beinn Edra. The path was only soggy for the people who didn't have any gaiters; (the 'coach' did, but forgot to get any for the group from the stores, and it was never forgotten). After another 2km of false summits we reached the top (611m). As the weather closed in we had one last glimpse of the fantastic scenery before we were 'hood up and head down' into the rain. The highlight of the day was still to come with **Sgt Jimmy Fox** making a stinger of a chilli; he exceeded the recommended dose of two chillies and put in a gut wrenching TEN! A contender for 'Can't Cook Won't Cook' if ever I saw one.

Day Five: Low cloud hampered any ascent today so we headed for Broadford and a low-level walk around Loch Eishort. The walk started on the Broadford to Torrin road and was immediately contoured around Ben Suardal and followed a boggy path down to the coast where we found the ruins of a village at Boreraig. The rest of the walk was spent along the coastline with some spectacular views of the mountains. As we neared the pick up we were met by the sight of the Mountain Rescue helicopter reminding us that today was not a day for the hills.

Day Six: With the sun out, today was a day for tackling the 'Storr'. We were dropped off at Keistle and followed a long winding river for about 4kms until we came to a waterfall which signalled a distinct change in the steepness of the climb. We stopped for a view before starting the final 300m ascent to the summit (719m). Once on the top the views were amazing; no cloud and barely enough wind to ruffle your hair. We did lunch on the top and made our way down through some crags to the 'Old Man of Storr'. The walk off was steady, weaving through a forest to the pick up. We decided to dine out in style at the Flodigarry Hotel before wearily heading back.

Day Seven: Today's route had all the potential to be a lung burster and did not disappoint. We were dropped off at the Sligachan Hotel and headed across moors to the base of Sgurr Mhair, an amazing mountain that rises 775m out of the ground in just over 2km. After tea and doughnuts provided by the 'coach', we set off in single file to the summit. It was definitely every man for himself and was so steep there was hardly anywhere to take a break. The steepness of the hill accompanied with the scree made it one of the most difficult ascents we had ever done. At the summit we were rewarded with fantastic views of the infamous 'Black Cuillons' and the rest of the Red Hills. After going along the ridge to An Coileach, we descended off the hill to the north down a dried up watercourse. **Sgt Jimmy Fox** even claiming to save the coach's life at one point, he had no witness though! After reaching the Sconser Lodge Hotel we found we were 6kms from the pick up, but in true marine style **Capt Carpenter** set out to bring the minibus to us by running all the way to it then directing it back to the weary walkers.

Day Eight: The final day was the 'grand finale'. We were dropped off near Torrin and the whole group set off up a windy path and a lot of steep scree slopes to the summit of Bla Bheinn, a monster of a mountain standing at 928m. The climb was longer than the previous day but slightly easier and once again we were rewarded with fine views of the summit. After a great week walking we celebrated with an outstanding Indian Meal in Portree washed down with some Champagne and a few beers.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON 40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

In mid-July 1999 it was decided that 233 Sig Sqn should hold a function in order to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the formation of the Unit. In order to organise the event, a 'small' committee of volunteers was formed, and the initial preparation started. From the initial concept by OC, 233 Sig Sqn, it had been decided that this function would need to be a little bit special, given that as well as being an anniversary celebration, it was also to be a combined Summer and Christmas function - in short, a spectacular! The first problem faced was the choice of venue; given the large numbers in the Squadron the anticipated attendance was somewhere in the region of 200, so the choice of location was a major factor. There proved to be nowhere large enough to stage the event within Thiepval Barracks so it was decided to go 'outside the wire'. Moving to a outside venue in Northern Ireland had obvious security and logistical implications, but the ideal spot was soon discovered in Belfast and the organisation for the event shifted up a gear!

The date was set as 1 October 1999 and as the event drew nearer, numbers of those attending fluctuated almost daily. By late September, all the organisation and final details were set in place, and all that remained to be done was to enjoy the evenings celebrations - that is until on the morning of the event, when one of the four 52 seater coaches that had been booked was declared not to be roadworthy. Not a major problem you might think, but given the distance from Lisburn to Belfast and the tight evening schedule, a shuttle service was not practical. For the next couple of hours, conversation within India Tp was heavily loaded with expletives (apologises to the 2IC if she heard them!) but by 1300hrs and after calling in numerous favours, a replacement coach was found and the event was back on the road, - literally! By 2000hrs all those attending, including the CO, had arrived, and after the initial welcome speeches, the celebrations started. As well as being well fed and watered, the guests were entertained by a live 4-piece band (anonymous but brilliant!) a stand-up comedian (anonymous, fat and brilliant!) and the SSM's dancing during the disco (NOT anonymous - **WO2 Rob Dunseith** - not QUITE as fat - and definitely NOT as brilliant!). By the way Sir, it is OK for men to dance with each other.... Isn't it? Sadly, due to licensing restrictions at the venue, the evening drew to a premature close and the guests departed for Lisburn.

The feedback from the Officers, Soldiers and civilians within 233 Sig Sqn with regard to the evening was that everyone had thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and the 40th Anniversary of 233 Sig Sqn had been celebrated in fine style. Thanks should be extended to the committee members; **SSgt Flo Jarvis, Sgt Mick Stoneman** and **Sgt Billy Fagan** for ensuring that both the organisation and the evening itself ran smoothly.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

As 2IC for the largest non-independent Squadron in the Corps, I feel in quite a good position to assure the reader that the last six weeks have been busy to say the least. The silly season normally begins in December, not for our Squadron. The first 'hot potato' to juggle was the formation of the Network Control Centre (NCC). The original date for this was 1 June 2000, which sounded a long way off so not as to get flustered about it - but no - the message came down that the NCC was to be up and running by 01 Dec 99 - was that a problem? **Capt Guy Benson** new OC NCC Tp quickly sprang into action and with literal round the clock work from all the Troops and in particular some very diligent Tele Mechs and Techs and long weekends, the NCC is now on green. The sea of screens and digitisation is an impressive sight and I am sure with one Captain, three WO1s and one WO2 leading the way, that it will run with extreme efficiency. During the same period the Squadron was preparing for their IIP Accreditation, with 220 soldiers and civilians, this was not an easy task. Although much was already in place more emphasis was placed on evaluation and formal interviews. All of this produced endless paperwork and very extended working hours with the introduction of individual IIP files and a Personal Development Record - but all was not in vain as the Regiment gained their well-deserved IIP Accreditation on 11 November 1999.

But there was more - the Forward Repair Teams under the command of TM Tp were to be moved under the permanent control of the Brigades - again another major increase in the workload to ensure that this move went smoothly and no soldier lost out. As if this was not enough, it was decided that the Squadron was now getting too large to manage with the increased manpower and responsibilities, hence the COMMCEN and the Operator Assistance Cells would be moved across to HQ Sqn. Again every effort was made to complete this move with the minimum amount of fuss and the maximum amount of assistance to HQ Sqn. Just to add a little more to the boiling pot, the SQMS was running around cajoling and coercing in preparation for the PRE, a major data system went live and to top it all the SSM was preparing for his civilian H&S exams. Not bad for a mere six weeks - as I am about to start on a two and a half year Sabbatical in Brunei. I can only say Good Luck to **Capt Bels Taylor** who takes over in February 2000 - easy life with only 160 in the Squadron and no Tp Comd jobs to juggle as well - and thank you to **Capt Gareth Oliver** who oh so willingly agreed to stand the gap - here's to a quiet December!

This year's Mercury Cup March and Shoot Competition reinforced what a high standard of fitness and determination there is at present throughout all the Brigade areas in the Province. Organised by 8 Bde this annual event took place up at Magilligan, home of 5 Royal Irish. The day took the shape of a 5-mile March followed by a timed 100m sprint and falling plate shoot. HQ Sqn set the early pace coming in at a respectable 57mins and with the shoot only taking 33.3secs from start to finish they were the team to beat. Up stepped 233 Sig Sqn who came in at a blistering 55mins, a time which remained unbeaten, but with a time of 33.7secs for the Shoot, HQ Sqn were in 1st place and 233 Sqn in 3rd. But 55 mins in the march for 233 proved untouchable and they took 1st leaving HQ in 3rd. So with HQ Sqn 3rd in the March and leading the shoot and 233 1st in the March and 3rd in the Shoot both teams came head to head for a shoot off to decide who would take this year's Cup. HQ were the first to the firing point but a collection of calm nerves and sharp shooting ensured 233 Sig Sqn took the victory hitting the last plate a heart stopping half a second before HQ Sqn. The winning team consisted of **Capt Colin Kell, Capt Jules McColl, SSgt Rob Allen, SSgt Icky Grattrick, Sgt** 'Hutch' **Hutchinson, Sgt** 'Taff' **Davies, Cpl Richardson, LCpl Burrows** and of the eight winning team members, six were recruited from Romeo Tp.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

Once again I must start with the usual hellos and good-byes to certain members of our Troop. First of all welcome to our newest sprogs in town who are hanging up their line belts after a long arduous course to become real men at work, **LCpl Mick Partridge** and **Cpl Mick** 'Ricki' **Lake**. Our recent escapees include **Sgt Dave Kilgallon** who is disappearing into the dark side of life (225). We are sure that those long legs of his will help him to survive dark realm. FRTS, well what more can I say except good-luck in the Brigade life. Off to civvy street goes ex-**LCpl** 'Nessy' **Nessling** and we wish him and his family all the best for the future. Congratulations also goes out to **Sgt** 'Pain Gain' **Watts** for surviving through the most horrific course known to man. The Troop as a whole has been heavily involved in a major undertaking to move The Network Control Centre from India troop and Comms Ops from HQ Squadron to combine the two to form 233's newest Troop. The Training wing was selected as the Bone shell ready for the installation of Red and Black comms. The NCC was to be operational by the 1 December 1999 and it was now the 8 November 1999, three weeks from the deadline, thus, some hard work ahead of us. The location still a bone shell within two weeks of the finishing date meant a lot of overtime and weekends and a pile of Province jobs outstanding, but TM Troop being TM Troop, this was not a problem. **Cpl Al** 'GOD MECH' **Walsh** was the guiding light for all the junior members of the Troop even though he was not the guiding light in his wife's eyes due to the work commitments. To end on a good note, about the major move, it was completed and up and running on the 28 November 1999.

ROMEO TROOP

Romeo Tp has at least started to see some postings in and out, although it seems like the ins are a bit slower than the outs. Over the past weeks and months we have said farewell to **Sgt 'Polly' Perkins** to 14 Sigs (one wet windy location to another). Another farewell was said to **Cpl** 'Dobbo' **Dobson** who received a short notice posting to Blandford, unfortunately 'Dobbo' spent that long on sick leave that nobody noticed that he had gone apart from the RSM, who always notices people with sideburns of 'Dobbo's' proportions. As we write this we also say farewell to **Sgt Barney** 'I finished my can' **Barnfield** and family. He will be greatly missed both in and out of work and we wish them all the very best in York. On the arrivals side we welcome **Cpl** 'Faz' **Farrington** and another **Cpl 'Loggy' Wright** to the Troop, both seeming to be settling in extremely well. The Troop remains busy both at work and at play, none more so than **Cpl Wright** (Old Breed) who so far this month has become a married man, an expectant father and has written off his prized car, not necessarily in that order. We all hope that December will be a little less busy for you Wrighty.

On the social front it fell to Romeo Tp to organise the latest Sqn function in the form of a quiz night, the coffers could not stretch to 'Who wants to be a Millionaire?' however, 'Who wants to win a crate of beer?' seemed to be the next best option. The quiz night hosted by 'Dobbo' complete with blonde wig but minus sideburns proved to be a great success, thanks largely to the efforts of **Sgt** 'Hutch' **Hutchinson, Sgt Trefor Davies** and all those who helped. On the work front we continue to prepare plans for all eventualities of the peace process interspersed with preparations for the big Millennium event, all techs have been cordially invited to the big bash at work (don't bother to bring a bottle!).

COMMCEN TROOP - *by Sig Tracey Walker*

Firstly, welcome to the new members of the Troop, **SSgt** 'Icky' **Gratrick, Sgt** 'I'm the boss' **Newman** and **LCpl** 'Nicky' **Bird** who all recently joined us from the wonderful 30 Sigs. Also Hi! to **LCpl Nathan** 'I'll teach the young lads how, or should I say what, to drink' **Hadley** who joined us from the 'Elite' Aldershot. Sadly, we shall have to say Goodbye to a few older members of the Troop who are all back off to school to re-trade. Goodbye, to **Sgt** 'I should be a model' **Anderson, LCpl** 'Matty' **Matthews, LCpl** 'Tanya' **Webb** and **Cpl Scouse** 'I am a God' **Lloyd**. Goodbyes also go out to **Sig Jenny** 'Gym Queen' **Read, Sig Matthew** 'Do my biceps look big in this vest' **Simpson** and **Sig** 'Matt' **Green** who will be leaving the Troop for their new units sometime soon. Also goodbye to **Claire Lydon** who has recently left for Civ Div to have a baby. Whilst on the topic of babies, congratulations to **Sig** 'Matt' **Green**

and his wife **Tracey** on the recent birth of their beautiful little girl **Imogen**.

Congratulations on all the promotions in the Troop: **Cpl** 'AJ' **Peters, Cpl** 'Richie' **Evans** and **Cpl** 'Glo' **Fagan** who were all recently promoted. Congratulations to **Sig's** 'Matt' **Green,** 'Matty' **Matthews, Tanya Webb** and **Tracey Walker** on receiving their first stripe. Sadly the time has come for COMMCEN Troop to depart for 233 Sig Sqn, making way for **Capt Guy Benson**'s 'new' NCC Troop, but not all is lost, as we now have a new start in HQ Sqn where I'm sure COMMCEN Tp will work and 'play' just as hard.

40TH (ULSTER) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col A. P. R. Roberts MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) C. G. McGinley**

Belated congratulations to **WO1 Skinner** who was commissioned in September of this year and a warm welcome at long last to **2Lt John Black** who successfully passed his TA Commissioning Board in December. We all look forward (especially the RSM) to them serving their time as Probationary Second Lieutenants !

66 (CITY OF BELFAST) SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj R. Butler**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Irvine**

EXERCISE GERBHOYS FINN IV

Ex Gerbhoys Finn IV was the Squadron's summer adventurous training which took place in the north of the province in and around Colraine. The activities on offer included canoeing, orienteering, horse riding and the odd mystery event which ensured that a good time was had by all. Thanks must go to **SSgt** 'Chicken Legs' **McClean** who not only organised the weekend but provided some excellent canoe instruction as well.

EXERCISE DRIVE ALIVE

As ever 66 Sig Sqn (V) took part in Ex Drive Alive which is the annual Northern Ireland Road Safety and Skilled Driving Competition which this year was held at RAF Aldergrove. Competition was once again fierce and out of the original 34 teams only 11 of which we were one went forward to the final round of events. The final six stands included a theory test, a road safety survey and a ROSPA assessment aimed at improving drivers attitude and proficiency. The team came away with a silver award and **Cpl** 'Flash' **Gordon, LCpl** 'Smiler' **Colwell** and **Sig** 'Ribs' **McKeown** are all congratulated on their superb effort.

The successful 1999 Drive Alive team

Finally, congratulations to the OC and his wife **Susan** on the arrival of their latest family member. Sir, we hope to see you in a few months!

69 (NORTH IRISH HORSE) SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj W. B. Houston**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) McKnight**

EXERCISE COSSACK EXPRESS 1999

Ex Cossack Express took place in the Ukraine during October 1999 and was The Royal Irish Rangers annual camp. The exercise was one of many that take place as part of the Government's Defence Diplomacy Programme. The Rangers asked 40 Sig Regt (V) to provide six HF operators to enhance their Signal Platoon. The Regiment provided a total of seven volunteers with six coming from 69 Sig Sqn (V) and one from 66 Sig Sqn (V). Those taking part in the exercise completed some pre-deployment training in late August with the Battalion and departed Beifast for Lvivi in Northwest Ukraine on 18 September 1999. After a typical Ukrainian coach journey from the airport to our camp near the Polish border we spent the first couple of days undertaking some familiarisation training. This was followed by the mixed Signal Platoon providing communications for a variety of ranges and a three day FTX. The exercise was a complete success and this was aptly displayed in the final three day exercise where everyone pulled together to create an effective and coherent battlegroup.

Ex Cossack Express '99
Back Row: Sig Curry, Cpl Ritchie, WO2 Lyle, SSgt Wolfe (66 Sqn)
Front Row: Sig Dickson, Sig McQuillan, LCpl Ritchie

85 (ULSTER AND ANTRIM ARTILLERY) SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj M. Fraser-Brenchley**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Hedley**

Its all change at the top as they say. A very big Bangor welcome to **Maj Mike Fraser-Brenchley** who has recently taken over as OC and is splitting his time between us and QUOTC. A warm welcome is also extended to **WO2 Hedley** who takes over as SSM. The Squadron bid a fond and tearful farewell to **Maj Cathy Sutherland** and **WO2 (SSM) Brotherston. Maj Sutherland** leaves us to take up an FTRS post at Worthy Down which apparently she took to like a duck to water! Meanwhile the old SSM leaves us on promotion to WO1 and takes over as SVWO. Thank you both for all your efforts.

VISIT OF SOinC (A)

As part of his visit to the Province in October 1999 the SOinC kindly agreed to re-open Bangor TA Centre which the Sqn had recently moved into as a result of SDR. The evening was a complete success with the Squadron hosting the SOinC in true N Ireland style much to the disapproval of the Adjt who eventually managed to persuade the SOinC to leave some 90 minutes late!

The SOinC unveiling a plaque
to commemorate the re-opening of Bangor TA Centre

8TH INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

Sqn Comd **Maj Jake Thackray**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Paul Fleming**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS - *by Pte Carrie Cumming*

For once it has been a relatively quiet period for SHQ. The Chief Clerk **SSgt** 'Karaoke King' **Hughes**, has been away for over a month on leave and his EFP 2, which has left **Sgt Andy** 'I'm God' **Snowdin** to play Chief Clerk. Another of our admin heroes, **LCpl Roy** 'Been there, done that' **Banyard** has also been away on leave and courses. He is now attempting his JQC which we are, he is, positive he will pass. Before leaving for Worthy Down we found out that **LCpl Banyard** has been secretly writing to a nurse via *Soldier* Magazine. **LCpl Banyard** and his new found love have never met, but whilst he is at Worthy Down, he will be rendezvousing with her in Portsmouth. All we can say is good luck!!

A very sad farewell to the Squadron 2IC, **Capt Dave Seymour**, and his wife **Ely** who are abandoning us for a new life in civilian street. Thank you from the whole Squadron for all your hard work I'm sure the Ops Plans team will miss you. A big welcome to the new 2IC, **Capt Gareth Lamb,** who has arrived from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. Also new in SHQ is **Cpl Tom** 'Penfold' **Stewart** who is a welcome arrival in the Training Wing. Congratulations to the OC, **Maj Jake Thackray** for being selected for promotion, rumour has it that he actually bought a round in the bar! Finally all military staff of SHQ would like to thank the Movements Clerk, **Susan Cuthbert** (thanks for changing my flight tickets again and again and again) and typist **Lesley** 'Cor he's a babe' **Lyttle** for their dedication and hard work throughout the year.

REGIMENTAL QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT
by LCpl Michael May
RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Kev Tunstall**

The department would like to say a sad farewell to **CSgt Ned Kelly** whose dedication and hard work for the past five years will be sadly missed. His talents will be especially missed by **LCpl** 'Shilly 'I'm not stressed' **Shillito**. We would like to say farewell and good luck to **LCpl Dave** 'Smiley' **Wardle** who is posted to the sunshine holiday camp of Cyprus. **WO2 (RQMS) Kev Tunstall** has put the A-team to shame, with his quick thinking and his deft use of a team of merry workers to organise the Combined Services Entertainment show at short notice (eat your heart out A-team). Not forgetting **Sig Fowler** who has now got the best bulled boots in the Brigade. I wonder why? **Sgt** 'Billy Joel' **Porter** has been busy singing to himself all around the golf course (watch out Tiger Woods!) On a further note, congratulations to **Sgt** 'Noah' **Duncan** and his sidekick **Pte** 'Snake Charmer' **Morris** for finally collecting more exotic animals than the Ark, lets hope it does not rain. A big thank you to **Cpl** 'Lily Savage' **North** for his hard work and leadership skills on the Mercury Cup competition. Welcome back to **LCpl May** after his short stint at Headley 'its a doddle' Court. He is a lot fitter and wiser thanks to all the staff that work there. Also congratulations to him as he has just come off the board. **LCpl** 'X' **Rattray** has finally escaped from Alcatraz, sorry the PRI Shop, and has been replaced by **Pte** 'Lord Lucan' **Wilson.** Good luck, you will need it!

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP
by Sig Chris Yarnall and Sig 'Sid' Sidorowicz
Tp Comd **Lt Jo Stewart**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Tony Taylor**

The last few months have been busy for both Operator and Engineering sections; there have been a few new arrivals, a couple of departures and a lot of planning. Welcome to **LCpl** 'Insert funny name' **Hodgson** who arrived from 3 Div, **Sig Peter Creith** straight from training and **LCpl Craig** 'I have a Jimmy tattoo on my left arm' **Law** from 1 Div. Welcome also to **Sig Chris Howell** and **LCpl Steve Binks**. A special welcome to the four members of 15 Sig Regt FRT, **Sgt Martin Bowkett, Cpl Steph Sabuda, Cpl** 'Omagh' **Walshe** and **LCpl Mike Garry** who are joining the Squadron and transforming into SRTs. Unfortunately the Syscon have just lost one of its longer serving members, **LCpl Ronnie** 'But' **Cuthbert**, who is deserting us to join 604 Sig Tp. Apparently they will be installing a few COUGAR talk-throughs in his new depot just to make him feel at home. Earlier we mentioned the immense amount of planning being undertaken by the Squadron; planning which is not for the forthcoming Lundy Parade, but is for the numerous Squadron and Troop Christmas functions. However, life in the Syscon is still full of mystery as ever thanks to the excellent planning by **Cpl Colin McGregor** when he does the Syscon shift rotas. Congratulations to **Sig Danni Critchlow, Sig Dave** 'Trigger' **Bateman, Sig** 'Geordie' **Fearon, Sig Kelly McCulloch, Sig Carl Stephenson, Sig Phil Parish** on getting their promotion to Lance Corporal and a double well done to **Sig Andy Gibson** who not only came off the board but has just had a wee nipper.

MY ATTACHMENT - *by 2Lt 'Blaykie' Morris*

I was told during my last few weeks of Sandhurst that I would be going to Northern Ireland for my pre Troop Commanders attachment. It was a week later that I found out that I was lucky enough, or so I was reliably informed by my CSgt, to be spending my time in Londonderry. After a massive 24hrs leave I arrived in Northern Ireland still recovering from the Commissioning Ball. I arrived in the barracks at about nine o'clock at night and was surprised how quiet it was. However, it did not take me long to find **Lt Jo Stewart**, who had organised my attachment.

The first week was filled with trying to find my way around barracks and find exactly where I had to be, when and with whom. Luckily my first weekend in Province coincided with the Apprentice Boys' parades in Londonderry. It was fascinating to see operations in Northern Ireland first hand and especially the Squadron at work. I then went to do my Northern Ireland Reinforcement Course (NIRTT). This was split into two different parts. Firstly phase one, which is basically three and a half days in a classroom watching power point presentations on security matters and the history of the troubles. Phase two is primarily for the infantry, to prepare them for patrolling. As I would be joining the R IRISH for a few days I also attended phase two. This was more practical and gave us the opportunity to get out of the classroom and on to the training area. After NIRTT it was time to get down to the real bones of my attachment. It soon became apparent that **Lt Jo Stewart** had planned things so that I would be kept busy the entire time. So much for relaxing after Sandhurst. After covering all the set training objectives I spent two days with the resident ATO. Here I was under the careful supervision of **Capt Chris Driver-Williams** and his able team. I was given the chance to try on and use some of the equipment which is a lot heavier than it looks and to go on the ground for a short period. We then practised some boat drills on the River Foyle which was a very bruising experience and then a quick fly over the AOR in a Puma helicopter courtesy of the RAF. I was lucky enough to see many other parts of the Province, whether it was to Omagh on a JOTES education course, out and about with teams or while I was on attachment to 3 Brigade Signal Squadron. It was during my visit to Portadown that I went on my first patrol. My 'guardians' for this experience were 3 R IRISH. My time with them was split between foot and mobile patrols in the Lurgan area. We were also meant to do some VCPs by helicopter, however, the RAF proved less reliable than they had been up to this point and after a three hour wait word finally came through that it was cancelled.

It was not all work, work, work. I was fortunate enough to spend a week adventure training in Scotland. This was a fantastic few days hiking, climbing, cycling and white-water rafting. I seemed to spend the majority of my time during the rafting under water and ended up running a few kilometres of the cycling. It was organised very professionally by the RQMS and his instructors. They were also able to successfully organise getting me very merry! Although I enjoyed all that I did on my attachment the part that I enjoyed most was deploying with the various repair teams. Some of the teams may think I was an unlucky charm as on almost all of the tasks I went on, the easy small jobs we started on ended up being mammoth tasks that took hours. My record was 15 hours!! Despite the long hours I thoroughly enjoyed myself during these adventures and have the utmost respect for the technicians and riggers that deploy at all times of the day and night. I attempted to give my advice such as 'look those lights are flashing again' or 'should that really be doing that?' much to the amusement of the technicians. I also attempted to help the riggers. However, having a bad head for heights, the amount of help you can actually give at six feet off the ground when they are at 50ft is very limited. I have gained a great deal of experience during my time in Province and I am grateful to all those who have kept a watchful eye over me. A big thank you to those who let me tag along and to those who took time to organise things for me. The only thing that remains for me to ask is when do I get to come back? And can I have some leave now please?

EXERCISE HIGHLAND DRIVE 4-20 NOVEMBER 1999
by LCpl Nathan Reed and LCpl Andy Green

Exercise Highland Drive is an exercise that is organised twice a year in order to get members of the Brigade away to sit and pass different driving categories. It is an excellent opportunity for personnel to obtain new driving skills in a relaxed atmosphere outside of Northern Ireland. The exercise is spilt into two phases with different students attending each week. The advance party left on 4 November and headed to HMS *Gannet* in Scotland. The next day they drove to Newcastle to collect the coach but after the four hour journey they were told the coach was unavailable! The instructors for the exercise were **Cpl Lee Taylor** instructing Cat A, **LCpl Andy Green** instructing Cat B, **Cpl Dave Rabbage** instructing Cat C and **LCpl Amanda Rowland** instructing Cat D.

The following students attended Week 1: **Pte Mark Fryer, Pte Mo Morris** and **Sig Kelly McCulloch** for Cat B, **Sgt Andy Winnett** and **Sig Carl Stephenson** for Cat C, **Sgt Scott Pringle, Sgt** 'Stan' **Stanley, Pte** 'Larry' **Loughton** and **Sig Lee Fearon** for Cat D and **LCpl Nathan Reed, LCpl** 'Woody' **Woods, LCpl** 'Sticky' **Bunn** and **Spr** 'Mac' **McKrindle** for Cat A. Group 1 students departed for HMS *Gannet* a day after the advance party and arrived just as the 'busless' instructors returned from Newcastle. We settled into the local community well by finding all the

watering holes mixing with the locals. On Sunday the instructors carried out familiarisation with the vehicles except for **LCpl Amanda Rowland** because she still had no bus.

The week's training went well, but only after a second trip to Newcastle, this time getting a bus. The first two days were confidence riding or driving and learning the manoeuvres for examples U-turns and emergency stops. Towards the end of the week the training became more intensive and we covered what would be expected of us in the various tests. The instructors seemed more than happy with most of our performances. On Thursday 11 November the examiners arrived and luckily nearly all the students were successful. Due to the success rate on test day everyone went out on the town and had some celebratory drinks. On Friday 12 November Week 1 students departed and Week 2 students arrived **WO2** 'Geordie' **Potts, LCpl Mark Toogood** and **Pte** 'Larry' **Loughton** for Cat A, **LCpl Holly Glen** and **LCpl Scott Taylor** for Cat B, **Sgt Dave Forrest, Sgt** 'Aide' **Duplock, Pte** 'Gaz' **Thomas** and **Sig Dave Bateman** for Cat C and **LCpl** 'Mac' **McCall, Pte Jason Philcock** and **Sig** 'Smudge' **Smith** for Cat D.

There were a few minor disasters in the second week. Firstly **Pte** 'Larry' **Loughton** came off the only bike we had damaging it but luckily not himself. Secondly **LCpl** 'Mac' **McCall** tried to wipe out every mirror he could in Prestwick and Ayr. However, after these initial problems it was a very successful second week with all students passing. Friday 19 November was the last day and the bus was returned to Newcastle and we all headed back to Northern Ireland. The Exercise was both enjoyable and successful and the pass rate only gets better thanks to the professional instructors. A special thanks to the Exercise IC, **Cpl Dave Rabbage** for all his hard work and effort and also to the three DDE's **WO2 (Master Driver)** 'Si' **Bean, WO2 (MTWO) Tom Hair** and **Sgt Stanley** who came over to carry out the testing of the students on both weeks.

LCpl Green reprimands Pte Fryer for a poor manoeuvre

Highland Drive Group Photograph Week 1

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1ST (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS & SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col E. M. Flint**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Chris Hymas**

A sad farewell to the Adjutant, **Capt Sharon Nesmith** nee **Moffat** who will be leaving the Corp's best behaved Subbies to the Adjutant, **Capt David Worden**.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj G. Douglas MBE**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Mick Flemming**

QUARTERMASTERS DEPARTMENT
QM **Maj Dave Rennie** AAC
RQMS **WO2 Martin Walsh**

The Department has recently witnessed a significant change around these last two months, with the arrival of the new QM, a new RQMS and a new SQMS though thankfully not all on the same day. Life therefore has been somewhat hectic, though the dept has managed to continue carrying out all its usual Q type tasks and many more besides under the watchful eye of **WO2 (RQMS) Craig Kearney**. Incidentally, with the early arrival of the new RQ, **WO2 Kearney** is keen to point out that the RQ's slot is in fact now a fully established Para trained post. As a result of the recent influx of new personnel, the Department would like to welcome the following people. Firstly the Quartermaster, **Maj Dave Rennie** AAC and wife **Sarah, WO2 (RQMS)** 'Scouse' **Walsh** and wife **Linda** just in from the Mediterranean and last but not least **SSgt Andy Jones** and wife **Heike**, all the way from across the road from the Regt Trg Wing. Farewells then to the old QM, **Maj Bill Hewett** and family, **SSgt Jimmy Burns** who leaves to become an estate warden and a fond farewell (though not for a while...Sssh!) to **WO2 (RQMS) Craig Kearney** and wife **Maria** who is leaving us on promotion to WO1 and a post slightly nearer to that ferry terminal.

SQUADRON ADVENTURE TRAINING
By WO2 (SSM) Mick Flemming

The Squadron recently conducted a period of adventure training based at the REME lodge in Gunzesried Sage, Sonthofen in Bavaria. The programme included a three-day introductory period of Trekking, canoeing and climbing culminating in a two-day period of extreme pursuits, which comprised of canyoning and tubing. The weather throughout the period changed from sun and factor 10 to snow and minus 10. For the uninitiated canyoning is basically navigating a river gorge and its obstacles by abseiling down waterfalls, sliding down rapids and the odd

death slide or two. The eye opener of the whole process involved a simple leap of approximately 10metres into the water. Simple other than for the fact that the leap was the equivalent of jumping out of your top floor window into a Hoover twin tub on spin, it's October in Bavaria and the water was rising because of the melting snow on the mountains.

Your job can't be all that bad!

The results were the topic of conversation for some time, in particular the near perfect demonstration by **SSgt** 'Spike' **Haynes** of how to do it. His chest leading entry caused all watching to first exhale and then cheer in unison as he floated to the surface. His thumbs up sign to the next man convinced no one, particularly as next man happened to be me. Throughout the other activities a number of stars (quite literally) also emerged. **Cpl** 'Pils' **Lamont** defying logic by completing the capsize drill without getting his hair wet and refusing to believe that he could not regain the standing position having fallen on water skis. **LCpl Emms** of the LAD decided to leave his mountain bike on one side of the barbed wire fence whilst he went though it; His helmet saving the day. **Sgt Al Holcroft's** theatrical performance of 'Billy don't be a hero' in the flying Scotsman would be impossible to forget even with counselling. The period concluded for the lucky few with a trip to Austria for a spot of downhill skiing. Fully equipped by the REME lodge we headed south. The sight of a group all dressed in matching REME coloured ski kit raised a few eyebrows but we quickly blagged our way into the Albanian ski team training session. An act which was more convincing whilst seated at the bar during the après ski than whilst on the piste. Overall the two weeks went extremely well with too many accounts to recall. We are all looking forward to next year.

(L-R): SSgt 'Ginge' Morgan, WO2 (SSM) Mick Fleming, Sig Frank Nash, LCpl 'Woody' Wood, LCpl Thompson and SSgt Neil McKenzie

201 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Colin Lawrence**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Kev Simmons**

EAGLE TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Michelle Hanlon**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Gaz Davies**

After a relaxed summer, came the gradual onset of dark nights and cold mornings. This as all soldiers know brings leaves, thousands of them! So it was out with the brushes and Signallers to clear them up. Falling equally fast upon us were the exercises. The first of these was Ex Ulan Eagle a three week static exercise situated in the picturesque holiday resort of Drawsko Pomorskie. Afterwards there was time for a quick cup of tea before we deployed on Ex Rhino Charge in sunny Sennelager. The only highlight of this exercise was the sight of **Sgt Gerry McGachy** sobbing into his thermos mug, as Scotland's 'finest' were given the hammering they truly deserve. The exercise season draws to a close with Ex Musket Diamond, situated yet again at the well known training area Sennelager. It covers a period of two weeks, which enables the squadron to practise their shooting skills.

Congratulations go out to **Sigs Burnip, Doran, Hulbert, Legg** and **Smith 240** for coming off the Sig - LCpl promotion board. We shouldn't be short of a beer or two! We welcome into the troop **SSgt Davies** and his wife **Beverly** and their daughters **Jodie** and **Catherine** who join us from 7 Sig Regt. The Troop bids farewell to **Sig Matt Hulbert** who will gain his Lance Corporal on arrival at 16 Sig Regt.

On a final note, **Sig Marc Ridgwell** has just discovered it is not a good idea to hit a wall, mount the kerb and dig up the grass outside the RSM's office. Did they teach you that at Blandford?

KESTREL TROOP IN POLAND
Tp Comd **2Lt Allen Foote**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'China' **Cooper**

This year's Ex Ulan Eagle saw Kestrel Tp providing most of the Squadron's manpower which meant that we were kept very busy trying to get all the dets ready and sort out all the crewing and manning. After a hectic time it was done. Once we completed the long tiring drive to Poland we set about setting up the comms and getting **SSgt** 'China' **Cooper**'s defence perimeter of barbed wire set up which saw a few cuts and raised voices in the process. **LCpl** 'Under the thumb' **Plumb** deployed out with 7 Armd Bde and while we were static for the whole exercise, he managed to move location more times than a Kosovan refugee. Our resident lineman **Cpl** 'Just popping out for 1 or 2' **Whitehead** used all of his remaining brain cells to good use in entertaining us by attempting to dry his softy jacket on a kero heater, with it promptly going up in a nice smoking mess, leaving him that little bit colder on those warm nights! With **Cpl Steve** 'What's green kit' **Pengelly** posted to 11 Sigs, and **Cpl** 'Blacky' **Blacklock** to the armoured puffs, it was decided to have the Troop Christmas party a bit earlier, and what a party it was. DM 50 for all you could eat and drink and we did our very best to drink the place dry, from all the beer down to the spirits. This proved a problem for a few though, in the form of **Sig** 'Slug' **Gallagher** who had rather a few too many and retired to the toilet early on and appeared several hours later to be taken home by his new wife. As well as our new relay **Sig** 'Geordie (GBH)' **Bowes** who fell asleep at the table and was promptly turned into a human art piece with people drawing all over him leaving him covered. The highlight of the night was when the Tp PTI **Sig** '2 can Van-Damme' **Harrison** tried to teach everyone karate and promptly got put down himself. Also a big well done to the following who have come off the promotion board, **Sig Sean** 'poser' **Exile, Sig Rob** 'straight bloke' **Vickers Sig** 'Taff' **Lewis** and **LCpls** 'Smudge' **Smith** and **Andy Plumb** for the Corporal's Board. Farewell to **Cpl** 'Resettlement' **Mallows** of to civ div and welcome back to **LCpl** 'Dirty Dave' **Harkness** so get the beers in!

HAWK TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Angie Aylward**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Neil Pollitt**

This month the Troop undertook Ex Rhino Charge, in support of 7 Bde at Sennelager. Although the exercise was static and straightforward, the Troop still managed its fair share of mishaps. **Lt Angie Aylward** was of course the first, following in the long tradition of officers getting lost; she actually managed it in Sennelager! The soon departing **LCpl** 'Paddy' **Lynn** came up with the mother of all excuses for a mast falling over, ' could you believe it staff, a horse chewed through my guy rope'. No 'Paddy' we don't believe you! This month the Troop says goodbye to **LCpl Lynn** who got his wish and posting to 3 Div and the always hard working **Sig Daz Hodgson** who is moving to 16 Sigs. Hawk Troop also welcomes **Sgt Steve Davies**, who arrived with a somewhat conspicuous sporting injury, at least that's what he told the RSM.

212 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Capt Mark Purvis**
SSM **SSgt (SSM) Greenwood**

DSG TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt Stuart Gunson**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Aide Sims**

The Troop has had a couple of busy weeks on the exercise front, with the squadron build up exercise and Ex Rhino Charge. The Squadron exercise was a slow build up to Rhino Charge as it was the first time that most of the Troop had been out on exercise in this type of scenario. The first couple of days were spent ironing out most of the problems with the complex and letting those who hadn't seen the BFOT experience the joy of putting it up! The last part of the exercise was spent as a bomburst 36 hours with the panzers bombing around Sennelager training area moving into hides and eventually being attacked. It was a good chance for all to see where there strengths and weaknesses lay!

Rhino Charge started with all the panzers tracking down to Sennelager again and setting up in Sennelager, with only one wagon breaking down (the demolition derby team **Cpl** 'Mac' **McCallum** and **Sig Michele Bond**). After one new heat exchanger and a new pack they arrived in the complex two days late! The exercise for us was quiet after arriving, as we were static. The 'war' was due to finish on the Wednesday but eventually finished on the Tuesday morning (rumours of the staff wanting to get back for a dinner party are totally untrue!). We set off from Sennelager on Wednesday morning for Herford. Again all arrived home safely apart from the demoli-

tion derby team who decided they didn't like Ford cars and decided to drive straight over the top of three of them! On a final note congratulations go to 13 of the Troop who came off the Sig-LCpl Board, **Sigs** 'Baz' **Harvey**, **Dave Vakalala**, **Nat Roberts**, **Sharon Johns**, **Graham Curtis**, 'Fudge' **Rudge**, **Graham Opie**, **Lee Armitage**, **Andy Cunnington**, 'Ringo' **Wringe**, **Si Knight**, 'Buffy' **Bufton** and last but definitely note least 'Paddy' **Hayes**. Well done to all of you and the best for the future.

211 SIGNALS SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Julian R. C. Bunce**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Stan Kelly**

Welcome to **WO2 (SSM) Stan Kelly** who arrives from his part time job in Sheffield and a congratulations to **WO2 (SSM) Angus Palmer** who leaves the Squadron on Promotion to RSM of 14 Sig Regt.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt David Spencer**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Mick Poyning**

Comms Tp has been very busy lately, what with exercises and people arriving and leaving. Firstly, three weeks in Poland on Ex Ulan Eagle. The Exercise was a great success for the Troop and gave the newer members a good learning experience, as it was the first exercise the Troop had deployed on for a while. We had a few days back in camp before deploying to Sennelager for two weeks on Ex Rhino Charge. Although it was a bit quieter than Ulan Eagle it gave more valuable time for the younger members of the Troop to learn more about their jobs. We'd like to say hello to three members of the troop currently serving in Bosnia, **Sigs Sharon Osgood**, **John** 'The head' **Garrod** and 'Scotty' **Wilson**. Welcome to the Troop to **Cpl Rob Jones**, **Sig Eric Moran** and **2Lt David Spencer**. A sad farewell also to **Lt** 'Mikey' **Morton**, **SSgt John Leach** and **Sgt** 'Wilki' **Wilkinson**.

RADIO REBROADCAST TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Adam D. Shakespeare**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Deano Cox**

Rebro Tp's deployment on Ex Ulan Eagle started pretty much the same as everybody else's. On arrival the Troop was required to blanket the area with CNR for the 3-week period that 7 Bde would be exercising. As the three weeks passed so did every other unit on the area. Static communications, easy life! One thing that did not pass was **SSgt Deano** 'Are you going to eat that?' **Cox**'s stomach. No stationary object was safe from his appetite. During the exercise the shower runs were prompt along with the abundance of fresh rations. Our sympathies obviously went to all the lads at the hotel who were required to provide six people for guard at any one time. A burden that could have only have been made easier to swallow by the bar! There was a near death experience for **Sig** 'Johnny the mule' **Carroll** who nearly took a bite out of the commander's hatch of one of the armoured RRBs; The hatch wouldn't have stood much of a chance against those gnashers!

Cpl Trev Allan working on his suntan
for his GOC's commendation presentation

Congratulations to **Cpl Trev** 'My mobile doesn't work' **Allan** on his well earned GOC's commendation for services in Bosnia and for somehow perfecting the Jedi mind trick. A fond farewell to **Mr Dave Kirby**, good luck in civvy street. Also the best of luck to **Cpl** 'Dangerous Dave' **Wallace** who is posted to Blandford. Standby Blandford! The Troop would like to welcome and congratulate **Sig Kat** 'That's cute' **Price** on her arrival and promotion to Rebro Tp and to welcome **Sig** 'how many nicknames' **Hardy** and **Sig Em Opie**. Congratulations must go to **Sig Ford**, **Sig Kingshott**, **Sig Opie** on coming off the board and finally if anyone has found **Sig Al Booker** could they please return him to BFPO 15?

14 SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)
Sqn Comd **Maj Rob Meinertzhagen**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Dave Watson**

The Squadron has recently been readjusting itself with the return of the Kosovo warriors led by **Maj MZ**. The Squadron gave a final farewell to **WO1 (SSM) Al Jenkins** who leaves to take up his new post as RSM 21 Sig Regt. The Squadron wish you and your family all the very best and continued success in your new post. We are certain that the QM's Dept at 21 Sigs will process your demands for CCSOD without delay! The Squadron would like to welcome the new SSM, **WO2 Dave Watson** and **Lindsey** to the DISI fold, fresh from a punishing 13 months with the TA in Northern Ireland. The Squadron wish you both a happy and successful tour at Brawdy, (make sure you never leave the house without the Goretex!) The Squadron is now re-shaping itself in readiness for the arrival of LEWT in December and additional taskings and EW support to 16 Air Assault Bde in the New Year.

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS TROOP
Tp Comd **WO2 (FofS) Hew Phillips**
Tp SSgt **Sgt** (New!) **Daz Welch**

Yet another entertaining month in 'the busy' Troop. Firstly we would like to say good luck to **Cpl Roach** and **LCpl** 'Brum' **Brummfield** who are off to Kosovo for some R+R from Brawdy! Also welcome back to **LCpl Hardman** who returns from Kosovo. The Squadron went adventure training in Betws-y-Coed, 'so we still didn't manage to escape from Wales (Cheers!)' The SQMS, **Sgt** 'Titus' **Reene** organised the week and we would all like to thank him for a truly marvellous experience. The usual activities where on offer such as canoeing and mountain biking. During a break in the canoeing the guy's decided to do a bit of cliff-jumping, they found the biggest cliff possible but when the chips were down they bottled out, apart from **Sig** 'Lemming' **Lloyd** who happily volunteered to throw himself off the cliff. I guess that just proves ED's are brave, or was it stupid? I never could work it out. Two of our Troop members represented the Squadron in the Regimental Boxing competition. **LCpl** 'Nick' **Piff** put up a gallant fight but unluckily lost on points, on the other hand **LCpl** 'Greg' **Hardman** put in an amazing performance when he KO'd his opponent in the impressive time of just 52 seconds (I guess that just proves ED's are born to fight).

640 SIGNAL TROOP - *by LCpl 'Tinny' Foyle*
Tp Comd **Lt Ben White**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Frank Flaherty**

Only one new arrival into the Troop, A warm welcome to **Sig Steve Langhorne** who arrived straight from training in Blandford, and who I am assured is looking forward to his tour with 14 Sig Regt(EW). Goodbyes go to **Cpl** 'Mac' **MacDonald** who has been posted back to his homeland of bonny Scotland to Edinburgh Det of 11 EOD, and also so long and good luck to **LCpl Daz Wright** who is also off back to his homeland, but this time it's Canada, and the posting is Civ Div and the hope of lots of cash as a Microsoft Professional, (Not bad for an ex ED) both will be missed within the Troop. We are also due to say so long to **SSgt Ted Whichelo** who is being moved to the Training Wing to help with the DISI trade training. The Troop is still awaiting the re-fitting of its non-comms EW assets from the clapped out Series 3 (yes I did say Series 3) Land Rovers into spanking new Wolves and Pinzgauers, although the Series 3's are still waiting to go to Vosper Mantech to actually start the transfer (the dates remain open ……..very open!) This leaves the Troop somewhat in limbo as far as the EW assets are concerned, and means that we could soon be saying goodbye to our DISI trained personnel who are set to move to Romeo troop, with the exception of **Cpl** 'Lance' **Beaton** who is looking forward to going to Kosovo in January, and **Cpl Simon** 'Airborne Warrior' **Green** who will be staying with the Troop with eyes on a transfer to LEWT when they finally move upstairs next year.

The lack of equipment within the Troop at present also leaves the diary open for other worthwhile activities such as Exercise Eagles Dawn, a Troop comms exercise ably organised and run by **Cpl Andy Nichols** who managed to overcome the many obstacles placed in his way, including having locations taken away from him at the last minute, having half his vehicles VOR'd on the morning of day one due to tyres being unroadworthy, losing manpower halfway through the exercise to inter squadron football, and various other equipment problems, but still managing to get both the Comms and DISI trained personnel out to practice skills such as Ratt and Kipling that we have not done for a long period of time. Also on the agenda has been a Troop Range Day, organised by **Cpl Russ Ryan**, who couldn't be there on the day, but nonetheless, **Lt Ben White** and **SSgt Frank Flaherty** did sterling work getting the

majority of the Troop (and a few invaders from Comms Tp) through their APWT without too much hassle, and without rain (which makes a change for Wales). The Troop also managed to support the Squadron in the Russ Cup inter Squadron boxing competition, with four members of the Troop putting in many weeks of training (and in the case of **LCpl Glenn Roberts**, dieting) to fight in their respective weights. Unfortunately **LCpl Roberts** could not make his weight and didn't fight, but **Sigs Mark Watson**, 'MicMac' **McDonald** and **Nathan** 'Whirling Dervish' **Higgins** did with a well fought victory for **Sig Higgins** and valiant defeats for **Sigs Watson** and **McDonald.**

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP
Tp SSgt **Sgt Steve Brown**

Comms Tp have a few welcomes to the world of 14 Sigs to make, firstly to **Sigs Graham Venn** and **Chris Treweeks** straight from the sausage factory, and also to **LCpl Karl Francis** wife **Alex** and Tomos his little puppy who arrived a while ago and who will now hopefully not grumble about getting a welcome now that he has finally had one. The Troop would also like to congratulate **Sig Ian Clark** on selection for promotion to Lance Corporal and we would also like to congratulate his wife **Jackie** on the birth of their little baby girl **Heather**, and the final congratulation goes to **LCpl Steve** 'Oh no not *The WIRE* notes again' **Stevenson** on his marriage to **Sig Mel** 'Losos' **Salmon.** The Troop which has been light on manpower lately has also had its ranks swelled by the return of the 'Comms Tp Kosovo warriors'. **LCpl Davey** 'Wan' **Kerr**, **LCpl Lynne Gray** (congrats on your promotion out there **Lynne**), and also **Sigs Craig** 'Thumper Hooton' **Johnson** and **Mike** 'Monotone' **McGhee** welcome back boys and girls, just in time to sort out what's left of those REBROS you had out there and last but not least the Troop would like to wish **LCpl Naomie Wilson** all the best and hope she is successful in her course to become an elite member of the Snot Hat Corp. Also Comms Troop would like to say goodbye to Comms Troop as we're disbanding.

ROMEO TROOP
Tp Comd **WO2 Nige** 'Dwarf' **Watton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Neil Sorley**

A fairly quiet period in which the Troop resembled the Marie Celeste with the majority on detachment or on post Det leave. We did manage a Troop day out at a local attraction to say goodbye to **Sgt Chris Dunn** and **Cpl John Pankhurst.** Heatherton proved to be a big hit, unlike **John Pankhurst** who missed with every single ball on the basketball machine, not too good as he is the main strike force for the Squadron basketball team. Some interesting impressions were made on the day with **WO2** 'Driving Miss Daisy' **Watton** coming in last and **Cpl** 'Michael Barrymore' **Pankhurst** being disqualified for mounting **Sgt Chris Dunn,** (Oh he was in a car though). As for work in the bays, a new look was needed for the Troop stores. So armed with brushes and paint we got to work with a spot of painting and decorating just the job as it now looks like a gallery - Admission £2 (towards coffee fund). Welcome back to the Troop from Northern Ireland goes to **Sgt Chris Gibbins, Cpl H. Clarke** and **LCpl** 'Icky' **Hickenbotham.** Also from Kosovo **SSgt Mark Wilson, Cpl Paul Brown, Sig Tony** and **Sig Dai Jones.** Goodbye and goodluck goes to **Lt Hervey Scott** who's soon off to Kosovo for a six month tour, **Sgt Chris Dunn** who's off to train to be a fly boy with the AAC. Lastly but not least **Cpl John Pankhurst** who's just gone to sunny Scotland attached to the EOD, hope you all have a blast lads!!

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)
Sqn Comd **Maj Dakin**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Richardson**

The Squadron continues to support several Out of Theatre Operations, prepares to accept the Odette equipment and plans for the deployment to Kenya on Ex Devil's Horizon. Welcome to the new Squadron 2IC, **Capt Al** 'Star Wars' **Hawes**, there is plenty for you to do also to the new SQMS, **SSgt Glen Kitchen**, there's even more for you to do. Congratulations to **SSgt** 'Shuggie' **Hughes** who as mentioned in previous *WIRES* is to wed and this he now has.

VICTOR TROOP
Tp Comd **WO2 Matthews** Royal Australian Signals
Tp SSgt **SSgt (Supvr R) Watters**

The Troop has had a hectic couple of months culminating in the return of Barracuda detachments from around the Balkans. This was compounded with the arrival of some Odette detachments straight from Racal with all their teething problems. **Cpl Haltam** and **Sig Nex** have been told to go on a diet so at least they will be able to fit in the back of the detachment. The Troop is gradually returning to full strength although as one returns another deploys. Congratulations to **SSgt Tony Watters** and **Theresa** on the birth of their second daughter, time to get rid of the Audi Coupe now……

Farewells are in order for, and many long nights have been spent in 'Charlies' bar in recognition of, particularly sad to see **WO2 Bob Matthews**, Royal Australian Signals and his wife **Sandra** back off to Australia and East Timor after two years with the Troop. **Sig Jim Bartlett** is off to 7 Sig Regt on promotion and **LCpl Al** 'Weiner' **Sharp** has departed to Northern Ireland. New arrivals have seen **SSgt Steve** 'Beaky' **Newton-Roberts** and **Sue** in from Chicksands and **Sgt Steve** 'Chopper' **Christopher** in from Cyprus. **Sig Tel Flook** eventually turned up from Germany and **Sig** 'Rich' **Steele** arrived out from training. **Sgt Stanley Buxton** returned to the Troop after a stint counting blankets as the SQMS. Also returned to the fray after helping out the LEWT in Egypt are **Cpl Dave Janvier** and **Cpl Mark Wright**. Finally our Op Palatine contingent have returned to Brawdy although are off on long leave until the New Year, **Sgt Rob Jones, Sgt** 'Taff' **Willumsen, Cpl Tommy Tucker, LCpl Jinna Garner, LCpl Paddy Neill, LCpl Dave Orme, LCpl Dave Salter** and **Sig Pete Nex**.

TANGO TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Waddell**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Woods**

Tango Tp is presently under-going some hierarchical changes. **Lt Waddell** was forced to deploy with the Regt Nordic skiing team to Scandinavia so we won't see him until the New Year. **SSgt Glen Kitchen**, just back from Kosovo moves from Tp SSgt across to the SQMS post. In the reshuffle sees **SSgt Oli** 'Has anyone seen my washkit' **Campbell** move from LEWT who are also coincidentally in the process of retreating upstairs to 226 (Rear) Sig Sqn. **Sgt Chris Mulligan** and family have arrived from 209 Sig Sqn but **Sgt Paul** 'Mainstay' **Woods** remains to guide the Troop through these upheavals. Supplementing the shop floor are newly arrived operators from the sausage factory, **Sig** 'Biggsy' **Hancock, Sig** 'Ingy' **Ingham.** and **Sig Sid James**. Welcome to the Squadron and the garages. Farewell and congratulations to **Cpl Sven Gronn** who moves on to Northern Ireland with promotion. Also recently selected off the Sigs to LCpl's board are **Sigs Dave Terron, Jamie Cox-Davies, Chris Daniel**, and **Phil Lee**. Welcome also back from Bosnia our Op Palatine lot. See you in the New Year.

LEWT
Tp SSgt **SSgt Campbell**

The past couple of months have been a busy time for the LEWT. The impending move to 226 Sig Sqn (EW) has caused several administrative headaches, but finally there is light at the end of the tunnel. October saw the deployment of twelve members of the LEWT to Egypt, to participate in Ex Bright Star '99. Several people guested of this exercise including **Sgt Andy** 'Blue Job' **Goodwin, LCpl Stu** 'Fat Tech' **Gray** and **Cpl Sven Gronn.** Ex Bright Star '99 was the major coalition exercise for the year involving sixteen nations. The first two weeks involved intensive desert training such as night navigation, OP drills and equipment familiarisation. Terrain was a constant hazard which highlighted the need for good route selection, a technique not demonstrated by **Sgt Matt** 'Always have a spare 352 in your Bergen' **England.** During this phase the LEWT was the only unit to successfully carry out an underslung helicopter move and was also tasked with CRTs for the Light Dragoons. There followed a short break in the military city (avoiding Friday Charger at all costs). The main exercise was an unmitigated success which enabled the LEWT to showcase their ability to provide battle winning intelligence for the battle group, to task the Phoenix and provide MRCSs fire missions onto the advancing enemy rec. elements. **SSgt Ollie** 'Off to Tango Tp' **Campbell** controlled the two patrol teams from the Troop CP along with **WO2 Jim Spiers.** Comms were difficult throughout the exercise, much to the annoyance of **Sgt** 'Egyptian God of Comms' **Mount.** All in all, a successful exercise and a busy period for the LEWT. The months ahead hold innumerable possibilities for the troop, including even more attempts at P Coy for the LEWT Harrys.

Patrol A minutes before insertion beyond the recce screen

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)
Sqn Comd **Maj Hodges**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Fisher**

The busy season has just finished in time for the silly season. We've gone from Ex Ulan Eagle; Rhino Charge and Mouflon's Shot to Squadron Christmas parties, Mess events, Troop sessions and, of course, the Wives' Club .... (Poor Santa is still traumatised). Congratulations to **Cpl Winwood** and wife **Angie** on the birth of baby **Oliver**. Also congratulations to **SSM Kennedy** Int Corps on Commissioning and, for info, bye bye to **Capt Rich Bailey** Int Corps on leaving the Army. (I say for info but his leaving present from the Squadron may well be a years subscription to *The WIRE*!)

EXERCISE MOUFLON'S SHOT - *by LCpl Lisa Paul*

Castle Martin Ranges……Hmmmm…the last castle was five miles back, Martin is one of the instructors and ranges are as usual a barren windswept stretch of coastline in darkest Pembrokeshire. In addition to

Cpl Martin Hunt the main players were **SSgt** 'Si' **Donnely, SSgt Frank Flaherty, Sgt** 'Taff' **Williams, Cpl** 'Sammy' **Samuelson** and **Cpl Mark McMullen.** After a steady day with the APWT and a gentle introduction to the range package we all embarked on our mandatory eight hours sleep. Well, we would have only for the 'Guars' in the room and their snoring competition. If **LCpl** '30mm' **Gunn** and **Sig** 'Foghorn' **Fox** had been able to replicate such a racket on the firing point of the ETR they probably would have knocked more targets down.

After the set shoots and this new fire team assessment (a couple of mile TAB to the range in webbing, helmet and body armour) we did some variety shoots. Pairs fire and manoeuvre dismounted was one thing but live pintle mounted GPMG from pairs of AFV436's was something else! The best was still yet to come .... bayonet charging. If we ever go to war against a hardened battalion of old NBC suits stuffed with hay ... then they don't stand a chance against me. Once I got started I just couldn't stop myself! The next shoot was the much needed rehearsal for the new James Bond film. The 9mm pistol experts in the Squadron were living out their fantasies as stars of 'Pembrokeshire is not enough.' Our final day consisted of 94mm LAW shoots and a live night ambush where a pretty tricky barn wall managed to leopard crawl through unscathed. PXR points: **JT Danni Russell**: you don't have to remove your muzzle dust cap before you fire unless you want to ever see it again. **LCpl** 'Karaoke' **Burns:** don't give up your day job!

SSgt 'Si' Donnely and SSgt 'Frank' Flaherty give the confirmatory brief before the pairs Fire and Manoeuvre

LCpl 'Wally' Waldron
There's fig 11s and there's smart fig 11s .... Get some!

After some name calling, spitting and hair pulling
Sig 'Guar' Shipley finally gets the better of the bayonet target

21 SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT) REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS
CO **Lt Col John Terrington**
RSM **WO1 Al Jenkins**

POST-SDR REORGANISATION - UPDATE

Three significant chapters in the history of the Regiment have recently been enacted. The oldest surviving Air Formation signals unit, 81 Sig Sqn (V), formally transferred to the operational command of 2 (NC) Sig Bde on 1 September 1999; the closing parade of 220 Sig Sqn in Germany, the last dedicated Airfield Support Signal Squadron, took place on 14 September 1999; finally, (at least for the time being!), the Regiment formally transferred to the operational command of the new Joint Helicopter Command at Wilton, on 1 October 1999.

81 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V) – A FOND FAREWELL

The history of 81 Sig Sqn (V) can be traced back to Leeds with the formation of the 1st Kite Balloon Signal Section, as part of the Supplementary Reserve, in 1924. By 1935, the Section had expanded and was converted into Royal Air Force Signals, consisting of a Headquarters and four companies. The Unit was renamed in 1936 as Air Contingent Signals and, in 1938, as Air Formation Signals. At the end of August 1939, 1st and 2nd Air Formation Signals were mobilised and deployed to France in September 1939. By 1942, these two units were serving in North Africa on Operation TORCH and subsequently served throughout the Italian campaign until the end of the war. In 1950, 50th Air Formation Signal Regiment was formed from a core of the now disbanded 1st and 2nd Air Formation Signals. This Regiment was re-designated 81st Signal Regiment in 1960, with call-up roles in Germany and the Far East. Small detachments even deployed to Aden, on two occasions, to assist the Regular Army in providing permanent communications. 81 Sig Sqn (V) has antecedents which have served with distinction for some 75 years, with direct Air Formation predecessors starting some 60 years ago. All Ranks of 21 Sig Regt (AS) extend the Squadron, and all personnel, their very best wishes for a long and equally proud future in 2 (NC) Sig Bde.

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON – A NEW ROLE

Capt Noddy Baugh leads the march past,
with Brig James Shaw taking the salute

The farewell parade for 220 Sig Sqn in Germany was held in Laarbruch, on 14 September 1999, in front of a distinguished audience, including the wives and families of the Squadron. **Brig James Shaw**, ACOS G6 HQ LAND, kindly agreed to review the parade and took the salute. The parade signified the closure of the Squadron in Germany, the return of the Squadron title to the UK and the transfer of the manpower to other units, principally to the new Deployable Telemech Troops in 16 Sig Regt and 30 Sig Regt. The closure is part of the post-SDR Royal Signals restructuring, which will see a revision of the core Telemech structure into one which more closely meets the deployability and sustainability

requirements of current and future operations. 220 Sig Sqn has served in Germany for 40 years, as part of the original Regimental support provided to the RAFs five Main Operating Bases there. Latterly, just two MOBs survived, at Laarbruch and Bruggen. Laarbruch will finally close in November this year, and the focus will shift solely to Bruggen before it, too, closes early in the next decade. Commenting on the reputation earned by Squadron personnel during recent deployments, and the future for the Deployable Telemech Troops, **Brig Shaw** said, 'Your skills have been recognised at the highest levels ... you will continue to be in great demand in the expeditionary nature of operations that we are seeing now.'

The Squadron title is to be retained within 21 Sig Regt (AS), as the second of three Air Support squadrons in the post-SDR Regimental ORBAT, providing communications to the RAF Support Helicopter Force. Following the parade and march past, therefore, the squadron pennant was formally handed over by the outgoing OC, **Capt Noddy Baugh**, to the CO, **Lt Col John Terrington**, and thence to **Maj Jim Forrest**, the new OC for the reformed Squadron in Colerne. LS&GC medals were also presented, by **Brig Shaw**, to **WO2 (FofS) Guy Lewendon** and **Cpl John Phillips**, and a GOCs Commendation to **Cpl Bob Walker**.

Lt Col John Terrington hands the 220 Sig Sqn pennant
to Maj Jim Forrest, whilst Capt Noddy Baugh quickly starts to
slip away to begin planning for the next ACPO project

OPCOM JHC

With remarkably little ceremony, the Regiment fell under the Operational Command of the newly formed Joint Helicopter Command at the beginning of October. Whilst still directly supporting the RAF Support Helicopter Force, this move places the Regiment at the core of an extremely potent organisation which embraces the helicopter capability of all three services. The role of the JHC is to:

'... Deliver and sustain effective Battlefield Helicopter and Air Assault assets, operationally capable under all environmental conditions, to support UK's defence missions and tasks.'

EXERCISE WARRIOR BEAUFIGHTER

The Regiment took part in Ex Warrior Beaufighter during the period 6 - 19 September 1999, based at the Hythe and Lydd ranges in Southern England. It was the first time the Regiment had used these ranges and provided an ideal opportunity for the troops to engage in some very exciting and challenging range practices.

LCpl Gooderham at the Skills House

These included the Individual and Team Battle Shooting Ranges, Rural and Urban Close Quarter Battle, specialist Sangar, high-rise flats and defence ranges and also section attack, Quick Reaction Force and night shoots. The use of the Urban CQB ranges was especially challenging, with full mock-ups of street scenes including pop-up targets and life size, moving and talking dummies. Sixpence/half a crown was translated for some of the younger members of the Camp and the text-book definition of adrenaline was fully tested during some of the sequences. Notwithstanding this, and especially for the TA element of the Regiment (TA units are not permitted access for live firing on certain Lydd and Hythe CQB ranges), this was a tremendous opportunity and there was some excellent shooting, throughout the Camp. Tied into the ranges was a comprehensive dry training exercise, providing a build up of skills from individual Battle Preparation, Fire Team and Section drills. We also trained on the urban skills house, watermanship area, obstacle course and NBC testing chamber, with some devilish twists thrown in (literally) by **Sgt** 'James' **Joyce**. The Battle Camp finished with a final exercise comprising a patrol competition. **WO2 (SSM) Paul Williams** was taken prisoner on the first night by one of the platoons (not funny), but had his revenge during the final march and shoot competition. Game Set and Match was finally established during the Regimental Smoker on the last night, however, although the Oscar goes to **WO2 Dick Malt** for his re-enactment of the antics of **Sig** 'Meerkat' **Osborne** during the Urban CQB ... 'tup, three! For other units considering the Lydd and Hythe package, a word of caution. The dry training areas are very limited and visiting units, as ever it seems, are vulnerable to gazumping by local units. The final exercise, especially, was markedly affected, by the continual reallocation of areas by the Range HQ to other, higher priority', units, sometimes with only 24 hours notice. This made a nonsense of the planning undertaken prior to the exercise, which had already been substantially hampered by the Agricola deployment, and did affect the troops undergoing training. That Battle Camp had gone ahead at all, however, with the deployment of so many on Op Agricola, was significant. The sense of achievement and the skills learned on the ranges, and even during dry training, was notable. Around 2000 rounds per soldier were fired, and a significant number hit the targets, with some commendable shooting. **Capts Andy Arthurton** and **Dave Whitaker** (Welfare not Warfare), **WO2s Dick Malt** (Training Sergeant Major) and **Nige Roberts (RQMS)**, and **Sgts** 'Mac' **Macdonald** and **Charlie Farley** are to be commended for their sterling work in setting up and running an excellent camp, against substantial odds. Well done, too, to all the Regimental soldiers who undertook the training; there was a lot of effort and some very fine skills displayed throughout the Camp.

Prizes were awarded at the end of Battle Camp, as follows:

Best Soldier	- **Cpl 'Ollie' Oliver**
Best Shot	- **Cpl Lee Gough**
Best Section	- 3 Section, Bravo Pl (led by **Cpl Rob Lewis**)
March and Shoot Winners	- 2 Section, Bravo Pl (**Cpl Setchfield**)
Assault Course Winners	- 2 Section, Bravo Pl (**Cpl Setchfield**)

BATTLECAMP - A SOLDIER'S VIEW

The Battle Camp commenced with zeroing our weapons on the tarmac of the range, very hard on vulnerable elbows, followed by shooting an APWT. Having passed, we were to spend every other day firing in different conditions with differing scenarios on various ranges. Being down by the Channel we had to endure a surface of shale/pebbles and gathered an assortment of bruises, especially on the knees. The thigh muscles also suffered and the various PT sessions early in the mornings were designed to help stretch them a little. The days of 'dry' training were very good for revision of infantry skills and ambush tactics. The river crossing was an experience for me. Using our kit as a buoyancy aid we swam across using a rope and balancing our weapons on top of our kit.

Everything led towards the final exercise. We marched into our harbour area only to leave shortly after on patrol to collect our rations. However, the harbour was not where it should have been and it took a little while to work out exactly where we were. Being further from our objective, we also had further to return. We arrived back in harbour just in time for a change of socks, five minutes for breakfast and then straight on with the day's hike. We were to carry our bergens with us and proceed to various stands during the day. However, someone forgot that we had not received any water since the evening before ..... Planners!!

Publish it in
The Wire
The Editor is always pleased to receive interesting articles

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Chas Dale**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Organ**

HQ Squadron is, once again, returned to normality, as the 244 Sabre Troops rejoined the returning Kosovo warriors, after an all too brief sojourn into a real working Squadron. The return from operations for the bulk of the Agricola deployment has allowed the Squadron to move at full speed into the post-SDR re-organisation phase. Despite the heavy workload, the Squadron has enjoyed a fruitful summer period and have combined adventure training and Battle Camp with the routine daily duties.

REGIMENTAL MOTOR TRANSPORT
MTO **Capt Pete Griffiths**
Tp SNCO **Sgt** 'Mac' **Macdonald**

HELLO AND GOODBYE

Cpl Holmes-Smith arrived in the Regiment in August, on FTRS, just in time for the Battle Camp, where his skills as a medic were well tested, albeit just for practice! Farewell to **SSgt Mark Sala**, **Cpl O'Neill** and **LCpl Lee** who have been posted to the newly formed 220 Sig Sqn. Battle Camp took place at Napier Barracks in Folkestone, Kent. The advance party left Colerne on 3 September at 0300hrs, consisting of **SSgt Sala**, **Sgt MacDonald**, **Cpl Holmes-Smith** and **LCpl Lee**. With the arrival of the rest of the troops on 6 September, MT switched to overdrive. **Sgt MacDonald** went into a frenzy trying to locate his vehicles as the troops had waltzed off taking them on different activities. **SSgt Sala** saved himself a few pounds on a haircut with his experience as a Platoon Sergeant (what again!), and **LCpl Lee** alerted everyone to the ambulance location as he discovered all the mod-cons and gadgets. He put his full creativity into the first aid casualty simulation and scenarios that the troops had to deal with. Getting himself right into his role, his (tor)mentor, **Cpl Holmes-Smith,** thought there was not enough work for **LCpl Lee** and decided to play the infantry role, managing to catch a (blank) case in the head. Congratulations go to **SSgt Sala** on a successful handover takeover of the Regimental Football team, and to gain a win in the process against 4 Field Armoured Brigade from Aldershot, and also to **Cpl Eskdale** on completion of his EFP-1 course at Warminster. A good pass, too, goes to **Cpl** 'Popeye' **Doyle** on completing his MT Accounts course.

QUARTERMASTER'S (TECHNOLOGY) DEPARTMENT
QM **Maj Ken Clark**
RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Merrie**

DEPARTURES AND WELCOMES

Farewell to **Maj (QM) Mike Bailes**, off to command HQ Sqn in York. You have achieved a great deal during your tour, at great advantage to individuals and to the Regiment as a whole. Your efforts will be missed, but we are sure that your successor, **Maj (QM) Ken Clark**, will soon get a handle on things. We have said goodbye already this year to **WO2 (RQMS) Iain Wylie** who, after serving 22 years in the Corps, went off to Canada on long service. His replacement, **WO2 Keith Merrie** is finding out that Colerne is not the sleepy little hollow he thought it would be. Good luck to both old and the new. We also say welcome to **Sig**'s **Gibbs**, **Fayers** and **LCpl Blythe**.

TRANSPORT MAINTENANCE TROOP
Tp Comd **WO1 (FofS) Ady Knight**

A quiet period.....until all returned from leave. Battle camp on the ranges at Hythe and Lydd, along with the ongoing Board of Officers, have made for an interesting break from routine. The Tp welcomes **SSgt Dave** 'Conkers' **Wilson**, complete with tan from Cyprus, **LCpls Si Lee**, **Matt Jennings** and **Arron Evans** from Blandford, **Cpl Dave Heath** 'posted' from 220 (Germany) to 220 (Colerne) and **Sig Nicky Ryan** from her stag on duty. Congratulations to **Ed Chweiseni**, **Dave** 'Boots' **Bentham** and **Johnny Nicol** on their recent promotions to Corporal. Well done to **LCpl** 'GB' **Lee** for being selected recently into the Army U21 Rugby squad. Congratulations to **Sgt Mick** 'Stores' **Heasman** for successfully passing his Unit Ammo Accountancy course (NVQ??) and for not losing any bullets on the recent Regimental Range/Battle Camp.

On the sporting front, the Tp personnel have been improving their skills in a wide variety of sports; Darts, Badminton, 5-aside Football to name but a few and will soon be ready to play competitively. Good luck to **Cpl Dave** 'Don't forget your trainers' **Bentham** and **LCpl Matt** 'Inky' **Jennings** with the Manchester Marathon. A thank you to **Cpl Bobby** 'I didn't get lost' **Sands** from the Burger man at Lydd. He made a fortune due to evening meal not being delivered to the Regiment on time!

43 (WESSEX) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)
Sqn Comd **Maj David Sleigh**
PSI **SSgt (YofS) White**

B3 RADIO OPERATOR TRAINING 4 - 19 SEPTEMBER 1999

The NFQ's and re-traders of 43 Sqn, HQ (V), FAC Troop and 6LI joined together for their Radio Operator B3 trade training at Colerne. The course consisted of two main phases: the first week was a programme of theory and practical lessons on each of the parts making up the B3 Radio operator qualification. Some parts were harder than others, a favourite being Antennae Theory and Propagation, particularly for those of us who never mastered long division at school. The first week culminated with a test day consisting of a written exam and a series of practical tests under the pressure of time. The test area for 12m mast erection was detectable by the grunts and screams, which seemed necessary for some individuals to perform the task in hand.The second week consisted of a Navex and further lessons and briefings moving towards deployment on Ex First Flight. This provided a very steep learning curve for all involved but in amongst the frustration of 'stolen' key settings, missing 12m mast base plates and monster cam netting everyone enjoyed themselves. Some individuals got too carried away as it was discovered that ending a transmission with 'Rog the Dodge' did not amuse the YofS who reaped his revenge as all the detachments were sucked in at the last moment by some sneaky deception. All those on the course look forward to joining again on the coming exercises to carry out what they have learnt. Congratulations to the best detachment - **Sig Miller**, **Cpl Sutton** and **Sig Harper** and congratulations to **Cpl Sutton** who was awarded most improved student on the course.

MILITARY SKILLS WEEKEND

On the weekend of 7/8 August, 43 Wessex Sig Sqn and HQ (V) Sqn, the TA elements of 21st Sig Regt (AS), deployed to Sennybridge Training Area (SENTA) for a pre-battle camp military skills weekend to practice all aspects of weapon handling and patrolling skills so as to ready ourselves for this year's camp which is being run with the whole Regiment. The main party of troops arrived at SENTA late on the Friday night to be welcomed by a very heavy rain storm that lasted through until dawn but sense of humours held as we were occupying one of the better farms with a good sized and dry barn. The first instruction on the Saturday was a refresher of TOETS to get peoples brains engaged and thinking. Dry and then blank ammunition was used so there was no hiding any mistakes! The troops were then split down into three sections and spent the rest of the morning practicing section movement during night and day and the theory/planning of section attacks. In the afternoon the hot August sunshine broke through the clouds lifting the mist from the hills giving perfect conditions for a Fire Control Orders and distance estimation lesson which was useful for the potential and current JNCO's.

Fire Control and Range Estimation

The use of radio controlled pop up figure 11 targets spread along the valley really brought home the difficulties of a section commander when trying to control their section, assess the situation and maintain ammunition levels. To complete the afternoon a good 'Close Quarter Battle' route has been set up in a very narrow valley in which either on their own or in pairs troops tried to patrol quickly through. Maintaining as much cover as possible and then spotting and returning fire to an almost invisible enemy, again proved to be good training to the less experienced members of the sections and certainly raised adrenaline levels! Much of the evening was left to section admin and briefings for the night exercise which was to take the form of each section being tasked to carry out Ops on various other farms to gather intelligence of enemy strengths and occupation to allow the support helicopter force to plan and select future flying sites. Early on a damp misty Sunday morning the three sections moved out to march on to the target farm and to carry out an assault of the buildings, No 2 Section providing covering fire while Sections 1 and 3 attacked and moved through the buildings, securing them and taking up 'all round defence' positions. A good well-controlled attack was carried out with plenty of ammunition and pyrotechnics to give an authentic battle and also giving the section commanders practice in what they had learnt the previous day.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Ian Walton**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Paul Williams**

Without doubt one of the busiest periods in our history, 244 Sig Sqn is beginning to emerge, confidently, from very turbulent times. With many personnel spread to the four winds on operations and Regimental restructuring post SDR, we now enter a period of consolidation (or picking up the pieces, and sifting through the debris!!). With the reconstitution of 220 Sig Sqn in UK (born of 244 personnel and equipment and a number of office and hangar changes), we now look forward to our new role in support of the Joint Helicopter Command.

ALPHA TROOP (AMF(L)) - NO CHANGE!

The Troop would like to extend a warm welcome to **LCpl Fraser Ferguson** who joins us from 7 Sig Regt and also congratulate **LCpl** 'Scouse' **Alston** and **LCpl Daz Daniels** on their recent selection for promotion. September saw **Sigs Steve Beal**, **Kev Batey** and **Emma Gommersall** deploy on Op Palatine. The Troop is now well split between Op Palatine and Op Agricola while the rear details are kept busy back at Colerne. This month the Troop deployed on battle camp with the rest of the Regiment or attended various courses.

Congratulations to **Sig**'s **Liesa Howson** and **Rachel Riley** for achieving outstanding results on the Royal Signals Leadership Course at Blandford and also well done to **Sig Lee Southernwood** for passing the Amateur Boxing Association assistant coaches course.

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Mike Lithgow MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Al Higgins**

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT ON OPERATIONS – OPERATION BOLTON

Op Bolton is the RAF contribution to the US-led, Op Southern Watch, which polices the Iraqi Southern no-fly zone. The RAF have deployed 12 x GR1s to Ali Al Salem (Kuwait), 6 x F3s to Al Kharj (Saudi Arabia), a VC-10 tanker to Bahrain and HQ British Forces Bolton (HQBFB) to Riyadh (Saudi Arabia). HQ Strike Command and PJHQ has devolved responsibility for all communications for these locations to Tactical Communications Wing Brize Norton. Although 30 Sig Regt once had several assets in theatre, the remaining assets and manpower consist of Euromux which extends data and voice circuits to HQBFB Riyadh with two Gurkhas (currently **Cpl Anjan** and **LCpl Man**). More recently, in an attempt to exchange ideas and methods, RAF officers from TCW have deployed on Op Agricola. Meanwhile, **Capt Rich Carter** deployed on Op Bolton as the Force CIS Officer Al Kharj, commanding TCW Al Kharj and HQBFB Riyadh whilst **Capt Teri Downes** has recently deployed as Force CIS Officer Ali Al Salem with responsibility also for Bahrain. All locations have some of the usual SATCOM and terminal equipment that is the 'bread and butter' of 30 Sigs Regt personnel. The main differences are two fold:

a. RAF Transportable Telecommunications System (RTTS) which provides a secure inter-nodal network around an air base giving access up to 2Mbps.
b. The average RAF officer/airman.

The latter is the most 'interesting' to army communicators. In a quick calculation on the back of a fag packet (an RAF officer would write an e-mail to his boss to ask permission before submitting his findings in a well written brief! 'After all, the task was not part of his job spec and it was after 5 o'clock!'), **Capt Rich Carter** found that the average age of his det in Al Kharj was 34. His Flight Sergeant (WO2 equivalent) was a mighty 51 years old and a Flight Lieutenant colleague (Captain equivalent) who was to be posted to RAF Cranwell to instruct Officer Training was. None could quite remember ever firing their personal weapon (which was not issued), PT stood for Part Time, and promotion went out with Options for Change.

With the exception of TCW, RAF personnel are not generally used to operational tours. Tour lengths are always four months with one week's R and R in an all expenses paid in-theatre 5-star hotel (unless they take a C-130 to Cyprus where they have to 'slum it' in RAF accommodation). Due to their overloaded commitment, TCW personnel (including attached 30 Sig Regt Officers) do 2-month tours without any R and R (typical!). However, the TCW airman expects soon after departing theatre to return to any number of operational locations. This may not be so bad if the 'rates' are good (one in particular had done eight tours in Riyadh where the rates were particularly good!).

Although not a daily news item, Op Southern Watch air-power is daily destroying targets in Iraq alongside Op Northern Watch (British Op Jural) based in Incirlik, Turkey. Here, **Sig Surya**, like **Cpl Anjan** and **LCpl Man** in Riyadh, maintains Euromux ensuring the continued presence of 'The Swan' on operations in the Middle East.

REGIMENTAL OPERATIONS TEAM
Ops Offr **Maj Garry Hearn**
Regt YofS **WO1 (FofS) Andy Campbell**
Regt FofS **WO1 (YofS) Bill Mccreath**

A very rare opportunity to produce a set of *Wire* notes from this Department – the phones must have stopped ringing for two minutes!! The Ops Cell has seen a major upheaval in the last six months; not just with the quantity of operations the Regiment is supporting but this period has also seen the departure of **Maj David Sullivan** on promotion to Lieutenant Colonel at QMG Andover. **WO1 (YofS) Norman Bain** on Commissioning to HQ R Signals Blandford. **WO1 (FofS) Mark Edwards** posted to JCUNI and subsequently selected for commission and **Capt James Langley** on promotion to Major at Blandford. Encumbents in order of arrival are **WO1 (YofS) Andy Campbell** from RMA Sandhurst. **Maj Garry Hearn** from STRIKE Command. **WO1 (FofS) Bill McCreath** from TM Tp. **Capt Jason Hazelwood** from 20 Armd Bde Sig Sqn and most recently **WO2 (ISM) Mark Potter** from Trg Wing. Holding the whole team together over this turbulent period is Mr Continuity, **Maj Pete Barron** who justifiably achieved his majority in September. In September, after a weeks delay, the Ops Cell moved from the dingy depths of downstairs RHQ, to the spacious, bright 'room with a view' upstairs. Therefore we can now see any visitors coming through the front gate and be somewhere else by the time they climb the stairs. The Regiment has continued to support eleven Operations over this period most recently being Kosovo, Albania, East Timor and Indonesia, not forgetting the military support to Y2K which involved many Regimental personnel. The main effort over the next period will be to identify the whereabouts of the Corps dock leaf to protect us whilst grasping the IT nettle.

EXERCISE CYGNET GLOBE 1999
by WO1 (YofS) Andy Campbell

Ex Cygnet Globe is a world-wide multinational HF Voice/CW/RATT comms exercise, co-ordinated and directed by 30 Sig Regt. This involves the establishment of a number of detachments in Bramcote working to participating nations world-wide. The Exercise has been in place for over 16 years and took place in September this year. Countries that traditionally take part each year include USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Cyprus, Gibraltar and Germany together with UK based Signal Regiments. In addition this year saw 7 and 16 Sig Regts operating from Kosovo. The participants are divided into geographical groups each with a nominated control station. The Exercise is planned and co-ordinated by the Regimental Yeoman of Signals **WO1 Andy Campbell** and then usually handed over to a Squadron Yeoman to carry out.

Enter stage left – straight from his Yeomans course in Blandford, **SSgt (YofS) Rob Barnes** to take on the appointment of training wing Yeoman. Having served together in 3 Armd Div Sig Regt in Soest ten years previously it was nice to see him arrive and equally as nice to present him with this Exercise – daunting is an expression much used that week for the former systems operator! One of the pleasing aspects of the Exercise is arranging exchange visits for this Regiment and hosting personnel from other countries. This year saw two JNCOs from 1 Canadian Div Sig Regt in Bramcote whilst **Cpl Dean Buckley** and **LCpl Dave Kyle** deployed to Ottowa and Kingston in exchange. Other deployments were **Cpl John Thompson** and **LCpl Adrian Giddins** to 110 Sig Sqn, near Perth in Australia. **LCpl Carl Ashton** and **Sig** 'Rosie' **Rose** to 12 SU in Episkopi in Cyprus and **LCpl Dom Burns** with **Sig** 'Scotty' **Chamberlin** to COMMCEN Gibraltar. The timing of the Exercise coincided with the onset of operations in East Timor which saw 22 members of the Regt deploy and equally saw a great deal of Australian units having to curtail their involvement.

This was also an extremely busy period for the Regiment with 258 Sig Sqn deploying on Ex Bright Star in Egypt. Therefore the availability of personnel for this Exercise became slimmer by the minute but it did provide the opportunity for the less experienced operators to get hands on, with **LCpl Bob Scott** one of the senior detachment commanders and HF guru. The best comms all round, however, was achieved by the 250 Sqn det with **Cpl Vinod** in charge. **Sgt Billy Kidd, Sgt Dave Bennett, Sgt Mark Ebdon** and **Sgt Ramkaji** ran Exercise control to ensure that the daily schedules for the world-wide links were maintained.

EXERCISE NORTHERN APPROACHES – JOCOMMEX
by LCpl Gav Vanden and Sig Lee Yoxall

LCpl 'Gav' **Vanden** and **Sig** 'Lee' **Yoxall** deployed on Ex Northern Approaches as a Joint Comms Ex (Jocommex) exchange visit and spent three weeks cruising around the sunny Med on HMS *Fearless*. We started our journey from Bramcote on 7 September 1999, flying at early o'clock from Heathrow to Zurich prior to the connecting flight for Ismir. With a couple of hours to kill **LCpl Gav Vanden** decided he needed a tax-free watch. Almost £1000 out of pocket he admired his new acquisition throughout the next flight! On arrival in Ismir we were collected and taken onboard HMS *Fearless*, our home for the next three weeks. The accommodation was not quite as luxurious as we expected as we were to live in a room no bigger than our Troop office and we would be sharing with 20 seamen!! The first Jocommex we took part in was actually to our own beloved Squadron (256) in Bramcote. This did not go particularly well, however, it was easy to blame the 'other end' with **Sig Richie Hewitt** and **Sig Stu Welton** on set. The second Jocommex was to a Royal Marine detachment and went very much the same as the first, although we proved our equipment and linked to Bampton Castle which upset the boot-necks a little. The rest of the trip was spent conducting mini tours of the ship with copious amounts of sunbathing on the flight deck. The exercise involved a great deal of action stations on the ship whilst simulating enemy attacks, fire practices and NBC alerts. The comms equipment and procedures used by the navy are very similar to ours although they do sometimes resort to flags and flashing lights between ships. We ended the trip with three nights R&R in Marseilles, much of which was spent savouring the local football bar and fostering Army – Navy relationships in the time honoured tradition - abusive banter.

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. E. Swindells**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Tivey**

The Squadron's Kosovo tour that took up the first half of the year has now well and truly faded into memory and the emphasis has shifted towards mandatory training, millennium contingency planning and preparation for taking on the demanding task of the Joint Task Force HQ Signal Squadron. Needless to say, this has been a busy year for all members of the Squadron and the New Year promises to offer many more challenges with major exercises planned across the world, starting with Ex Cobb Ring in Florida in March.

EXERCISE ROVING RAM

By LCpl Gav Vanden

In preparation for Operation Surety over the millennium period the Squadron recently conducted Ex Roving Ram. This was a Squadron level HF RATT exercise which took place 8 - 12 November 1999. The aim of the exercise was threefold. First to revise and develop operating skills on HF RATT detachments in readiness to deploy over the millennium period. Second to assess class three tradesmen due their class two upgrade and finally to cross train Data and Systems operators in the 'black art' of HF comms. The Exercise comprised of three outstations and one detachment located at Bramcote Camp which acted as Excon. The outstations deployed to Castlemartin, Catterick and Stanford training areas. After being delayed for 24 hours, the exercise finally kicked off bright and early on the morning 9 November 1999. All dets arrived at their respective locations safe and sound but only just for the Castlemartin det, who unfortunately for them had **Sig** 'Scan Fat Boy' **Martin** at the controls for the latter half of the journey. He not only drove erratically, to say the least, but also managed to run out of diesel in the middle of the journey. Once in location the dets very quickly established comms much to the surprise of **Sgt Dave Bennett** and proceeded to transmit the test traffic supplied to them by Excon. This was to be the trend (no pun intended) for the rest of the Exercise which allowed all involved to brush up on their RATT skills and gain confidence in the kit that they will be using on Operation Surety. All in all, the Exercise was a great success for everyone including **LCpl Dom Burns** who after being escorted back and forth to the trailer in the dark all week was finally convinced that the Bogeyman does not exist.

EXERCISE ROVING RAM

By Sig Tom Beerling

After a heart rending plug up on the night of 8 November, we deployed to Gandale Bivouac area, about 5mins from Catterick Garrison on the morning of 9 November. The det comprised **Cpl Stu Foster, LCpl Karl Ashton**, and **Sigs Si Mooney, Tom Beerling, Stu Welton** and **Kate Marsh**.

Sig Tom Beerling – Trying to look hard

The intention of the exercise was to ensure all participating personnel were sorted with SECURE HF RATT, antenna selection and erection, etc. We established comms with control from the word go and kept the link until ENDEX. The other dets did get the hump with us due to the fact that we had hard accommodation that was dry and heated. The boys at Brawdy loved that one. Everything ran nice and smooth, and the RATT was booming through. On the second day myself and **Si Mooney** were chatting and he says 'It makes a nice change to be doing proper comms instead of girly COMMCEN stuff', and I agreed, saying how nigh on all we do is 'girly' COMMCEN stuff. **Stu Welton** sat in the corner and disagreed with us. 'Shut up fellas, we're not birds!' Looking over we observed **Sig Welton** filing his nails with a Leatherman tool. Oh dear!! On the Thursday we had the two minutes silence, which was right and proper, and after a day of operator chat, closed down just after dark. Arriving back at camp, **Cpl Foster** was informed that all dets were to be turned around and ready for inspection by OC Exercise at 1030hrs next morning. We believe the reason for the rush was that the OC, **Capt Owen** 'Fingers' **Finnie,** had to do 'green' PT, there was no way we were going to swerve it!

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. W. Cooper**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) M. A. Webb**

OPERATION LANGAR - DELTA TROOP DOWN UNDER

LCpl Rawlings (left) and Sig Walker-Scott patrolling in Dili, East Timor

On Thursday 10 September, Delta Tp got the call to deploy on the following Saturday to Australia in order to move forward to East Timor. With 48 hours notice, we plugged up 501(E) Maroon and set about testing as many circuits as possible. With just over one hour left before the flight, we knocked off to rush around like lunatics packing our kit before we left camp. After the traditional six hour delay at Lyneham (all that rushing around for nothing then!), everybody boarded the faithful Hercules that was to take us on our four day trip to Oz. The first stop was Cyprus where we celebrated **Sgt** 'Davrog' **Rogers'** birthday with seven of us sleeping in each 2-man room! The second stop-over was a great improvement – Oman. We all stayed in a five star hotel and dined a la carte in our combats! We then flew on to Sri Lanka for refuelling and then the Coca Islands. Sadly the only hotel on the island was full, so the locals reopened the quarantine centre for us to stay in – how kind! The last stop was Darwin and it was straight off the plane and back to work setting up the detachment.

Five days later and after many sleepless nights, we had a period of 'on the Herc, off the Herc' as we tried to get to East Timor. Eventually, half of the personnel and all the equipment got loaded and we set off for Dili. Arrival in Dili was very much like a scene from M*A*S*H! Upon arrival in our location, 6kms from the airport, we were greeted by the TNI (allegedly) letting off rounds and setting fire to the building across the road from us. **Cpl Gina** 'Ginelli' **Atkinson** had the added bonus of it being her birthday! So far that day, she had seen gunfire, burning buildings and somehow she had set her combats alight! Once we began our set-up, no end of problems occurred, not least of which was **Capt Alex** 'Wear a helmet from now on' **Fennell** smacking his head on a roof while everyone watched and then having a satellite dish dropped on his head shortly after! The aforementioned **Cpl Atkinson**'s recognition skills have kept the morale up however with such lines as, 'Ooh, look at that funny dog!' 'No, that's a pig Gina.' – she is obviously not a local!

Meanwhile, back in Darwin, those who flew back to collect the last of the equipment got to have their photos taken under a 'nice' sign (due to censor restrictions we can't show this). When all the 'important' people were where they belonged (in Dili) and the insignificant underlings were left to rot by the poolside with fresh food in Darwin, the hurry up and wait syndrome began – 'Quick, get this link in first. No, now this one, etc.'. It was all great fun! At the end of the day, is it too much to ask for running water and a cold can of Coke? This and many other questions will be answered in the next instalment from Delta Troop in the Far East!

VSC501 MAROON and crew in Dili, East Timor

EXERCISE BRIGHT STAR 1999 - *by LCpl Tony Gallagher*

Ex Bright Star is a coalition, tri-service exercise held in the Egyptian desert once every two years. Our role was to provide the comms close support to the National Command Centre (NCC). The Advance Party deployed on 10 September 1999, deploying without minimal equip. Inevitably, all they could do was settle themselves into the Aida Beach Hotel and enjoy the sun! When the Main Body arrived, the Advance Party tried to complain about the hardships that they had had to endure. After all, MacDonalds had only been open for a few days and they had had to move from the coastal hotel to 'luxury' accommodation at the top of a five-story block, with port-a-loos a five-minute sprint away. We thought the stairs would get easier as the weeks went on and the weather cooled, but no! In fact, to aid acclimatisation Squadron PT started soon after arrival at 0545hrs; yes there is a morning variety as I was soon to discover! Every dawn we all walked down the five flights in a trance to be greeted by the smiling faces of our two resident PTIs, **Cpl** 'Paddy' **Bevan** and **LCpl** 'Caz' **Burrows**. Anyone thinking the Exercise was going to be all sunbathing and sangria was very much mistaken – unless of course you were a Telemech. As the Exercise progressed and a solid routine was established, everybody brushed up on their skills. For example, I managed to work on my 'People skills' in the ICC – not that they needed improving (honest).

A good earthing was required for desert communications!!

But luckily it wasn't all work and no play. Three of the Troop managed to get away for a cheeky game of rugby against the Expats. Also R&R began shortly after the match with almost all of the Squadron getting a few days off in Hurghada, down on the Red Sea. I would love to tell of the tales and adventures that occurred during R&R, but 'what goes on tour must stay on tour'. So, unfortunately, I am not permitted to disclose **Cpl** 'Jase' **Curley**'s disagreement with one of the lovely local boys! Anyway back at the NCC, the exercise proved to be a good test for everybody in the Squadron and all demonstrated they could handle the responsibilities of JFHQ – both the equipment and the staff! However, by the end, we were ready to swap shades and sunscreen in Egypt for jumpers and scarves back in Blighty!

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS NEWS

The Squadron headquarters has at last settled, with just one departure, that of **Capt Rich Carter**; all the best for Staff College! Geographically speaking however, we've been spread between continents. With the Kosovo recce still to be done before Christmas, there will still be plenty of movement right through to the end of the silly season.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Teri Downes**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Gaz Middleton**

Delta Tp, would like to say a warm welcome to **Cpl Dambar** 'Dimebar' **Gurung** coming across from 250 GSS and to **Sigs John** 'Winston' **Ellson, Steph** 'Trunks' **Hawkins** and **Paul** 'Catalogue Pose' **Howells** - all coming straight from the factory. A fond farewell goes to **Sgt Dave Rogers** and family and **Sig Jacqui** 'Brunei' **Bridger** who are both posted to the Royal School of Signals down in Blandford. Also fond farewells to **LCpl Lee** 'You ain't seen me, Right!' **Kemp** to 1 (RBY) Sig Sqn, **LCpl Paul** 'Unlike the Murphy's' **Hines** to 7 Bde and **Sig Mark** 'Mr Logic' **Palmer** to Northern Ireland. We must also say goodbye and good luck to **Cpl Andy** 'Jurassic' **Smart, Sig Oscar** 'Weight gain 4000' **Phillips** and **Sig Baz** 'Beefcake' **Still** who have all seen the light and are leaving the Army for civvy street. Congratulations go to **Sgt Gaz** 'Barry Sheene' **Middleton** and wife **Angela** on the birth of baby **Edward,** as well as to **Sgt Dave Rogers** and wife **Christine** on the arrival of baby **Lauren Jade**. For several months now members of the Troop have been deployed on Operation Langar and we would just like to say hello to all deployed (we hope to see you all before Christmas). The Signalman – Lance Corporal board did the Troop proud and although there are too many names to mention, congratulations to all! A big welcome back should certainly go to **Cpl Dean Rawlings** and **Sig Ruth** 'Rounders Queen' **Phillips** – who by all accounts were left and forgotten in Egypt on Ex Bright Star. Finally, we are all very pleased to see the return of **Lt** 'Not very brown' **Downes** from Kuwait – some people get all the jollies!!

ECHO TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Emma Rae**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Doc' **Halliday**

Some hellos and goodbyes from the almighty Troop that is Echo: Hello to **Capt Emma** 'I do know my Corps History' **Rae, Cpl Pete** 'taxi' **Watson** and **Cpl Brendon** 'bit of a ladies man' **Plant.** Also welcome to **Sig's Bruin, Hannam** and **Howland** from that lovely Blandford factory. Farewell and good luck to **Sig Jim Brown, Sam** and **Shannon** posted to Ireland. And of course we will miss **Sig Dave Sims** who is off to 1 Div to continue work on his belly (Lucky you!). Also congratulations go to the multitudes that have recently received news of promotion. **Cpl Plant, LCpl Bevan, LCpl Carter, LCpl Howson, Sig Brown, Sig Donnelly, Sig Engelby, Sig McKay, Sig Stedman** and **Sig Walker**. Your name in *The Wire* means you owe us yet more beers - Thanks!

FOXTROT TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Morag Southern**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Paul Boughey**

A warm welcome is extended to numerous new faces: **Cpls Lucy Mason** and **Garath McKee**, posted in from ATR Arborfield and JCUNI respectively, and **Siggies Gareth** 'Doris' **Day** and **Andrew Jordan-White** fresh from the Royal School of Signals, Blandford. We also welcome **Sig Thwaites** and **Sig Armitage** back into the fold after some beasting with the PT Corps in order to pass their assistant PTI instructor course; well done! The past months have naturally focused on the Squadron JTFHQ deployment on Ex Bright Star, Egypt, an Exercise that has certainly topped up any fading summer tans. In preparation for the Exercise programme next year, the Troop OC and Staff Sergeant also managed to tear themselves away from the rigorous routine of the Regiment and recce Diego Garcia for an OTX.

250 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj R. P. Wilson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Chandrabahadur Gurung**

THE WORK OF THE GURKHA WELFARE SCHEME

As the Second-in Command of 250 Gurkha Signal Squadron, I was recently fortunate enough to attend the Nepali long language course in Nepal, followed by a three week duty trek on behalf of the Gurkha Welfare Scheme (GWS). Despite being heavily involved in the organisation of the Regiment's Trailwalker event earlier this year, which raises funds for the GWS, I had very little idea of how this help actually reaches those in need. Contrary to what much of the British Press would have you believe, Gurkha Ex-Servicemen are not forgotten by the British public and British Government once they retire and return to one of the poorest countries in the world. The GWS is the field arm of the Gurkha Welfare Trust, a Registered Charity based in London. The aim of the GWS is:

'The alleviation of hardship and distress amongst Gurkha Ex-Servicemen of the British Crown and their dependants by rendering aid to individuals and their communities in Nepal.'

Individual Aid is the core activity of the GWS, and working through 25 Welfare Centres, basic welfare pensions and medical care are provided for over 11,500 Gurkha veterans and widows. Individual Aid also comes in the form of hardship and educational grants, and accounted for approximately half of the £3.5 million spent by the GWS last year. Community Aid concentrates on building schools, bridges and water projects, with funds mainly provided by the Department for International Development (DFID), Kadoorie Agricultural Aid Association (KAAA) and Exercise Trailwalker. The help of the British Government is essential in covering all GWS support costs in Nepal, with the result that the total amount of any donation actually reaches those in need.

During my trek I was tasked to visit seven schools which had received major grants for rebuilding, as well as interviewing two ex-servicemen and one widow. Even after a short time in the hills, I soon understood just

how vital the support of the GWS is. At the first AWC I visited, a pensioner arrived with a gangrenous foot. He had been carried for two days by his sons in order to reach the AWC, and was in a great deal of pain. The AWC's Medical Assistant called the doctor immediately, and the pensioner was sent to hospital within an hour. As a Welfare Pensioner he will be refunded 100% of his expenses for medical treatment – Nepal has no free National Health Service. I also visited an elderly couple who relied heavily on the help of their nearest AWC. The Ex-Serviceman was 84 years old and had been held as a Japanese POW for three years during World War 2, and his wife was suffering from the advanced stages of cancer. The wife had already been treated in hospital in Kathmandu, and the couple's welfare pension was their only source of income. Examples of such extreme hardship are commonplace in Nepal.

Three of the WW2 Veterans whom the GWS support

Over 3,500 of the 11,500 welfare pensions paid by the GWS each month are now sponsored by individuals who covenant £10 a month, allowing the GWS to use the money saved to extend its' medical care and other benefits. However, it still means that £80,000 has to be found *each month every month* to meet the promise of paying a welfare pension to those who are not yet sponsored. Could you help? To find out more details about sponsoring a destitute Ex-Serviceman or widow please contact the GWT (address below). Another way to help these proud people to whom we owe a great debt of honour is to participate in the annual Trailwalker fund raising event. Next year's event takes place on 24/25 June 2000, and after raising £60,000 with 800 competitors this year, Trailwalker 2000 aims to raise £100,000 and to attract 1000 participants. To receive an information pack, contact the Trailwalker office on 01455 222576 or visit our website: http://www.trailwalker.uk.clara.net The Gurkha Welfare Trust can be contacted at: 3rd Floor, 88 Baker St, London, W1M 2AX. Tel: 0171 707 1925 Fax: 0171 707 1929

EXERCISE FLYING KHUKURI 3 1999

by LCpl Sundar Rai

Exercise Flying Khukuri took place in Beckingham training area during the period of 15-19 November 1999 and was organised by our Squadron Second in Command, **Capt A. R. Aitken.** The main aim of the exercise was to make sure that all the Operation Scarab/Appolyon assets and personnel in it could work efficiently in case of a callout. The secondary aim of the exercise was to brush up our military skills in the field environment. The exercise was conducted in two distinct stages. The first stage consisted of practicing Op Scarab/Appolyon for two days. Operations Scrab/Appolyon are Military Aid to Civilian Powers (MACP) Operations initiated at a high governmental level. If they call us out, we are there in the field within six hours providing secure voice lines, faxes or anything they want regarding communication. The second stage was purely a military training exercise, which consisted of map reading, NBC, patrolling, section attack and attack in pairs. The last but very interesting lesson was 'Conduct after Capture'. We had been fortunate enough to be imparted such a valuable lesson, where we learned what to do, and more importantly, how to survive and live graciously afterwards should we become a Prisoner of War. Finally, we came back to Bramcote Camp on the morning of 19 November 1999 after a very useful yet an enjoyable exercise.

Jai Queen's Gurkha Signals.

33rd (LANCASHIRE & CHESHIRE) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

42 (CITY OF MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

Sqn Comd **Maj I. G. Kelly TD KINGS**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) G. Ward**

Once again the plaintive cry comes up the line from RHQ at Liverpool, 'Where are your *WIRE* notes?' It seems that the last lot have only just been dispatched, but after checking the file, I realise that the Adjutant is not joking and indeed two months have flashed past so quickly that Christmas is almost upon us. Knowing that it's hopeless to contact my fellow officers in the faint hope that they might just have jotted down the odd thought or happening (fat chance!), the usual (no prizes for guessing who) Squadron scribbler once more takes up his well chewed pen.

VISIT OF THE HONORARY COLONEL PROFESSOR P. TOYNE DL

Kicking off with (which seems an appropriate metaphor to use when the TA Centre is a stones throw from Main Road) the visit to the Squadron of our Honorary Colonel, **Professor Toyne** the Vice Chancellor of Liverpool John Moors University, on the 19 October 1999.

The Honorary Colonel, Professor P Toyne, pictured with Mr Norman Hathaway and his wife Betty

It was a pleasure, as ever to receive a visit from **Professor Toyne** which occurred during a Tuesday evening drill night when he was met at the gates to Norman Road TA Centre by the Sqn Comd and the SSM. A variety of training was being carried out and the Honorary Colonel was able to talk to a large cross section of the Squadron and infect them with his unique brand of enthusiasm and energy. A highlight of the evening, was a presentation to **Mr Norman Hathaway**, our civilian vehicle mechanic, on the occasion of his retirement after 14 years service with the Squadron. **Norman** will be sadly missed and it is an indication of the great affection and respect in which he was held that we were able to ask **Professor Toyne** to present him with a beautiful engraved rose bowl from all ranks of the Squadron.

CO's COMPETITION – 30/31 OCTOBER 1999

The Winners and Runners Up in the CO's Competition at Strensall Training Camp
Front Row (L-R): LCpl Stew Green, Capt Dave Titheridge, Lt Paul 'Beanpole' Edwards, LCpl Michelle Holbrook and LCpl Paul Bennison
Middle Row: LCpl Sue Heaps, Sgt Tim Mounfield, Cpl Karl Bartlett, Sgt Dave Kerr, Sig Alex Thoms, OCdt Danny Fenwick
Back Row: Sig BJ Smith, LCpl Andy Connell, OCdt Charles Vincent, LCpl, Harold Griffiths and Cpl Mick Hanna

This year the Commanding Officers competition was held at Strensall Training Centre near York and consisted of a physically and mentally demanding series of military skills stands which were designed to test ITD skills amongst other things over a two day period. The 42 Sqn teams were led by **Capt Dave Titheridge** and **Lt Paul Edwards** respectively. The hot money was on **Dave Titheridge** leading his team to yet another victory, having won the competition in 1997 and 1998. However, our pint sized OC Trunk Node Troop, **Paul Edwards**, had other ideas and pipped them to the post by leading his team to a well deserved victory. A not too surprising occurrence when one considers that **Paul** was the RSM of 37 Sig Regt (V) before being appointed to a TA commission with the Squadron. Having completed a comprehensive clean sweep of first and second places in the Regimental Competition the Sqn Comd could perhaps be forgiven for having looked like the proverbial smiling Cheshire cat ever since.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

The Squadron took part in the Remembrance Sunday Parade through the centre of Manchester on the 14 November 1999. This was a big day for our SQMS(V), **SSgt Maurice Aarons**, as he was acting Sergeant Major, having just completed the two week drill course with the Brigade of Guards on the hotplate at Pirbright (the SSM was on his honeymoon in Thailand. Read on for an explanation). **SSgt Aarons** has now had a new dance named after him called the Salford Shuffle for reasons which escape me for the moment. Suffice to say that when his course report arrives from Pirbright I shall study it with great interest! Once the parade was over all and sundry repaired to the TA Centre at Norman Road for the usual curry lunch. Our guest of honour this year was **Maj Sam Arditti MBE DL MA**, who is a Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester.

42 Sig Sqn (V) marching in the Remembrance Sunday Parade led by the Sqn Comd, Maj Ian Kelly TD KINGS

BROUGHTON HOUSE HOME FOR DISABLED EX-SERVICEMEN

As a result of a conversation between the PSAO, **Capt Gerry Whelan**, and the Deputy Lord Lieutenant, **Maj Sam Arditti**, during the Remembrance Day lunch, the Squadron now has an affiliation, with Broughton House disabled Servicemen's Home. Broughton House, whose patron is **HRH The Duke of York**, was founded in 1916 to care for disabled Sailors and Soldiers returning from the Great War. Through its doors over 4,500 ex-Servicemen have entered, many from the 1939-45 War. It is a registered charity and is situated in a quiet residential area of Kersal, Salford and has facilities to care for 57 disabled Servicemen at a time. It was decided that the proceeds of a Squadron social event, which had been organised to raise money for charity, should be donated to the House. **Cpl Carl Jefferson** was the mover and shaker behind this event which took the form of a 'Horse Racing Night' held in the JRC. The sum of £200.00 was raised and our picture shows **Cpl Carl Jefferson** presenting a cheque to **Col D. E. Gibbs CBE TD JP DL**, the Chief Executive. It is hoped to run further events to improve on this modest but most welcome sum.

As a footnote, *WIRE* readers will be interested to know that three former members of the Corps are at present patients in the home. Pictured with **Col Gibbs** and **Cpl Jefferson** is **Norman Harris**, formerly **2325998 Sig Harris. Norman** served in Aden and then throughout the War with the Eighth Army in North Africa, Italy, France, Belgium and Germany. The other two ex-Corps men were both National Servicemen, postwar. **Hugh McKay** from Glasgow, formerly **22181314 Sig McKay**, who served in Catterick from 1949-51 and **Bill Grundy**, formerly **21057293 Sig Grundy**, who also served at Catterick from 1947-5 1. **Norman Harris** and **Bill Grundy** are both local men from the Salford area.

Ex-Signalman Norman Harris flanked by Col Gibbs, Chief Executive of Broughton House and Cpl Carl Jefferson

MARRIAGE
WO2 (SSM) GRAHAM WARD AND SGT LESLEY DEAKIN

A special mention must be made of our popular Sergeant Major, **Graham Ward. Graham** finally plucked up the courage and popped the question to our even more popular (she feeds us) AGC Chef, **Lesley Ward**, nee Deakin. They were married at the end of October and went off on a dream honeymoon to Thailand. Preparation and planning being every good Sergeant Major's watch word, he had already arranged drill courses for his two senior SSgts, **Maurice Aarons** and 'Rooster' **Coburn** six months before, realising that he would be away over the Remembrance Sunday Parade (coincidence or what!). On his return he held a highly successful wedding reception in the Drill Hall at Norman Road to which he invited all members of the Squadron. To mark this happy occasion the SSM and his charming bride were presented with an engraved ships decanter on behalf of all members of 42 Sig Sqn (V). Of course it goes without saying, that we wish them both a long and happy married life together.

WO2 (SSM) and Mrs G. Ward pictured after receiving a ships decanter from all the members of 42 Sig Sqn (V) at their wedding reception in the TA Centre at Norman Road

FURTHER CONGRATULATIONS

Finally congratulations are extended to the following: **OCdt Charles Vincent** on his promotion from Lance Corporal, **Sgt Kevin Westall** and his wife on the birth of their daughter, **Cpl Dave Kerr** on his promotion to Sergeant, **LCpl Karl Bartlett** on his promotion to Corporal, **Sig Georgina Evans** for gaining 'Best Endeavour' on her recruits course.

55TH (MERSEYSIDE) HEADQUARTERS SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Micah Cummings**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Paul Williams**

A warm welcome from 55 Sig Sqn to the new PSAO, **Capt Tom Ponton** who has retired as Quartermaster of the Regiment. **Capt Derek Deegan** now assumes the appointment of Quartermaster. A big thank you to **Capt Phil Atkinson** who has been standing in for three months. You can now get back to your job as OC LAD.

In November of this year 33 Sig Regt were invited to take part in an end of year shooting competition in Stadtallendorf in Germany. The Regiment entered two teams of four, a team of old and bold, **Maj Stan Quayle** the RAO, **WO2 (RQMS) McFarlane, WO2 (SSM) Paul Williams** and **SSgt (FofS) Paul Corrie** and a team of youngsters, **Cpl Matty Riley, Cpl Sean Tran, Sig Marty Elliot** and **Sig John Clothier**. We also took two reserves/Admin who were **Sgt Tim Mounfield** and **LCpl Anton Kenny**. The shooting competition is run and organised by the Reservistenkameradschaft Giesel and sponsored by the 39th Finance Battalion US Army who are stationed in Geissen. The competition is an international event with teams from all over Europe, however this year we were the only British team to enter. Reservists from the Army, Navy and Air Force as well as the German Police and German Border Police took part in the competition. The competition involved shooting the Colt M16A2 rifle, the M249AR machine gun or Minimi and the new Heckler & Koch SL8. Minimal instruction on the weapons was given with no time for any zeroing. The standard set was very high and a large number of the competitors failed to qualify. This was mainly due to the lack of experience with the weapon. **WO2 (SSM) Paul Williams** got the highest score of the two teams earning him a sharpshooter's qualification and **SSgt (FofS) Paul Corrie** came a close second earning him a Marksman qualification. The overall result for the teams was Fifth place for the old and bold who are all 42 (NW) Bde B Class Champions and 33rd place for the youngsters. This was out of a total of 129 teams. Our prize was a 105mm shell case engraved with the 39th Finance Battalion's crest. We are looking forward to next year's competition where we aim to come back as winners. Any other units who wish to enter shooting competitions abroad contact your unit rep for the Reserve Forces Association, or the Reserve Forces Association Duke of York's Headquarters, Chelsea, London, SW3 4SG or call on 0171 730 6122 and ask for a serial list of the events for the year 2000.

59 SIGNAL SQUADRON

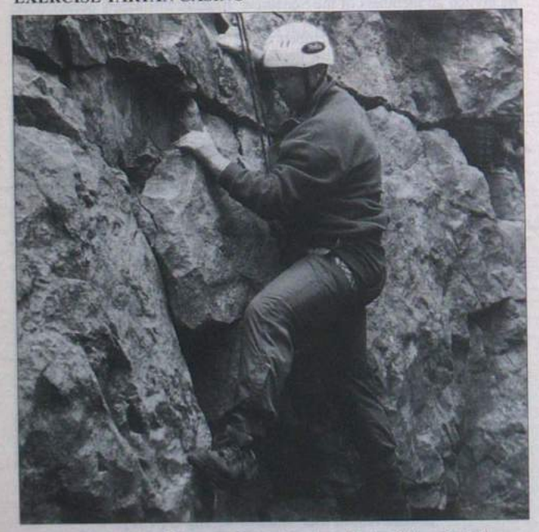
Sqn Comd **Maj Chris Heaton**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Bob Paterson**

The Squadron has had a busy time this last three months, having recently completed the vehicle PRE. We are now busy working towards RSIT early next year.

BARBECUE

The annual barbecue went very well, the weather was good and spirits were high. The theme this year was a potted sports event between the Officers and Seniors versus the Other Ranks:

EXERCISE TARTAN CASINO



SSgt George Sheppard showing how it should be done!!

The annual adventure training weekend at Halton Camp went extremely well with over sixty members of the Squadron taking part in various outdoor pursuits including canoeing, mountain biking, rock climbing and abseiling:

CO'S COMPETITION

The annual CO's Competition has just taken place where teams of eight carry out various military activities that they would not normally take part in.

Sgt Brian Gillbanks, Cpl Bobby Hunter, Sig Chris Donaghy and LCpl Mick Philburn showing how much they enjoyed the pistol shoot Sgt Gillbanks was heard to say, 'That's unusual, we've all run out at the same time'

The Squadron 'Q' Staff,
SSgt Denise Halewood and Cpl Karen Woodford show how to smile (They've just been told by the QM we're on fresh rations!!)

Overall the weekend proved to be a success although the scoring was weighted against us again.

80 (CHESHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Stan Fitzgerald**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Frank Hale**

SSM Bob Taylor (Left) handing over to SSM Frank Hale, November 1999

Since the last edition 80 (Cheshire Yeomanry) Signal Squadron has been extremely busy with exercises, training and recruiting. The last regimental exercise of 1999 was conducted in an urban environment with 80 Squadron being located in a school in Liverpool. One of the pupils had recently subjected the school to a CS gas attack so there was a real NBC threat! The Regiment proved that it could operate in a city environment as well as the more familiar countryside role. The Squadron has lost **Sigs Darran Carr** and **Michael Wagstaff** to the Regular Army whilst **Capt Bill Dixon, 2Lt Ross McLeod, Sgt Chris Murphy** and CSO5, **John Fidler** (MGS) have deployed to Bosnia in support of the Regular Army. We wish them all the best of luck. **SSM Bob Taylor** has retired from the Territorial Army after 28 years service and **SSM Frank Hale** has taken the helm as SSM of 80 Squadron.

The Squadron wishes **Bob** and his family all the best for the future and thanks him for all his hard work and dedication throughout his long and distinguished service. **Cpl Paul Bermingham** has just completed a twelve month tour of the Falkland Islands and is now serving in Blandford on FTRS. **LCpl Rory Haddock** is currently completing a twelve month tour of duty in Bosnia. We hope to see both of them back in the Squadron soon to get on with some real soldiering!

34 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col D. A. Hargreaves**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) N. C. Yarwood**

MUDDLE MANSION

A groan of disappointment was heard in Glasgow at the same time as a shout of pain was heard in Middlesbrough when the Adjt, **Dave Wilson,** had to tell records he was not resigning. The CO was happier! A warm welcome to the mansion for **WO2 (RQMS) Richie Bell, WO2 (YofS) John Walesby** and **WO2 (FofS) Steve Young**. May we welcome you to the delightful surroundings of Brambles Farm! The major note of the period is the announcement that the CO is off to Bosnia for six months. What will we do without him!!! After a hectic few months it was great to get the invite to accompany the boss to pastures new but alas it was not to be for anyone else in the mansion. With a slight accent on words 'Why would the mansion want to go to the muddle!'

34(N) SIGNAL REGIMENT (V) ENTER A TEAM FOR THE NIJMEGEN MARCHES
LCPL WILKINSON'S DIARY OF EVENTS (SHORT VERSION)

16 July: Departed for our journey into the unknown.

17 July: Boarded the ferry at Dover for Calais. The team has a few drinks on board. Nearly lost two members, better luck next time. Arrive at Heumensboord Camp approx 1330hrs. Shown to our accommodation (unfortunately all rooms with balcony and sea view had previously been booked). Had a briefing, first meal on camp and then for a night out in Nijmegen.

18 July: Spent an excellent day/night in Amsterdam.

19 July: Alcohol free day (**Sig Barret** and **Sig Parkes** obviously misunderstood the briefing and thought the alcohol was free, at least they drank like it was). Opening ceremony in Nijmegen, British contingency about to march on with flags flying high and the heavens opened up and put an end to that; umbrellas up and everyone home. **LCpl Wilkinson**'s 15 minutes of fame is put on hold.

20 July: Tuesday morning (only just) 0245hrs, shower, dressed and b/fast at 0315hrs. Food hall is buzzing. Made sandwiches for lunch and we're on parade for 0400hrs. 0430hrs eyes right and we're off! The streets are lined with civilians cheering us on. The first day seems to run smoothly and we made quite good time; back in the beer tent for 1345hrs. The atmosphere is electrifying. Finished the first day with all eleven, though **Sig Crayton** had a tough time with headaches.

21 July: Day Two up with the sparrows again, b/fast, parade; eyes right so here we go we're at it again – go left, go right, go left. The songs just keep on flowing the same ones over and over and over again. Most of the team are starting to get the odd blister but we keep smiling through, just like we always do 'cos we know we'll blister again as tomorrows another sunny day. Third checkpoint: **Sig Crayton**'s in the medics tent with constant migraine and vomiting. Team Leader (**Lt Williams**) comes back 'they've pulled him out'. So then there was ten and the little one said show me the way to go home I'm blistered and I want to go to bed (via the beer tent please). Not such a quick day today, but we're on our journey home now and the teams beginning to gel.

22 July: Thursday (renamed Hells Day). I think everyone dreaded this day. Sore blistered, feet swollen, ankles and knees and seven hills to climb. We climbed the first two without knowing; the next few weren't so small but they take your mind off your feet (concrete slabs). 'It's a long, long road, with many a winding turn', then we spot the Shell garage, just another few miles now, heads down we're going for it! Time for another song, 'All the leaves are brown and the sky is gray; I went for a walk, a walk! a walk! oh yes, just a stroll in the park. We're getting closer to the beer tent, heads up shoulders back, feel proud; 'Oh when the Brits, oh when the Brits, oh when the Brits come marching in, 'They'll want zehn biers bitte!' and then some more. Well one more day to do and we've done it! Slabs of concrete and legs in serious pain now. (**Lt Howard** laughs in the face of pain). A few of the team visit the medics tent then preparation of kit for the march past, tea, shower and lights out.

23 July: Day Four up at 0230hrs, dressed, b/fast, prepare lunch, fill water bottles, parade, photo taking session, 34(N) Sig Regt eyes right and away we go for the last time. Who said the last day was the easiest! Funny how we all hobble down the road in step. Seeing familiar faces in the crowds old and young from all around the world. (**Sig Bibby** chats to a few hundred as we pass by). God where's the finish line? Ten determined (knackered) soldiers marching in two files. Someone spots MacDonalds (finish point) and emotions they run high.

Now that's the end, it's over, but was it all worthwhile? perhaps you should ask: **Lt Williams** (Team Leader), **SSgt More** (2IC), **Lt Howard, LCpl Callaghan, LCpl Wilkinson, LCpl Williamson, Sig Barret, Sig Bibby, Sig Crayton, Sig Parkes, Sig Rayner.** See you all next year!!

The End

49(WR) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd **Maj Sixsmith** DE
SSM **WO2 (SSM) James**

ARRIVAL

A warm welcome to the new SPSI, **Sgt Bob** 'The cat' **Breheney** and the new Radio Relay Corporal **Cpl Daz** 'NATO Boy' **Collins**.

DEPARTURES

We finally managed to get rid of **WO2 (RQMS) Mick Ginty**, on promotion to 39 Sig Regt (V) at Bristol. Seriously though, Good Luck **Mick.**

PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to **Sgt Ian** 'Clint' **Eastwood** and **LCpl Kelly** 'Witch' **Marsden** on their well earned promotions.

EXERCISE GREEN OSPREY – 5/6 JUNE

Ex Green Osprey is a management training weekend at The Royal School of Signals, Blandford. The intention of the Exercise is to train Ops/Plans personnel and Node Commanders in the command and control of the Ptarmigan System. The Exercise takes the form of computer based training followed by an Exercise scenario. The scenario starts off quite slowly and then in true army fashion finishes at a delirious pace. Many beers were owed on the strength of Ops/Plans personnel answering the subset as OSCs. It became obvious that the pace of the exercise was too fast when **SSgt Dawn** 'I'm sure that I told you that before, didn't I?' **Malloy** phoned the other Ops/Plans for an update. Imagine her surprise when the subset was answered by the OC, who happened to be stood next to her.

ANNUAL CAMP 19 JUNE/3 JULY

This year's Annual Camp was divided into three phases. The first week consisted of a Ptarmigan Comms Exercise, the second was a military training week and the end of the camp was in the form of the

Regiment exercising its right to a Freedom March through the streets of Middlesbrough. At Squadron level the comms Exercise went well, although it was with much regret that we had to hand over our blank ammo to 90 Sqn so that they could be attacked. A special mention must go to **Sgt Stu Key, RLC**, who at one stage seemed to be providing food for the five thousand. The military training week culminated in the Birtwistle Trophy. This year each squadron had to provide five 5-man teams, the combined scores of the top two teams from each squadron to count. The competition consisted of military stands such as command tasks, vehicle recognition, assault courses and ranges. The top two teams finished first and fifth respectively, the Squadron claiming the trophy for the third consecutive year. They also won the sports competition, the two volleyball teams contested the final (**SSgt Keith** 'Dig it' **Holdstock** to the fore), the football team was runner up (thanks to 'I can't miss, sure shot' **Williams**), the tuggers were third in the tug of war and the Squadron easily won the chain of command race. Each year the Squadron awards a trophy to the best or most improved Signaller, male and female, on the camp and this year the two deserving winners were **Sig Kev Downs** and **Sig Sarah Stedman**. Well done. The culmination of the camp was the Freedom of Middlesbrough Parade. The TA are not issued No 2 Dress and it was only through some hard work by the QMs dept and some last ditch stitching by the tailoress that saved the day. It was a fine summer's day and everyone in the Squadron seemed to enjoy the parade and then it was back to Leeds for a well earned cup of tea.

The OC presenting Sig Stedman and Sig Downes with the Best Signaller Shield

Members of 49 Sqn prior to the Freedom of Middlesbrough Parade

The winning Birtwistle Team
(L-R): Sgt Keith Geddes, 2Lt Keith Williams, Sig Mel Firth, Cpl 'Ollie' Oliver, Sig Kev Downes

EVERYONE LOVES A SAILOR

Sgt Joff Bailey was recently dined out by the Squadron, but not before we can claim some reflected glory for his recent success in the Services RS Championships. **Sgt Bailey** along with his crew **Adrian Lynham**, won the RS400s competition, winning four out of the six races. Well done **Joff** and good luck with the infamous Bowman Trials.

GENERAL

Congratulations go to the following on successful completion of their Phase II Recruit Training at The Royal School of Signals: **Sigs Clarkson, Lodge, Nelson, Ramzan, Reveley, Stead, Stedman and Torley**. A warm welcome back from the Falkland Islands to **LCpl Terri Collict**, who is already searching for her next adventure. Bosnia perhaps?

WINDSURFING

A very well done to **SSgt Baz** 'I've still got it' **Raine**, the SPSI at the Hull Detachment, who won the Royal Signals Heavyweight Windsurfing Championship and came second overall.

A PERFECTLY GOOD AEROPLANE

Sgt Tony Maples was medically discharged from the TA last year and members of the Squadron decided that they would like to raise money to help with a trip to the USA for **Tony** and his family. After much thought and heated discussion it was decided that the team would take part in a parachute jump. The team consisted of seven intrepid idiots, that was **Sgt Dave** 'Oh I've broken a finger nail' **Carr** pulled out at the last minute, and The Merlin Centre at Topcliffe was to be the location for their hairbrained scheme. The team was made up of the following: **SSgt Dawn** 'Wings' **Malloy, Sgt Frank** 'I have to be in black' **Mason, LCpl Aron** 'What happens if I pull this' **Wimpenny, Sig Becky** 'How does the count go again' **Lodge, Sig Ben** 'Where do we land' **Martindale** and **Sig Sahera** 'Do my goggles suit me' **Ramzan.** The training all went according to plan and then they were airborne, it was at this stage that hearts began to pound, sweat began to drip and doubts began to appear. Sig Lodge needed some coaxing out of the aircraft and she must have been counting mentally as all that could be heard were her screams. **Sig Martindale**'s exit went well, but then he decided that he needed some physical training and landed about two miles from the DZ. Apparently it was a pleasant walk back. All enjoyed the adventure and about £800 was raised for the good cause.

The faces of fear!

EXERCISE POLAR PEAK EBOR – 11/12 SEPTEMBER 1999

This was an Adventure Training Weekend in the Peak District organised by **Lt Jo Howard** and **Cpl Andy Meadley**. The Exercise was to take the form of mountain biking, hillwalking and rockclimbing. The walkers started off at the Torside Reservoir and finished at Edale, via Kinder Scout, a total distance of about 23km. **SSgt Dawn** 'Never Happy' **Malloy** was not too impressed with the lack of water on the Kinder Waterfall and there was some discussion as to how far two kilometres on the map is as compared to on the ground. **Sgt** 'Nobby' **Clarke** was that enthusiastic to join the rest of the Squadron that he managed to collect three bonus points from the constabulary in Sheffield. The mountain biking was a little too steep for some tastes with some of the bikers spending a lot of the time with their bikes slung over their shoulders.

50 (NORTHUMBRIAN) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

Sqn Comd	**Maj G. Jennings**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) S. Tinkler**

ARRIVALS/FAREWELLS

A fond farewell to the Squadron Commander, **Maj John Lambton**, who has deployed to the Balkans for a six month Detachment. The new OC, **Maj Graham Jennings** is at this moment wading through the last three previous OC's paperwork, (the majority having been already filed in the infamous File 13). A warm welcome to **Sig Sam McDermott** who joined the Squadron just in time to attend Summer Camp and be volunteered to take over the running of the Squadron Football Team.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations go out to **2Lt Paul Denning**, who has just successfully completed and TA Commissioning Course at RMA Sandhurst. For his sins, **Paul** takes over the responsibilities of 2IC Trunk Node Troop. Congratulations to **Cpl Paul Standing** and **LCpl Vicky Standing** the proud parents of the Squadron's newest and youngest recruit, **Thomas Neil Standing.**

PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to **Sgt Ross Blair** and **Sgt Mickey Jemmett** who have made the short trip up the stairs to the Sergeants Mess. Well done. Also **SSgt Carole Ann Phillips**, who now outranks husband **Sgt Mark Phillips** – who wears the trousers in their house?

NEWS HOT OFF THE PRESS

Apparently to break the monotony of the leaving speeches at the Training Majors leaving do, the CO took it upon himself to promote **SSgt Colin Ridley** – Well done SQMS.

PRE CAMP DINNER

Once again the Squadron held a very successful Pre Camp Dinner. The standard of service from the Officers and SNCOs was a great improvement from last year, especially the wine waiters. The Chief Guest was the Commanding Officer, **Lt Col David Hargreaves**, whose party piece was to promote the head wine waiter, to Squadron Commander, **Maj Graham Jennings** is still paying for ringing the bell.

ANNUAL CAMP

This year's Annual Camp was a two part affair. Week one, Ex Able Condor, a Communications Exercise, saw the Squadron initially deploy to Granthan, then various locations in the North of England, the last one being seven miles from our own TAC! The Squadron lived up to their reputation as being the best communicators in the Regiment (or should that be the Brigade) and again did themselves proud. Various VIPs were entertained, notably the Master of Signals, **Maj Gen Sprackling**, who visited the Trunk Node at Ilidebrand Barracks, Harrogate. The Squadron SPSI, **SSgt** 'Mac' **Makinnon**, managing to drag himself out of his sleeping bag, to share a cup of tea and a packet of chocolate biscuits and reminiscing over old times with said Master of Signals! The second week of camp saw the Regiment deploy to Swynnerton Training Camp, on Ex Bold Tiger. The week comprised of Military Training and Drill, Drill and more Drill! The climax of the week was the Birtwistle Trophy and Regimental Smoker. **Sig Tony Standing** proving there is no truth in the rumours that he is about to be promoted, by playing the Acting SSM to perfection. Camp finished with the Squadron taking part in the Regimental Freedom Parade of Middlesbrough. All the RSM's shouting and hard work paying off.

ABC AID TO POLAND

WO2 (SSM) Steve Tinkler has been flying the flag for the Squadron by assisting the Teesdale Lions and ABC Aid to Poland in organising a weekend for Polish refugees in the Lake District. The children were visiting England from three different orphanages in Poland – Mragowo, Jawar and Warsaw. A great weekend was had by all and the children will take fond memories back to Poland of their time in the safe hands of the SSM.

A CHANCE ENCOUNTER

Whilst on a recent visit to Holland **Maj Chris Jones**, Ops Officer 34(N) Signal Regiment (V) and **Maj Graham Jennings**, Officer Commanding 50(N) Sig Sqn (V) had a chance meeting with ex-**Sgt Terry Beeching MM** now a sprightly 82 year old. During a lull on a tour of the Airborne museum Hartenstein at Oosterbeek, they got together for a chat about **Terry**'s experiences during the airborne landings and the Rhine crossing. **Terry** was with 30 Corps Sigs and was the line control Officer of 139 TE Section Line Mechs at Comms Sigs office. **Terry**'s unit was in position with 30 Corps on the Dutch/Belgium border and as Op Market Garden began they advanced with the aim of relieving Arnhem. As the advance came to a halt **Terry** had to mark time in the Nijmegan area, 30 Corps were then involved in the Rhine crossing. It was during this phase that Terry happened to mention to his OC that 'he was bored and could he find him something to do'. Well he did and **Terry** was given the responsibility of laying the Submarine cables across the Rhine …… at night and also under enemy fire. **Terry** successfully completed this task and as a result was awarded The Military Medal.

(L-R): Maj Graham Jennings, Sgt Terry Beeching and Maj Chris Jones. Clearly seen are the medals awarded to Terry and also his 30 Corps Divisional Flash alongside Jimmy

XXXV

35 (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

IT'S A BUGS LIFE

Lazing in front of my computer I was desperately searching for some inspiration to write some notes for the next edition of *The WIRE* when I came across the Regimental year 2000 Defensive Plan to deal with the Millennium Bug. I was convinced it was just another health and safety scare and couldn't possibly relate to my magnificent home PC that needed a small room to accommodate it - but big is powerful I say and anyway it complements my stacked hi-fi system with its 200 Watt speakers. That is until I started reading the bit about computers ceasing to work on 1 January due to some compliance problem with its internal clock. Happily the document reassured me that my toilet flush and drainage would continue to work except for some local failures - but hey what's new over Christmas and at least I can still use the telephone, which would also remain unaffected, to call out a plumber. But that won't resolve my immediate computer problem which will cease to function at the end of the year. Will this be the end of my useful life as a main contributor to *The WIRE* magazine and would I have to resort to using the typewriter?
In desperation I sought the help and guidance of our IT expert in the shape of **FofS Andy Gilpin**. He was quick to grasp my problem and wisely advised me that big isn't necessarily better and that I needed to invest in a more modern PC, with at least Windows 95, MS Office, an appropriate Anti Virus programme and loads of RAM. Now for someone who was brought up on an Olivetti typewriter, and currently using a ten year old Amstrad, this push towards modernisation as well as spending money worried me. Up until that point I thought Random Access Memory was something my Storeman, **Charlie**, experienced when he suffered a convenient memory loss, that Windows 95 was a national Double Glazing Company and that a Hard Drive was the daily experience I endured travelling into work! As for anti virus I assumed that was a course of antibiotics I was currently receiving for viral flu - which has now deteriorated! Happily my transformation in embracing modern technology is almost complete and having received some useful technical advice and training I am now semi computer literate. In the meantime until I can upgrade my PC the FofS gave me a floppy disc that would rectify my date problem so I can continue producing *Wire* Notes at home on my colossal but antiquated machine, but as I type my printer has just packed in - now where is my Christmas present list!

CHRISTMAS CRACKERS

Continuing on a light note the following humorous incidents took place during the past couple of months. While the afflicted would naturally prefer to remain anonymous, it is felt that in the current climate of openness and unfair play, it is in their best interests for their names to be revealed! **Cpl Carl Rossal** an experienced Tech serving with Mike Tp has reportedly gone into hiding when it was discovered he tried to jump start a 7Kva generator from the vehicle batteries but alas he ended up connecting the vehicle batteries to the installation batteries - a simple case of a power ranger getting his wires crossed but at least he wasn't charged! **SSgt Andy Egan** meanwhile now wishes he was a little more switched on when he asked **SSgt Charlie Walker** what day it was just before he paraded in Birmingham on Thursday 11 November at the Festival of Remembrance! No prizes for guessing the response **Capt Dave Brough** received when he asked the Sqn Fire NCO what some new fire extinguishers were for!

EXERCISE SPIDERS WEBB

Ex Spiders Webb was a shared HQ, 48 and 89 Sig Sqn Adventure & Leadership Training weekend held at Kimnel Park near Rhyl over the weekend 16/17 October . The weekend , which was designed to incorporate both fun and serious training activities was the brainchild of **SSgt Andy Egan.** He ensured a broad range of subjects were covered from Map Reading to specialised Command Tasks, which are necessary to assess the leadership potential of those who attended. The weekend was a considerable success, enjoyed by all who attended, full of unforgettable incidents and its format will be repeated in future training events. Memorable moments included **SSgt Jim Stephen**'s unique demonstration on how to scale an eight foot wall unaided. His lesson fell into disarray however, when he attempted to show off his gladiatorial talents and physical prowess and impress his enthusiastic and engrossed audience. Instead, much to his dismay, he acted out a scene from the film 'Ghost' when having misjudged his take-off he run straight into the wall and, while escaping unscathed, suffered a major loss of dignity. Having regained his composure he executed a magnificent run and jump and launched himself over the wall to the sound of great applause! Not to be outdone during the Orienteering exercise later in the day **Cpl Tracey Haggan** and **LCpl Adrian Proffitt** two of our most experienced Orienteers' missed their

marker and for the next hour at least attempted to act out 35 Sig Regt's dramatic interpretation of the Blair Witch Project. A wide eyed Tracey later confessed that the experience did prove to be a bit of a map reading nightmare. To cap the first day **Sgt Dave Taylor** received his introduction to the popular drink 'Metz' (you know the advert) that on the morning after left him in a delicate and contorted state. He naturally blamed everyone but himself. On the final day during the Map Reading lesson **Sgt Steve Crooks** (aka Julia Andrews) stayed with the film theme and unwittingly acted out a scene from the 'Sound of Music' when he led an intrepid group over a hill overlooking Rhyl only to have them impersonate the Von Trapp family. Much to his surprise they burst into a rendition of the 'Hills are alive with the Sound of Music'. **Sgt Crooks** remained unusually quiet during this impromptu rendition.

5 DIVISION CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

It seems for far too long our Regimental Orienteering Team have dominated the headlines and captured all the glory with their successful exploits in many orienteering competitions. Now it was the turn of the Regimental Cross Country team who have always aspired to reach the same level of success and acclaim. On a bitterly cold and windy day at Larkhill in early December the team achieved their aim of not only competing but also thrashing the opposition and winning. The team led by **SSgt (FofS) Neil Trengove** by sheer guts and determination managed to secure six team places in the top ten which was enough to ensure that the Regiment gained an excellent piece of silver to add to and adorn the trophy cabinet. Congratulations are extended to all of the runners who included **Sig Simon Brown, Cpl Nobby Styles, Sgt Surge, Cpl Shyam** and **Cpl Sudeep** and the RSM, **WO1 Geordie Marshall,** who despite a severe cold, persevered to the end and put up a great performance.

EXERCISE NODAL FORT

Ex Nodal Fort was a 48 Sig Sqn exercise that took place at Nescliffe training area and was designed to carry out some ITD tests and train members of the Squadron in the Defence of a Communications site. The exercise was planned and controlled by **Lt Andy Sturt** and started with a tactical deployment into field locations. The initial phase of the exercise was purely instructional with all involved undertaking ITD tests in first aid and NBC while receiving instruction and practice in patrolling and defence. Although heaven knows what **SSgt Andy Lloyd** (the new Sqn SPSI) thought when he discovered to his horror (almost half a mile later) that the patrol he thought he was leading had deserted him. It transpired that they had lost sight of their leader and thought the sensible option was to return to the Main Gate of the training area - well it was dark and he should have allowed them a torch or two! The exercise also represented a first encounter with mine awareness training with a typical scenario of recovering a casualty from a minefield. This not only provided useful training but it also made everyone aware of the fact that despite a world wide ban on mines, millions of them still exist all over the world presenting a daily hazard to many communities and our own troops. Up until Saturday afternoon the weather remained relatively mild but typical of Nescliffe within two hours it turned from mild to poor to appalling and the Bivi area turned into a quagmire with sleeping systems floating everywhere. Despite the increasingly poor weather the simulated Trunk Node responded well to the repetitive and determined enemy assaults and gained some valuable experience.

By Sunday morning though the weather took its toll and rumours abounded that the coastguard was being called in to recover those who had been swept away during the night! Amazingly the wind and rain dissipated just in time for the arrival of the helicopter (no not the coast-guard) that was to be used for training in aerial reconnaissance for future comms sites, unfortunately no one managed to hitch a ride. The exercise concluded with a further attack on the Trunk Node which resulted in the capture of several enemy wounded. This provided an exciting climax to the exercise that allowed all involved to return to our home TA Centre just in time for tea. Special thanks are extended to **SSgt Andy Lloyd, Sgt Mick McDonald** and **Sgt Keith Nevitt** for providing excellent DS support and a very special thanks to **Cpl Wendy Geddis** who took a break from her normal trade to provide essential catering support - thanks for the grub Wendy! There was also a large number of recruits on this exercise having their first taste of field conditions subsequently their personal skills and drills improved significantly. That is with the exception of one unnamed recruit who learned a very valuable lesson in personal admin the hard way, when drawing his kit a month later, he realised that it had been packed wet and consequently was not only a little fragrant but most of it required replacing!

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

One of the joys of Christmas within the Regiment is the annual celebrations and functions that take place in all locations when the TA family in all its guises get together and enjoy themselves and hopefully look back with fond memories. It goes without saying that we have just gone through an eventful year tinged with sadness and tragedy but happily we are now going through a period of consolidation, stability and calm and are now beginning to look ahead with renewed confidence, optimism and vigour. Getting together especially during the Christmas Season strengthens the bonds that tie us all and allow us to enjoy ourselves and relax amongst the good company of family friends, companions and colleagues. The first two events involved the Officers and Sergeants Messes which both took place on Saturday 4 December.

The Sergeants Mess Christmas Draw took place at 58 Sqn's TA Centre based in Newcastle under Lyme and proved to be a most enjoyable and fun packed occasion with almost everyone winning a prize of one description or another. The acknowledged premier event however has to be the Officers Mess Guest Night held at the City of Birmingham's magnificent and sumptuous Council House and is fondly and traditionally known as the Council House Dinner. Guests of Honour included The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Birmingham, **Cllr** and **Mrs Ian McArdle**, Comd 143 Bde, **Brig John King** and Comd 11 Sig Bde **Brig Jonathan Cook**. All of our guests were welcomed by the CO, **Lt Col Steven Potter** and the Honorary Colonel, **Col Brian Foxon**.

A delighted Dominic Hope
pictured with her Sqn Comd, Maj Chris Edwards

Following the traditional speeches the CO presented the award of best junior officer to a delighted **Capt Dominic Hope** of 58 Sig Sqn and also promulgated **Lt Andy Sturts** promotion. Both **Dominic** and **Andy** celebrated their achievements in traditional style. Present at this very special dinner were many old friends of the Regiment included **Maj Gen Paul Alexander** a former Honorary Colonel . Also present was perhaps the Regiments oldest and most distinguished friend in **Lt Col Geoffrey Davis** who it would be fair to describe as the Regiments founder member.

Promoted at last Lt Andy Sturt with Capt Allison Swain

The founder member Lt Col Geoffrey Davis

He joined 48 Sig Regt as a signaller in 1939 and served his war years in a host of other Royal Signal units including 61 Sig Regt, 45 Sig Regt finishing with 7 Armd Bde Sig Sqn and was commissioned in June 1943. After the war he rejoined 48 Sig Regt which for a while was

retitled 1/20 Army Signal Regiment and later joined 59 Sig Regt based in Liverpool in 1960. Three years later he joined 58 Sig Regt as Sqn Comd and later was appointed 2IC and finally assumed command in 1967 just prior to the merger of 58 & 48 Sig Regt which then formed 35 Signal Regiment Ever since then the good Colonel has given 35 Signal Regiment his complete and total support and can be seen at every Council House Dinner. In this our Millennium year all members of the Regiment are both proud and delighted to know him and fervently hope that this unique friendship and relationship carries on for many more years to come.

RING THEM BELLS

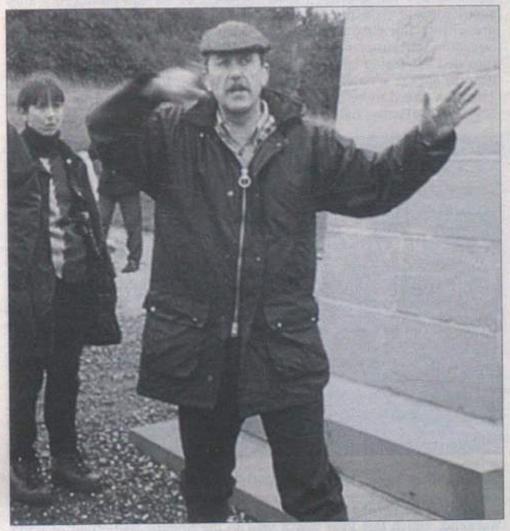
It is appropriate to close our current contribution to *The Wire* with a message of congratulations to the Bell brothers serving with 89 Sig Sqn. First to **Cpl Steve Bell**, an ex Regular Radio Relay Operator now serving with the AGC , for achieving an A grade on his SPS Finance upgrading courses and to his brother **Mick** (ex Regular RMP) who has just returned from his Det Comds course having received the Top Student award. Very well done to you both! A further congratulation is extended to all those aspiring SNCO's who were selected for promotion to Sergeant during the recent Regimental promotion board. Finally a Happy New Year to all of our readers.

37 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col P. J. Grogan**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Cox**

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

The past two months has been a relatively quiet time for the unit. The principal thrust of training was aimed at Op Surety (The Millennium Exercise) which unfortunately has now been cancelled. This was a major disappointment for the unit and all that had volunteered to take part in the exercise. During the weekend, 2-3 October, Regimental Officers attended a Battlefield Tour of the Somme - it would appear that wine tasting and the replenishment of wine cellars featured high on the priority list. More details of the tour are contained in 93 Sqn's notes. The Regimental Officers held a dinner night to bid farewell to the outgoing CO, **Lt Col Whittle** and his wife **Pamela**. Unfortunately, however, the lasting memory of the night to all will be **Maj John Duggan**, the Regiment's 2IC, giving his speech whilst his fly was clearly ajar!



CO 37 Sig Regt (V), Lt Col Alan Whittle
describes the action at Memetz Wood

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. Riley**
SSM **WO2 J. Krikorian**

EXERCISE GOLDEN LION

Ex Golden Lion is an annual adventure training event and this year it took place over the weekend of 17 to 19 September. The location in North Wales was excellent and the facilities at the Naval Adventure Training lodge, although cramped, were ideal for a small group. A total of 24 Squadron personnel attended. The Saturday morning started with an unplanned fire practice, at 0615hrs the alarms went off and everyone ran towards the exits, but were stopped by the red faces of the Chef, **Cpl Powel** and **SSgt (SQMS) Wood** who had burnt the sausages. We knew it was not a practice as the PSAO was also seen running with just his underpants on. The girls had to cover their eyes!!!

After breakfast, which didn't take long to eat, the Squadron was placed into three groups. This was not an easy task as no one wanted to go with the PSAO, but the youngest and fittest couldn't hide and they were dragged out from nooks and crannies. The groups then departed to start their activity which comprised of TR&A and map navigation. The weather was dry but the wind was gale force and appearing without warning in gusts, which proved difficult at times to even walk let alone hold a map. One particular gust caught **SSgt** 'Andy Cap' **Skelton** unawares, which resulted in him fleeing down the mountain to retrieve his hat whilst the rest of the group almost went para gliding without the need of any wings.

SSgt 'Andy Cap' Skelton
pleased after retrieving his much loved cap, during Ex Golden Lion

On the Sunday morning the weather was appalling, the wind had reduced but a continuous downpour now replaced it. Orienteering had been arranged in a local forest but as everyone was so keen and had been looking forward to this event (I lie a lot) it was decided to proceed. **WO2 Eddie O'Connor** was paired with **Cpl Mickey Muckle** but it took them some hours to return. It seems they lost their way in the undergrowth and when they finally emerged without their map they wandered around taking in the view until being given directions out of the forest by another group. **Sgt Phil Hall** and **LCpl Eddie Dale** won the orienteering event. They were each presented with a much sought after Squadron T-shirt. Both were extra large!!! Although the weather over the weekend was appalling the aim of the exercise was achieved and valuable lessons were learnt. New members of the Squadron were introduced to top roping and abseiling and other members gained experience on route selection and map scale appreciation.

67 (QOWWY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj R. E. W. Hall**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) M. Walker**

The Squadron, having completed Annual Camp at Fremington has embarked on a very busy period. Ex Winged Lion saw all our assets deployed to Copthorne Barracks, Shrewsbury. This was quickly followed by Ex Autumn Belle both of which were in preparation of Op Surety. **Sgt Mick Clarke** also deployed with his team as part of the work up for Op Jekyl. On 19 September 1999 we also took part in Civic Sunday at Stratford on Avon which saw members of the squadron on ceremonial duties including Sword Bearer. **SSgt Eric Head** our PSI has at long last returned from Blandford where he has been learning the intricacies of IT for five weeks - we now look forward to much improved communications. On the social front our Annual Post Camp Squadron Dinner took place at Barford - **Sgt** 'Ros' **Thwaites** organised this event and both current and ex members from far and wide attended - it was a great success. We say farewell to **Sgts Pete Deakin** and **Rob Cameron** both of whom are unable to continue with their TA duties due to other commitments and welcome **Paul Jones** joining the Commissioned Ranks and hope his stay will be long, pleasant and memorable. Finally, our congratulations go to **Capt Andy Fletcher** on his recent marriage - although not currently serving with the squadron is still a valued member of the hierarchy and held in high esteem - especially as he currently controls the Brigade IT Budget - best wishes to him and **Paula** for the future.

93 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd **Maj A. Unwin**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Reid**

Over the weekend of 1-3 October 1999, Officers of 93 Sig Sqn (V) took part in a Regimental study taking in the battlefield of the Somme and visiting the World War I cemeteries in the area. The study was led by the CO, **Lt Col Alan Whittle** who also acted as guide and commentator. The Regimental group set off from RHQ at Redditch at 2000hrs and arrived at Maidstone at 2340hrs.

Early next morning saw the group boarding the ferry at Dover and despite delays due to 50mph winds in the Channel, arrived in France at 1000hrs. The first visited was Serre which was of particular interest to the squadron officers as on 1 July 1916, the Accrington Pals went over the top. The Squadron has in its title 'East Lancashire' and as the Pals were the 11th Service Battery, East Lancashire Regiment, to be able to see the site where so many fellow Lancastrians had died was very poignant. The graves are kept in pristine condition, a credit to the War Graves Commission and surely of great comfort to those relatives of the fallen who make the pilgrimage. The party then moved on to Mematz Wood where the 38th Welsh Division fought. The memorial to the fallen is spectacular and is in the form of a bright red dragon with strands of barbed wire in its claws. En route the huge mine crater of Lochnagar was viewed. Next we visited a German cemetery to see the site where 17,500 German soldiers lie, many in mass graves. Of particular interest were head stones of German Jews, especially considering the persecution of Jews by the Nazis during the Second World War. The day ended with visits to Delville Wood where thousands of South Africans perished and the Theipval Memorial, a huge monument, which carries thousands of names, none of whom have a final resting-place.

We stayed overnight in the town of Arras and in the morning set off for Vimy Ridge. This strategic ridge was fought for by the Canadian Division against an enemy well established and with the advantage of the high ground. The area has not been landscaped and still bears the craters caused by the intense bombardment. Much of the land is still fenced off due to unexploded munitions. The huge memorial was created from stone quarried in the former Yugoslavia and like Theipval, bears the names of soldiers with no known grave. This was the final site visited before making our way home. The weather throughout the weekend had not been good with violent showers of heavy rain. However this only added to the atmosphere of these silent places where, collectively, millions who had fought and died and were now remembered. Whereas we could climb back into the coach to dry off, those who were there and survived had to endure four long years of appalling conditions. The saying 'Lest we Forget' now means much more to those of us who attended that weekend.

EXERCISE HIMALAYA DRAGON

During September and October 1999 three members of 93 Sig Sqn (V), **Sgt Jim Holmes**, **Sgt George MacGregor** and **LCpl Jonathan Greaves** participated in Ex Himalaya Dragon. This ambitious Joint Services adventurous training exercise involved over 180 members of the regular and reserve forces, in an expedition to climb 18 peaks in the Nepalese Himalayas. Since completing the selection weekend in March 1998, an extensive training programme took place over the following 18 months, allowing all participants to develop their skills, qualifications, and gain further experience before the expedition. This included winter mountaineering in Scotland (in what was possibly the worst weather of the year), rock, snow and ice climbing, and an alpine mountaineering course to gain experience on glacial terrain.

On arrival in Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal, the 18 teams then went their separate ways to their climbing areas, which were themselves a challenge even to get to as the road system in Nepal does not venture very far into the mountainous regions. **LCpl Jonathan Greaves** was a member of the team to climb Mardi Himal (5,588 metres). This involved an interesting bus journey to Pokhara, followed by an approach from the South following a river up the Seti valley.

After the climb, the route out was by following the Mardi Khola South. **Sgt George MacGregor**'s team was given the task of climbing Pisang peak (6,091 metres). The approach was via the popular trekking route 'the Annapurna Circuit' as far as Pisang village, where the team left the crowds of trekkers to establish a base camp at 4,200 metres, and a high camp at 5,400 metres from which to approach the peak. The route out again followed the course of the Annapurna Circuit over the Thorong La pass (5,416 metres), before flying out from a remote mountain airstrip at Jomsom. **Sgt Jim Holmes** was a member of the Rolwaling team, whose approach route to climb the peaks Ramdung (5,930 metres) and Parchamo (6,273 metres) followed an un-mapped route through uninhabited country for several days before setting up base camp at just over 5,000 metres. The picturesque Rolwaling valley is to the West of the Everest area, and is relatively unspoilt by tourism as the Nepalese government restrict access to this area.

All the teams experienced the effects of this year's late monsoon season, which unfortunately reduced the opportunities for photography for the first few days of the trip, and tested the waterproof properties of the tents to the limit. Gladly the weather changed for the better at the end of September, and the mists cleared to reveal the Himalayan scenery in all it's majesty. With the climbing phase of the expedition complete, a few days sightseeing in the amazing city of Kathmandu was squeezed in before the long trip home. All agreed that the expedition was challenging, but one definitely not to be missed, and was well worth all the hard work and training over the time leading up to it. A lot of experience was obtained from both the training and the expedition, and also qualifications were gained by all which should prove to be of benefit to the Regiment.

Sgt Jim Holmes near Ramdung Peak Base Camp

96 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj R. Bowden**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) C. Taylor**

Following a successful contribution to 2 (National Communication) Signal Brigade's Exercise Autumn Belle, the Squadron was busy in preparation for what proved a busy November and December. With trade training weekends, Remembrance Sunday and a maintenance weekend the Squadron has certainly not been bored. The Squadron was extremely well represented at this year's Remembrance Parade in Coventry. An excellent and fitting effort by the members of 96 Sqn produced a very smart turnout with the Squadron resplendent in its No.2 Dress and presenting the City of Coventry with a very smart Royal Signals Squadron. The dropping of hundreds of poppies from the air by aeroplane provided a touching end to the service and it was extremely rewarding to hear the appreciation of the local public for their local Royal Signals unit. This was added to by a letter of thanks and appreciation from the Lord Mayor of Coventry, **Cllr Mrs Joan Wright**.

96 Squadron on parade

A month earlier the Squadron had organised the 37 Sig Regt (V) study weekend, which this year saw a visit to the Somme battlefield of north eastern France. This proved to be an extremely educational and moving weekend and we would like to express our appreciation to those members of the Regimental officers and warrant officers who attended this weekend and made it such a success. Our thanks go also to **Lt Col Alan Whittle** - CO 37 Sig Regt (V) - who provided the historical commentary although **Maj Dickie Hall** (OC 67 Sig Sqn) provided some commentary as he was there the first time in 1916!!! Certainly none who attended could fail to be moved by the immense sacrifice and suffering whilst I am certain everyone went home wiser than when they left.

With two new officers in **Capt Jonathan Farmer** (ex RE) and **Lt Miles Schofield** (ex 6 Bn RRF) and various other new members the Squadron is certainly looking healthy. This is probably just as well. With the annual Ex Cold Comfort fast approaching (and with it the usual Christmas celebratory alcoholic indulgence) the Squadron will need as much health as it can muster. Having provided the local Casualty department with plenty of business last year, this year's festivities will hopefully be a little less inclined to provide such a drain on the resources of the NHS... We can but hope for an enjoyable, memorable and pleasantly safe Saturday night free from brussel sprouts and Christmas pudding eating competitions which usually contribute to the evenings pleasantries.

And finally... our congratulations go to **Sgt Julie Brookes** and **LCpl Steve Tuck** on their engagement to be married next year. We are not yet sure what you get if you cross a potential Yeoman and a technician but we wish them every happiness and success for the future.

38 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

Nottingham's military Signallers are straining their ears for a sound of their weatherman on the other side of the world. Territorials at 87 Sig Sqn were thrilled for **Dion Brittain** when he set off on the adventure of a life time. The 24-year-old Corporal is currently on a six-month tour of duty as the army's weatherman for the South Atlantic. From his island outpost on the edge of Antarctica he is keeping tabs on the turbulence tumbling off the ice cap and across the endless miles of ocean. Meanwhile back in Britain his friends are knitting woollies for their man on South Georgia. **Capt Ken Scott** said,

'We're very proud of ***Dion.*** *Our soldiers have gone on some strange duties around the world but this one takes the biscuit. Before he went out he was given special meteorological training by the Royal Air Force. He is now second-in-command of Britain's 12-strong garrison on the island.'*

Cpl Brittain's headquarters are in Shackleton. The bleak and tiny settlement is not far from the whaling centre the Argentinean's took over in the run up to the Falklands War. Facilities and entertainment are few and far between. Communications with the outside world are difficult too with the soldiers' supply ship only calling once every three weeks. But the biggest problem **Dion**, from Beeston, has to cope with are the gale force winds whipping up off the Atlantic which seem set to rip his roof off. He is expected to finish his tour of duty in three months time, when he will return to command a five-strong detachment at his base, in Triumph Road. His foray to the southern seas is his third stint abroad. Earlier trips have taken him to Canada and Ascension Island.

Weather Watch – Cpl Dion Brittain

39TH (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

CO **Lt Col J. Crackett TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) P. A. Anderson**

EXERCISE HIGHLAND LYNX

How It Was, According To The Yeoman!

Towards the end of 1998 the CO, **Lt Col John Crackett TD** decreed that the next Regimental Annual Camp, his last with the Regiment, would be something special. Little did we realise at that time exactly what he had in mind and indeed how special the camp he envisaged would be. It was to be *'A two week camp split between Squadron collective training and a Regimental field exercise, in Scotland, based upon a Peace Support Operation; following the principles of Mission Command'*. So Ex Highland Lynx was born. Under the direction of **Capts John Cullen, Dave Gibson, Bob Sheldon** (and in an advisory role **Tom Pengelley**) we set about constructing an exercise that was to be challenging, rewarding and memorable to those who would participate. Based upon a scenario not too dissimilar to that of the Balkans, the three hastily formed composite Squadrons of the Regiment were each tasked with completing a series of activities, primarily based on: Internal Security, the establishing of a tactical harbour and domination of ground through patrolling and an arduous march with full CEMO, which culminated in an assault crossing of Lock Lubnaig. With only twelve hours of preliminary training and a skeleton set of orders, the Sqn Comds set about issuing their orders and preparing their Squadrons for the unknown. After three damp and full days, the troops returned to Cultybraggan Camp to participate in the exercise finale, a Regimental assault course and falling plate competition. After more than 72 hours of damp and often extremely unpleasant conditions, having faced mountains, lochs, abseiling (the **Tam Ewart** way), serious cross-country driving and plenty of walking, it was uplifting to see so many happy and smiling faces. The troops had prevailed (in some cases survived) what was to be noted as one of the best, if not, the best Annual Camp that these TA officers and soldiers had ever deployed on.

EXERCISE HIGHLAND LYNX - ACTIVITY 2
THE SEARCH FOR RODNEY REDFERN RILEY

The Scenario for Activity 2 of Ex Highland Lynx was to provide aid and support to the civil government of Escosia where troops of 39th (Skinners) Signal Regiment (Volunteers) were tasked with the search and rescue of the United Anglian States Consul **Mr Rodney Redfern Riley** and various other MACC taskings. 'Drip Camp' by name and by nature was the setting for Ex Highland Lynx, Activity 2.

Regiment on patrol during Ex Highland Lynx

The DS Plan was for each squadron to set up a Forward Base Camp under canvas on a field inside Drip Camp and then carry out detailed tasks as given by the DS. 47th (Middlesex Yeomanry) Signal Squadron was first to take on the search and rescue. An incredible and consistent downpour of rain hindered the start of the phase setting up camp. It was either the tenacity of 47 Sqn or the civilian staff members of Drip Camp feeling sorry for them having to live under canvas, that they ended up obtaining shelter inside one of the Nissan buildings. The search areas were given and they involved 'Off Road Driving Skills', 'Recovery Training', 'Abseiling' and 'Map Reading'. In addition the troops had to cope with local unrest whilst carrying out these tasks. The news of the acquired building travelled fast. Each Squadron arrived at Drip and they all acquired hutted accommodation.

The main phase was to find the UAS Consul, **Rodney Redfern Riley** who was trapped in a disused quarry, and provide him with food, water and his satellite communications equipment and secure documents briefcase that had been dropped by parachute. Well done to 47 Sqn for finding the UAS Consul, feeding him, insisting he travelled with them over the 'Off Road Driving' to locate the communications equipment etc. Very well done to 57 Sqn for finding the UAS Consul, undressing him and dressing him in waterproofs, keeping him in sweeties and taking him on a trek and a half through the hills and woods surrounding the quarry and completing all this with an invite to a birthday party back at SHQ. Exceptionally well done to 5 Sqn for **not** putting him through any of this, they didn't find him. It was their PSAO playing the part!!

During the silent, or not so silent hours, a number of the DS brought out their Thespian Skills and became Mad Marine Sergeant Spotty Boyle, alias **Sgt** 'Scotty' **Doyle** URS REME, Gypsy Dennise Mennise alias **WO2 Dennis Griffiths** MTWO, and Art Thriller, alias **SSgt Phil Sweetland** Art Veh REME. **Sgts Rick Norman** and **Chris Stuart** played the Press and disgruntled locals. The 'Oscar' goes to 'Spotter Boyle' who crawled and swam to get into the ex area and then climbed onto the top of an ISO container just outside the SHQ and proceeded to create one hell of a din with a length of chain. Those who attempted to put a stop to his antics will surely remember the incident.

Lt Sara Hunter attempting to deal with two irate civilians
(Capt Tom Pengelley and Maj Daniel Haines,
neither had to act very much)

Is he down there?
Sgts Ewart and Doyle try out the abseiling for Activity 2
(The Search for Rodney Redfern Riley)

47 Sqn in action during Activity 3 - Let's get wet and wetter!

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj R. H. Belbin**

ANNUAL CAMP 1999

Annual Camp for HQ Sqn was split into two distinct phases. Week One was Squadron Training in Halton, and Week Two was the Regimental Concentration at Cultybraggen Camp in Scotland.

Week 1: This commenced on the Saturday morning with the deployment from Horfield to Halton Training Camp in Lancaster. It was a long drive up the M5/M6 which took the bulk of the day. Indeed the last packet (LAD Recovery) arrived just in time for the evening meal. That evening consisted of several briefings, the most notable being the Padres Courage Discipline and Loyalty brief. Delivered as always with his serious demeanour. This was followed by the combination of **WO2s Martin** and **Lee** and Exercise Question Mark 4, as always keenly contested. After splitting the Squadron into three teams **WO2 Martin's** sense of humour was seriously tested. Sunday morning started as always with the Church Service, noted for the extremely bad but spirited singing. The rest of the morning was a round robin of Ranges, NBC and First Aid, the afternoon was the Assault Course competition, hotly completed by the various syndicates. The victorious team led by **Cpl** 'TC' **Cole**. This was the first introduction of our comrades from the US (Delaware) National Guard to our competitive spirit. **Sgts Barry St John** and **Will Winchester**, at first they found our sense of humour a bit hard to understand. In fact at the end of week two they were still a bit unsure. The rest of the week was spent working at a great pace, combining a wide variety of activities. The high point being Ex Wild Rover 2, the Batco/Navigation exercise in the Lake District. The scenery was magnificent, although travel sickness spoiled it for a few team members. That evening the best kept secret of the week was revealed - Morecombe Ways. We all had guesses at what it was, a few guessed right that it was Ten Pin Bowling. At the end of the week we travelled over night up to cold and rainy Scotland.

Week 2: Cultybraggan Camp - this was a shock to a lot of us. A former POW camp for German Officers, it didn't appear to have been improved that much since then. The Saturday was R&R day, and a lot of us travelled to Edinburgh for the day. On the cultural front we visited the Castle enjoyed by all especially the good natured banter with the guide. Then it was back to the main business of the R&R - Pub-crawling. Later it was time to try out our favourite food, and a trip to a Curry House was duly arranged. This was where **Sgt** 'Stuntman' **Clarke** amused everybody with his trick diving headfirst down the cellar steps. That is everybody except Barry our friend from Stateside, luckily there was no damage except to the cellar door. So we ate our overpriced and not so good curry and cracked on. For the bulk of the second week the Squadron was split to the Four Corners. Notable performances were **WO2 Dickie Lee** as a casualty at the bomb explosion, **Sig Sam Worthington** as a dead body at the Riot. From the other side was **Cpl Paul Isaac** and his impersonation of Frostie the Snowman at the Riot as well - top shot with a flour bomb from Regimental Quartermaster, **Sgt Ginty**. The Thursday rounded off the week with at the Annual Sports Competition, it was pity we were unable to defend it for the third year on the trot. That night was the all ranks bash, the newly badged recruits were welcomed in the customary style - can of beer and a chair (Stacks of Squadron Bonding). The following morning was the beginning of the long trek back home to Bristol. This was punctuated by staging the Regiment back through Halton Camp, during this overnight stop most of the Squadron managed to completely miss out on sleep. Saturday we recovered back to Horfield, and after a period of stowing all the stores away it was the end of Annual Camp 1999.

5 (QUEEN'S OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIG SQN
Sqn Comd **Maj R. D. Stone**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) R. E. Phillips**

EXERCISE HIGHLAND LYNX - IS PHASE
by SSgt 'Scouse' Simcock PSI Ops

'Who have we got first then?' boomed the voice of **Capt** 'When I' **Gibson**, leader of men (and also known as the PSAO 47 Sqn). **RSM Paul** 'I'm the Chief Inspector not an RSM!' **Anderson** too happily came back with the reply 'God help us. It's 5 Sqn!' 'I want to go home!' I thought quietly to myself and started looking for places to hide in for the next 24 hours.

To explain slightly, what we were all on was Day One of the Internal Security phase of Ex Highland Lynx - 39th (Skinners) Sig Regt (V) Annual Camp. The point of the IS Phase was to learn and practice IS within a Balkans type Scenario. Each Squadron would have 24 hours to undergo various scenarios that would become more and more physically and mentally tiring as the day went on.

In charge of the 20 peacekeepers from 5 Sqn was OC 5 Sqn, **Maj** 'Roberto' **Stone** - including two attached personnel from the American National Guard Force (who as the day went on never really knew what hit them and I am sure went back with a few stories of their own). As the day progressed events happened quick and fast - having to react to IED's, drunken armed civilians, mortar bombs and of course the Escosian Police Force who not only consisted of the RSM and myself but also a strange little character known as **SSgt** 'Tock' **Tocker**. The culminating event was the civilian riot at night. With only a small force of personnel guarding the IS Base Camp, they suddenly faced a 70 strong mob chanting and yelling armed with various bric-a-brac ready to use at a moment's notice. The mob was gamely led by **Capt Tom Pengelley** who, as accounts go, role played excellently as the obnoxious local MP. On appearing at the gates of the IS Base the mob seemed to have the advantage on the small band of peacekeepers – ie: there was 70 of them and only 20 to guard the camp! The obvious decision of **Maj Stone** was to head off with a small band of peacekeepers to try and calm the situation. The obvious decision from the brave peacekeepers of 5 Sqn was to stay in the camp and hide as much as possible. Eventually OC 5 Sqn managed to bribe them out of the security of the camp gates.

Sgt Paul 'Runaway' **Milner** was heard to say 'Sod that, I'm not going out there! and there was general mentioning of handing kit in and saying enough is enough. However, with bravado from all concerned, the Squadron managed to calm everyone down (after initially running away!) and it was left with the OC Sqn and a few brave men to descend into the Sgts' Mess (which was covertly hiding an armed member of the mob). After **Maj** 'Errol Flynn' **Stone** thrusted himself onto all concerned they managed to apprehend those concerned and everyone went back to the base for tea and scones. All members of the Squadron thoroughly enjoyed the 24 hour IS Phase and although the weather was atrocious (typical Scottish weather of rain, rain and then after a while more rain) it didn't dampen anyone's spirit. As for myself, I was just glad that they didn't tie, gag and torture me!

Sig Prosser dealing with a casualty during IS Phase

47 (MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY) SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj M. H. Lansdown**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) B. Copsey**

SF BASE ANTICS EX HIGHLAND LYNX
by SSgt 'Tock' Tocker PSI Ops

'Comms, What are they then?'

Security forces in the town of Braggen were called to an incident in the hills surrounding the SF Base 'a possible suspect mass grave'. Having cajoled and persuaded **Sgt Mick Jervis** (HQ Sqn) acting as the distraught farmer, to accompany the patrol to the scene, **Cpl Justine** 'Xeena Warrior Princess' **Jones** gallantly led her brick to the grave area and having left distraught farmer **Mick** unaccompanied with the vehicle, proceeded to carry out an outstanding route clearance up to the grave site. A mathematical genius, she calculated there were at least three bodies in the grave as she could see five hands sticking up through the disturbed earth (what happened to all the one armed shepherds). Having secured the area and received bemused glances from the DS, sat down lit a fag and decided to write up her patrol report ready to send back to the SF base. Low and behold no radio. No worries thinks **Justine**, I left it back at the truck (wrong). The farmer's gone and so has our radio and if it had not been for the ditch so would the truck. The moral of the story **Justine** is do not shake (count) hands with every farmer you meet, they could be a crook (shepherds) and if the flack jacket is too tight use the issued radio harness!! Black Bag the faithful border bin liner.

Sgt Gary 'Lightning only strikes twice' **Cheshire** diligently patrolling the town of Braggen on a mild but windy day reports to the SF base a suspect device. This is then passed up the chain and finally filters to DS HQ. At last, they have found the culvert bomb and we can start serial 2 (the bomb had only been planted in the town for two hours and was not exactly unmissable, three beer barrels with a makeshift timer attached, virtually out in the open). Inspector Mc Anderson, alias the RSM, dispatches his two faithful police Sgts PSI Ops 5 and 47 to take charge of the situation and obviously DS the patrol on their performance. PSI Ops 5 and 47 on arrival are somewhat perplexed as to why the patrol is cordoning off an area 250 metres away from the location of the culvert bomb. **Sgt Gary** 'I know what I am doing that's why I'm wearing this patrol vest' **Cheshire** arrives and proceeds to brief on what he thinks is a suspect device, 'On our first sweep through' (brags **Gary**) 'there was nothing and now there's this bin liner'. The PSIs exchange glances and follow the portly patrol commander to the scene and low and behold there's this black bag. **Gary** with a serious expression on his face states he requires police support and wants bomb disposal calling out. PSI Ops 5 asks him if he is sure and just as **Gary** is about speak, Black Bag the faithful border bin liner begins to stir. PSI Ops 47 drops to the ground in the nick of time as the irate bin liner makes a lunge for his throat, PSI Ops 5 Sqn then lunges at Black Bag in an attempt to arrest the unruly Bin Liner, but to no avail, Black Bag is off over the sports fields and away.

Gary, the moral is 'He who fights and runs away lives to fight another day!'

WEEK ONE ANNUAL CAMP - *Anon*

Annual Camp for 47 Sqn started well with an excellent field firing package and exercise at Barry Budden camp near Dundee. The downside of the package was the 12 hour drive which, despite the loss of a vehicle, - duly recovered by the splendid AA on **LCpl Devine**'s card - went without too many problems. Everyone was looking forward to the training which had been arranged by **Capt Gibson** and **SSgt Tocker**, our PSAO and PSI. Rumours abounded regarding the quantities of ammunition available. In the end the rumours had understated the amounts considerably! With glorious weather conditions the range package started. There were lots of constructive and realistic shoots and also excellent background activities including the 51mm Mortar and hand grenades. The pistol CQB was much enjoyed despite the cumbersome body armour restricting free movement to a degree. The first two days concentrated on maintaining interest and this was certainly achieved by an excellent long range shoot using a combination of LSQ, GPMG and the L96 Sniper Rifle.

Each Troop had to carry out a defensive shoot using as much ammunition as they could carry. Full war loads of ammunition on all shooting exercises gave everyone an idea of the amounts involved. With fixed bayonets each troop went over the top on to the range. There they found a GPMG with piles of ammunition with which to supplement the defensive firepower. Never have people fired for such a consistently long time. In one instance nearly 40 minutes. At the end of the shoot the smoking weapons and piles of cartridge cases reminded everyone of a scene from Saving Private Ryan. An IBSR shoot was run on similar lines. Everyone was made fully aware of the need for slick weapon handling drills as an almost reflex action. The exercise phase found the Squadron split into two troops. Anticipation was heavy as most squadron members know how devious the thinking of the PSAO and PSI can be when it comes to such events. Having received orders, we deployed into a limited war scenario to a troop night harbour. From there, we were tasked immediately to carry out a live night ambush. The rest of the exercise was a mix of live firing and platoon and company blank attacks. Never knowing what was coming next tends to concentrate the mind and you were always aware as a commander of the need to stay switched on at all times. The value of being able to navigate in all weathers was also made painfully obvious.

The Platoon went into the final assault on a high. They had been given a large area to clear as part of the initial company attack. We crossed the line of departure and closed with the extensive enemy position in depth. Very soon we were brought under a mass of fire from numerous enemy positions and the fight was on. Section commanders found themselves acting independently at times as the fighting became confused. Finally, after over an hour of almost continuous fighting, the Squadron reorganised prior to the final assault on the enemy who had withdrawn into some buildings. A final attack involving FIBUA skills and drills, saw the enemy defeated. Before we had time to draw breath we were told to move at best speed with all weapons and equipment, to a heli LZ for extraction by helicopter. The physiological impart of this news was staggering. Was there no end to the torture? The answer of course was yes as after reaching the camp gates, Endex was called and we had Squadron and Troop photographs taken in full battle kit and dirty, tired but smiling faces. The week had been brilliant with each person firing more ammunition than they would have believed possible. The training was testing, realistic, hard work but above all thoroughly enjoyable. That's the way it should be.

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Rosemary Tuhey**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Phil Packer**

ANNUAL CAMP WEEK 1 - SURVIVAL

After three days of very little food, bad weather, uncomfortable beds and inadequate heating, we were beginning to wonder if we were on another RTW at Longmoor. It was only the arousing aroma of sheep, which told us otherwise. This was the Squadron training phase of Annual Camp organised by the very receding **Sgt Thomas Ewart**. We deployed to a run down ramshackle camp, which we felt quite at home in, as it bore a remarkable resemblance to our own TAC in Bristol. **Sgt** 'Ginge' **Farah**

and **Sgt Euan Laird** were on hand to give us some excellent instruction on shelter building, fire lighting and trapping (something **Thomas** is very good at). After being given some basic materials and having our sleeping bags taken away, we were then given ten minutes to go and scavenge around the camp for anything else that could be useful.

We were dragged kicking and screaming into the woods where we would set up home for the night. Spirits were high until the point where we received our evening's supply of food, half a cabbage, a few onions and half a dozen potatoes. It was not the food which caused my spirits to drop, but the fact that my small dented metal mug was our only cooking vessel. After an uncomfortable, sleepless, hungry night, we crawled out of our shelters to find that **Cpl Tim** 'Wingnut' **Ewing** had managed to shrink-wrap his boots with a bin liner. Our faithful fresh looking DS were there to give us further instruction; 'Ginge' on mutilation of Flossy and Larry the lambs, **Euan**'s downed pilot presentation and **Thomas** on extracting after-shave from tree sap (well he did smell very nice for someone who had spent a night in the open). After a short vehicle journey to another location we set camp again and awaited our feast of Flossy and Larry, and wait we did. 'Ginge's' small puppy 'Eric' was beginning to look like a double cheeseburger. After scoffing down our sandbag and orange flavoured fleecy friends, we retired to bed to dream of really sleeping. Another cold night then we broke camp and made our way down to the edge of the loch to await extraction. In the distance we heard a hum of motors and then out of the mist roared two Rigid raiders from Commachio Group. After a bracing ten minute ride we were back in the comfort of a nice warm LDV, heading back to camp, to warm showers and overcrowding. Many thanks again to the instructors for an excellent package

Members of 57 Sig Sqn still smiling during the Survival Exercise

Members of 57 Sig Sqn **still** smiling during the Survival Exercise

EXERCISE HIGHLAND LYNX - IS PHASE

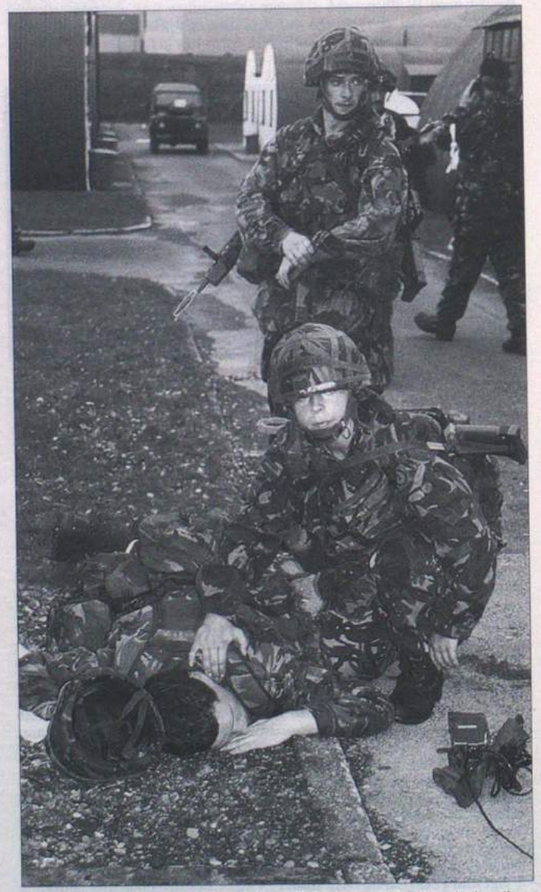
by Lt S. L. Hunter, OC Tango Troop

So at 0530hrs on day two of Highland Lynx, 57 Sqn arrived in Braggan SF Base for luckily (for the locals) the shortest roulement tour on record. Handover of the Base from 5 Sqn took place without any of us being much the wiser as to what was about to follow. Patrolling started and the incidents began.....

It was an experience we won't forget quickly. We all learnt that guarding prisoners is more effective if they are watched all of the time and then you don't have the problem of turning back round to see their feet disappearing out of the window. This is especially important when the local police constable **SSgt** 'Well then, what have you lot got 'ere - nothing actually' **Tocker** is already on his way to collect said prisoner. Having stopped and searched a suspicious vehicle, only to discover a number of weapons, we learnt that if they are not either watched or removed they have a nasty habit of disappearing when left on their own. In these circumstances it is best never to trust the dulcet tones of **LCpl** 'I've never seen them before in my life – honest' **Stevens**. It is also helpful not to shoot unarmed civilians. However, if this does happen a surprised soldier is likely to find herself on a murder charge in a court of law. Not that she has anything to fear when being defended by the famous **Maj** (QC) **Tuhey**. However, it may have helped the defence if said soldier had confidently stated that she did have a copy of the rules of engagement and indeed that she had read them. Perhaps most importantly we learnt that snatching armed terrorists from the local pub is not actually a form of FIBUA and the exercising of restraint is sometimes more productive than bodily throwing all the drinkers one by one into a corner (apologies to the Sgts' Mess members but wasn't it fun **Cpl Sharp**?)

But despite the above, a riot was quelled very ably under the leadership of **WO2 (SSM)** 'Butch' **Packer** and **SSgt** 'Sundance' **Williams**, the mass grave was accurately located and Aide Katie (of CNN) was brought on side by the open but yet direct manner of OC (hop along) REME. What to do when the RMO, complete with half empty whisky bottle and bomb in back of car, turned up at the gate and refused to leave we are still working on. We did take it all seriously (honest). So at the end of 24 hours of pretty non-stop activity, the civilians of Braggan, not to mention **Chief Inspector** 'You may like to consider doing it this way Ma'am' **Anderson** bid us a reluctant farewell and hello to the relief in the guise of 47 Sqn.

Disembarking following extraction
by Commachio Tp Royal Marines during the Survival Exercise



Sgt Zamparelli and LCpl Stephens handling a situation during the IS Phase of the exercise

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

7 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

Sqn Comd **Maj Andy Bristow**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Colin Milne**

This issue includes a number of reports from the troops covering the Brigade's deployment on Ex Ulan Eagle 1999 and also the run up to our forthcoming deployment slightly further afield.

ALPHA TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Andy Hill**
Tp SSgt **SSgt James Runchman**

EXERCISE ULAN EAGLE 1999

After the long road/train journey to get to Poland we were given just a few hours to get things sorted before moving into the first location. After several tracks were thrown and several teddies likewise, things started to calm down a bit. The first night move was interesting especially for the 'B' fleet led by **LCpl Si** 'The Pathfinder' **Periera**; it took them 13hrs to reach the location - everyone but the Admin Daf having been bogged in – twice! Another funny incident was on another move to a new location with **Cpl Andy Allen** driving a panzer with **SSgt James Runchman** commanding. 'It's only a small puddle,' said **James**, not realising it was more like a lake which inevitably soaked **Andy** and the Tp SSgt (not much laughter - honest!) All in all, however, a good exercise. With a week in camp to turnaround the wagons we're off to Sennelager for Ex Rhino Charge. A static comms exercise - enough said! Last but not least congratulations to **Sigs Dave** 'Spanky' **Harris**, **Andrew** 'Savs' **Savage** and **Rob** 'Rossi' **Ross** for selection for promotion to Lance Corporal.

BRAVO TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Adam Corkery**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Dave Sloane**

After a safe return from Poland and a well-deserved long weekend, it was straight back into the life with the premiere brigade. Half of the Troop deployed to Sennelager for Ex Rhino Charge and the remainder to deploy the armoured HQ on various demonstrations under the watchful eye of **Sgt** 'Sparticus' **Dixon**. On one particular road move we discovered that **Sig Chris** 'Killer' **Brogan** might need his eyes re-testing. Having failed to see **LCpl** 'Sticky' **Allardyce** frantically waving his hand to stop him, **Sig Brogan** was under the impression he was driving a 16 ton guided missile! Disaster was narrowly averted as he brought the 436 to a halt a good six inches from the parked rover!

With Kosovo looming in the not too distant future, we embarked on a training day at Sennelager. The day's stands included 9mm ranges, CasSim training and skid car training (better known as MT Sgt scaring). On the same day the Sig to LCpl's board results were published with some notable troop successes. Congratulations to **LCpl** 'Swampy' **Dick**, **LCpl** 'Eclipse' **Thompson** and **Sig** 'When am I getting mine' **Davies** and also to **Cpl Sam Moger** on picking up her second and who now leaves the land of rover queens to join the complex. Further congratulations to **LCpl's Greg Dick**, **Nikki Thompson** and **Sig's Matt Epton**, **Mark Jessop** and **Steve** 'Beaten by a girl' **Homer** for collectively winning six gold medals at the BAG canoeing Championships.

HELLO'S AND GOODBYES

Firstly goodbye to **Cpl Adam Harvey** off to 615 Tac P and **LCpl Pete Ashcroft** off to Civ Div. All the best for the future to both of you.

Secondly a warm welcome to **LCpl Paul Hines** from 30 Sigs, **Sig Daz Jardine** who has re-joined the army from Civ Div, **Sig Andy Loose** on loan from 1 Div and straight from the factory **Sig's Pam Dunkerley** and **Adam** 'Lurch' **Wilson**.

OPS/ES TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Jason Gray**
YofS **WO2 (YofS) Keith Parsons**
FofS **SSgt (FofS)** 'Mac' **McCallum**

CHEERIBYES AND AY UPS

The Troop has to say ta ta to **Cpl Nick Ulley** who emerged from the Crypto cell on posting to the School's Training Wing and promotion to Sergeant. Also going to the School on his Class I course is **Cpl Richie Brown**, who's finally had enough of the Red Rat. Leaving the tech workshop as well is **Sgt Owen** 'Fat Lad' **Gudge** with his own five-a-side team, off to 16 Sigs. The LAD is sad to see the back of **Cpl Paul** 'Under the thumb' **Cation**, and **Cpl** 'Mel' **Melrose** both of whom are going to the Sappers. Good luck in the future to you all and your families. A big hearty welcome goes out to **Cpl Baz Park**, who at first glance seems ready to take over from **Sgt Gudge** in the workshop, and just in time for going to Kosovo with the LAD, **LCpl Mark Perris** and **Cpl** 'Arthur' **Dent**.

ALL THE NEWS THAT'S NEW AND APPROVED

The Brigade deployed to Poland on Ex Ulan Eagle 1999 as the final part of their training year and therefore required propping up by the Troop! **Cpl Richie** 'Where the hell does this go' **Brown** deserves a special mention for coping with the Commander's Warrior. Cheers **Sgt Jules** 'It'll be no problem' **Thorne**! Many vehicles needed recovery in muddy conditions, but as least the trees provided support for the Foden and **Cpl** 'Yoda Three wheels are better than six' **Holloway**. Unfortunately the exercise proved too much for some of the Troop, **Cpl Baz** 'What gun pit?' **Park**, who decided that six days were enough for his first exercise in four years before getting Casevaced. On seeing this **Cpl Paul** 'Anything you can do, I can do better' **Cation**, decided a spell in a Polish hospital was in order before going back to Hohne. The ERV under the control of **Cpl Brown** had no problems throughout the exercise. Within thirty minutes of Endex being called the ERV was bogged in by **SSgt Dave** 'Time for a sharp exit' **Baddeley**, on his first time behind the wheel, before beating a hasty retreat to go on a RMQ course.

On the Troop's return to camp many more faces disappeared on courses ready for Kosovo, leaving the rest to cope with the mountains of post exercise work. Chief amongst these were **FofS** 'Mac' **McCallum**, Tiffy **Tim** 'See you when everything's ready for Kos' **Parker**, and last and by no means least **Cpl Adi** 'Cyber pest' **Worsdall**, who has spent more time in the UK than Germany. Two faces that will look out of place in Kosovo, are **Cfns Pete** 'Goat Boy' **Butler** and **Gav** 'Guido' **Lehrle** who are spending Christmas in Belize on exercise with the TA. Nice work if you can get it!

Congratulations go out to **LCpl Steve Livesey** on passing his Class I entrance, and **LCpl Rog** 'Innit' **Mortimer** on obtaining his Class II, without any help from **Sgt Jules** 'Just do this' **Thorne**. Thanks go to the Ops Officer **Capt Jase** 'Can I use my Jew jar to pay' **Gray** for getting the beers in.

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

Sqn Comd **Maj I. Hooper**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) C. Drew**

A TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt J. Lambeth**

Like the rest of the Squadron, A Tp has been busy as usual including their participation in the Brigade's inaugural deployment of the Air Assault assets during Ex Gryphons Eye. The Exercise began with a road deployment to the Air Movements Centre (AMC) in South Cerney, followed by a very short flight onto the Salisbury Plain Training Area. Alpha Tp's main effort throughout was changing control from a heavily beefed up Tac HQ to the all new singing, dancing and heavy Brigade HQ. Of particular amusement was **Sig Stu**(pid) 'The Fall Guy' **Downard** who decide to test the rollcage on his Wolf Defender by rolling it - twice.

No set of *Wire* notes would be complete without the obligatory Hellos and Goodbyes. We say fond farewell to **LCpls** 'Chappy' **Chapman, Mark Williams** and **Stu**(pid) **Downard** who are off out to Civ Div, and to **2Lt Beeky** 'Naughty KW' **Knightly Brown** and **Cpl Russ** 'Snakey' **Heynes** who are off to further their careers at Blandford. We say hello to recently promoted **Cpl** 'Treacle' **Bettle** from B Tp and welcome back **Cpl Scott Dernie, LCpl Scott** 'Robbo' **Robinson** and **Sigs** 'Flash' **Gordon,** 'Smudge' **Smith** and 'Ruby' **Currie** from that goddam' war in Kosovo. We also send our best wishes to **SSgt** 'Jeffrey' **McKenna** who is currently recovering from a knee operation and to our old Troopie **Lt Dan Ashton** and hope he has a speedy recovery.

Members of Alpha Troop
on a visit to the Cabinet War Rooms in London
(For the record, third in from the right, thinking he is out of view is
Cpl Heynes, who will be delighted to buy everyone a round
at the Mil Trg Wg in Blandford)

EXERCISE ALPHA AMBLE - *by Cpl Shaun Smith*

On 22 November 1999 the Troop departed to 14 Sig Regt for a week's adventure training in Pembrokeshire. 12 hours later the Troop finally reached their destination and under the expert guidance of **Cpl** 'Little Smudge' **Smith** wasted no time in finding what evening delights Haverfordwest had to offer. The first day was spent on a coastal path walk, an easy stroll in the summer but quite a challenge in a driving November wind. Luckily the Troop was well prepared for all eventualities with its very own emergency beacon, **Sig** 'Gargoyle' **Kershaw** who was sporting a particularly fluorescent yellow jacket which he flatly refused to remove during daylight hours. By Wednesday the weather had closed in with a lot of the activities becoming suicide missions. It was an ideal opportunity to slope off to the local driving range where the Troop's budding Tiger Woods-alikes could flaunt their stuff. After a rather uneventful day, the Troop headed off to town where a good time was had by all .... and in particular by **Cpl** 'Little Smudge' **Smith** and **Sig** 'Gwar' **Bowes** who got so carried away with keeping the army in the public eye that they only just made it back to camp for breakfast. The final day's training saw the Troop coastal steering at St. Davids which proved to be an excellent day out. We did become a little concerned when our illustrious leader, **Capt** 'Look at me, I'm a wave' **Lambeth** looked like he was about to be swept out to sea, but managed to scramble around and carry out an impression of a knackered beached whale. In all the Troop had an outstanding week thanks to the time and effort put in by **Sgt McGuiness** and also the training wing at 14 Sig Regt. Roll on Christmas and the New Year!

B TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt R. Hamilton R SIGNALS**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt A. May**

Bravo Tp have continued to lead where others fear to tread. All our intrepid heroes are back from Kosovo and our boss keeps babbling on about the Empire being safe from evil tyranny now that the realm has been defended. Welcome back to **Lt** 'He's going to get Begbie'd' **Hamilton, Sgt Dave** ' Where are those 19 Mech moon monkeys?' **Owen** and **Sigs** 'Gonk' **Fletcher,** 'Fuzzy Bear' **Foster** and 'Jack' **Frost.** Welcome to our new arrivals, namely **Sig** 'You name it, I type it' **Holland** from 280 Sig Sqn and **LCpl Simpson** from Ireland. Our best wishes go to C Tp for inheriting **Sig Shields** and who will now have to suffer his bombardments of useless knowledge. Best of luck as well to **LCpl** 'Tastic' **Richardson** and **LCpl** 'Do you know I'm a skydiverT' **Guntrip** who have gone to 3 Div, **Sgt Smith** who is now with the Gunners in Germany and **LCpl** 'Egg' **Evans** who has gone to 21 Sig Regt.

EXERCISE BRAVO BRAVE - *by LCpl Marshall*

Prior to the Troop's adventure training package, it was decided to have a weekend of heavy manoeuvres in Blackpool to say farewell to **LCpl Richardson.** The escapade started well when what should have been a four hour journey turned into a nine hour one thanks to the Troop's very own Magellan system demonstrating his navigational prowess - **Sig Shields** was later tried for cruelty to a compass and was found guilty. On arrival the Troop wasted no time in deploying to various haunts and convincing the local populus that although they looked like soldiers, they were actually part of a parachute stunt canoe team who had been forced to cancel a demo due to inclement weather. After a number of pubs and clubs of varying reputes, the Troop spent a small fortune on the amusements before heading off to 14 Sig Regt: for the adventure training phase. There was no time given for recovery as **Cpl Marty** 'Now, has everybody got a nature book of some sort with them?' **Barringer** had time-tabled a lot of activity in to the week. After a leisurely day on the coastal path, the Troop borrowed a number of bikes including **SSgt May**'s which was stolen from the Hovis bread advert and went on a 30 mile pedalathon. Other events included the coastal steering and a day trip to Tenby where **Cpl** '7ruffle Shuffle' **Kirk** maintained everybody's morale with his joviality and high spirits. The entire package was thoroughly enjoyed by all and the Troop returned to Colchester exhausted and penniless, the telltale signs of a good expedition.

B Troop on the coastal steering, Ex Bravo Brave

C TROOP

Tp Comd	**2Lt T. Courage**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt S. Hatton**

Charlie Tp has now been established as part of the new 216 Sig Sqn and includes 25 people from Aldershot who are Para trained. It wasn't long before the Troop took part in the first Air Assault Exercise. Five days were spent at South Cerney, carrying out rehearsals and allowing the heavy drop team time to rig their Medium Stress Platform. The Airborne Battle Group jump went well with **Cpl Page** and **Capt** 'Jump dodger' **Merry** giving a fine example of how to conduct an air steal, the result being **Cpl Page** being knocked unconscious. The comms role did not prove too demanding, giving the Troop a chance to brush up its infantry skills.

In November the Troop used the opportunity to go to Sennybridge for a field firing package run by SSO 'Kebab' Read. It consisted of individual to section fire and manoeuvre and culminated in a live platoon attack. The weather was kind but the temperature never rose above ice-cream preservation conditions. It didn't help either when the Training Staff convinced the E&E phase was going to be initiated on the Thursday night. **Cpl** 'Spud' **Fawcett** and **Sig Blackie** were ready to jump from the upstairs window, whilst **LCpl Barnes** instructed his section to paracord the door shut. Fortunately nothing happened much to the disgust of **Sgt** 'Large Swede' **Combe**.

Finally congratulations must go to a number of the Troop. **Cpl Page** was promoted to Sgt and has picked up a posting to RMA Sandhurst. **LCpls Shaw** and **Barnes** picked up their second, and **Sigs Hillyard,** 'Scouse' **Richardson, Pete Thorpe,** 'Boss' **Hogg, Steve Jones** and **Steve Crutchley** all picked up their first tape.

MOTOR TRANSPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt M. Schofield**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt D. Elesmore**

MT Tp has now been formed with the combination of the MT and the LAD, which consequently has left Support Tp with no real workers. The formation of the new Brigade has brought in a few new arrivals. Hello goes to **Cpl Eckett** who has filled the position of details clerk but has unfortunately had a phone stuck in his ear since arriving in Colchester. **Sig** 'PMT' **Metcalfe** is settling in well and **Sig Burgoyne** is teaching us everything we need to know about FEPDS. **Sgt Mark** 'Chuffin' Hell' **Makings** has moved in from the Goojerat guardroom and is joined by **SSgt Goldsworthy** who has just arrived from 16 Sigs. The Troop would like to congratulate **LCpl** 'Bob' **Hoskins** and his wife **Leigh** on the arrival of their new child **Ellie.** Worthy of note is the reappearance of **Capt** 'Lord Lucan' **Schofield** who has just returned from his MTO course, thereby ending a great saga as to whether he existed or not. **SSgt** 'Der' **Elesmore** is currently on the biff for the first time in twelve years, yet was luckily in good enough shape to complete 35 free-fall jumps in California in November. Mmmmm.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt S. A. Clarke**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt P. Latimer**

Life has been hectic with the rerole of 24 Airmobile and 5 Airborne Brigades, a Board of Officers, and various other tasks. In addition there are a number of other units whose equipment now comes on the ledger including the Pathfinders who have brought with them an armoury that looks like a scene from 'The Matrix'. The turmoil has seen the arrival and departure of a number of personnel. A sad farewell go to **Sgt** 'Nah you tinker' **Palmer** who is now on his Foreman's Course. 'Sthaff Thargeant' **Hamlet** who has escaped to sunnier climes at 259 Sig Sqn, and Sig 'I don't mean to cry' **Tarry** to 11 Sig Regt. We wish them all well. Welcome to the party for **Sgt Rayson, Cpl** 'Get the brews on' **Knibbs** and **Sig** 'George' **Cloney** from the Aldershot direction and **LCpl** 'Dingle' **Vernon** and **LCpl** 'Boy Racer' **Browning** from Blandford.

THE GREAT NORTH RUN 1999 - *by Mrs Cheryl Brown*

Sunday 10 October dawned bright and clear, a nice day for a gentle jog, though not for myself **Cheryl Brown, Sgt Gaz Corrigan** and **WO2 (YofS) Wilf Wedge** and another 41,000 people. We had decided to take part in the Great North Run, which is 13 miles 192 yds. After stretching our muscles and plastering Vaseline in parts other lotions cannot reach a 2-minute silence was held for those in the Paddington Train Disaster. The gun was fired and we were off, running, then some walking (for me anyway) listening to the Bands playing on the round-abouts one song being 'Keep on Running' crowds cheering and shouting you on all the time, a fantastic atmosphere. 1hr 56mins later **Wilf** crossed the line coming 10,051. 2hrs 50mins later **Gaz** came in 24,592 and finally I crossed the line in 2hrs 56mins coming 26,170. For this great effort we managed to raise in total £388.00. £143.00 going to SPARKS and £245.00 going to the Helen Rollason Cancer Care Centre Appeal.

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

Sqn Comd	**Maj Heaney**
Ops Offr	**WO2 (YofS) Wedge**

October saw a change in Squadron Commanders. **Maj Dave Wright,** has now left the service to take up lucrative employment with EDS. It really was a 'Here today. Gone tomorrow.' scenario, with some nail biting telephone calls to MCM Div to ensure that **Dave** could be released in time to take up his new contract. We thank **Dave** and **Susie** for all their hard work and support to the Squadron and wish them all the very best in the future. The new Sqn Comd, **Maj Mal Heaney** joined us via a roundabout route from NI, and officially took command on 11 October. To illustrate the steepness of his learning curve, he went into his office saw two PCs on his desk and said 'Why have I got two televisions in here?' Things are improving though, he now knows that a server is not an Officers' Mess waiter! We welcome **Mal,** and hope that he has a happy productive tour with us. The OC's first official duty as Sqn Comd was to host CO ACISG, **Lt Col Geoff Cary,** when he visited the Unit to present the Imperial Service Medal to **Mrs Pauline Taylor. Pauline** has been in the civil service some 25 years, the last nine of which she spent with the Squadron. The presentation and buffet lunch was well attended by Squadron military and civilian staff both past and present and reflected the high esteem in which she was held.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd	**Mr Vic King**
Tp SNCO	**Sgt Blyth**

The Troop ran a team building exercise, hill walking in Church Stretton. Although everyone bonded during the day, at the last RV the leadership appeared to go to pieces with questions like, 'Whose round is it?' going unanswered. A lot of new names were learnt that day like **Kev** 'The Ferret' **Anderson**. Welcome to the new members of the Troop, **LCpl Mick Leet** who came from NI (trying to get a straight answer from him is hard), **Mrs Val Hargraves** (COMMCEN Donnington - CO4), **Mr Ken Resoun** (CO4) who is not content with being stressed with a new job, but is also getting married on the 28 November 1999. Best of luck to you both from all the Squadron. Congratulations go to **LCpl Mandy Robinson** for being selected for promotion to Corporal. After her (18-30 holiday) nine-month tour in the Balkans she has obviously done something right. (Although she allegedly found the '2 can rule' hard going - ITD90).

TECHNICAL TROOP

Tp Comd	**Mr Kennedy**
Tp SNCO	**Sgt Corrigan**

Like the rest of 2 (NC) Sig Bde the Tech Workshops have been very busy with various HQ demands (i.e. builds.Y2K/ISIS system). Whilst the rest of the Troop were busy grafting, **Sgt Gaz Corrigan** learnt years ago that when the going gets tough – the Tech goes on a course ('Safety boat handler is very relevant to the cutting edge of Information Technology). **Gaz** has mentioned to **SSgt Dave Halkett** that he starts his resettlement soon and will be on a few courses then. (in a year, he has only been on eight courses!) Welcome to **Cpl Michelle Sheppard** who has arrived from Cyprus and just recently been promoted. (**Michelle** was recently locked out of her house by her cat, whilst climbing through the window to get back in, got stuck and able to reach the phone, telephoned friends, who in turn telephoned the Fire Brigade - who had to take the window out). Just thought we'd mention it!! Congratulations to **Mr John Saxon** who transferred to the Squadron, who couldn't wait to get stuck into work, changed his mind and proceeded to go straight to Turkey on holiday.

FINALLY RELEASED .....

John and **Sandy Blyth** would like to thank everyone who gave their support whilst their son **Thomas** was in hospital. Thomas was born prematurely at 2lbs 12ozs. After 22 months, four hospitals (of which 456 days were in an Intensive Care Unit) including numerous operations has was finally allowed home in August. He is a bright, happy little boy who in time will grow out of his chronic lung disease.

Sgt John Blyth beasting his son Thomas
on the kids Assault Course

KEEP IN TOUCH – PUBLISH IT IN *THE WIRE*

242 SIGNAL SQUADRON

A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD?

When working in a small static squadron such as 242 you get to know your colleagues very well, and with the workload and commitments undertaken by the Squadron in the past year it's important to gel together as a team. It's always disrupting to that team when members change and move on, but when that team is comparable to a football squad in size and five of its members all leave at once that would spell relegation to any premiership side. **Sgt Clive Quantick,** the crowd's favourite and who made the No 1 jersey his own in Tech Troop for his incredible 5-year spell with the club. He's leaving the game after a commendable 22 years to follow a career as radio/telecomm technician over the water (Rosyth). **Clive**'s hard and sturdy work in all aspects of the game will be sorely missed, especially his skill at diving (in the sea not the box). Likewise after 22 years in the game **LCpl Jimmy Patton** is stepping down from the first team, but remains with the club to take up a backroom role with ADA. This marks the start of his third spell with the club. **SSgt (FofS) Jim O'Donnell** leaves in a closed season deal with 15 Sig Regt, for an undisclosed sum. Shadows of doubt were cast over the move due to a foot injury, but he passed the medical and the deal went through. The club will miss his technical ability, but his ball control and shooting left something to be desired, so congratulations on the birth of your son **Ross**. The club and supporters wish you continued success. **Cpl Mac McWha** wasn't with the club really long enough to make his mark, but the games he played showed potential. After a nine-year career he too is leaving the game for pastures green. The fifth and final member to leave not only brought her individual skills to the club but proved to be a great team player, winning the player's player of the year award for the commitment and enthusiasm she showed during her second 2-year spell at the club. Newly promoted **SSgt Hev**'s **McNair** moves south of the border to 30 Sig Regt to take up a new role as Troop SSgt. Her after match celebrations a speciality, never failing to get the crowd singing, you'll be truly missed. But all is not doom and despondency at the club, the manager **Maj Neil Stevens** has worked hard to find replacements. Bringing in the experience of **Sgt Dai Rennison** from 251 Sig Sqn and **Cpl Jim Wainwright** from 259 Sig Sqn, coupled with the youth and enthusiasm of **LCpl Daz Ormiston** and **Sig** 'Hoss' **Cartwright.** Though an initial setback as rising star **SSgt (FofS) Jamie Chambers** jumps ship with a stunt comparable to Paola Di Canio, moving to 240 Sig Sqn York and severing all communications with the club. The club Captain, **(TOT) Lee Brown** has the last say on the matter (as usual), 'Early signs at the club look very promising with the team having four exceptional performances against formidable opposition, The Edinburgh Military Tattoo, The Opening of the Scottish Parliament, The Tall Ships Race and Berwick Tattoo. As well as working hard to keep clean sheets in all their domestic fixtures, all at the club feel confident premiership status will be maintained for the foreseeable future'.

A LOOK AHEAD

As Scotland is to take over the 2 Div area of responsibility we look forward to the challenges that this will bring. There will be much to-ing and fro-ing until the new 2 Div settles down here in Craigiehall and our new responsibilities evolve. This coupled with the re-shaping of the ACISG, responsibilities between the fixed Signal Squadrons will keep us occupied for the foreseeable future.

VISIT OF COMD 2 (NC) SIGNAL BRIGADE

On 2 December we hosted **Brig S. G. Hughes CBE.** He presented the LS & GC medal to **Sgt Mark Robinson** (now stationed at Balado Bridge) and then toured the unit lines. In the evening a dinner was held in a local hotel.

259 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj N. Grifiths**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) D. Ewing**

The past few months have flown past, summer in Cyprus is over and the cooler weather is setting in just in time for Battle Camp in November. The main event, which has taken place this month, was the Cyprus Walk About. A gruelling two-day run covering 95km from Episkopi to Mount Troodos and back. Two teams from the Squadron took part in the competition, a Ladies' Team consisting of **Capt Katy Caie, 2Lt Sarah Covey-Crump** and **Sig Emma Flynn** and a Lads' Team of **Sgt Dave Street, Sig Gav Darke** and **Sig Dan Reade.** In total there were 33 teams competing to get the fastest time possible over the two days. The Ladies' Team set off first on Day One as they were the only all girls team taking part. The Lads, who started 20mins later, were determined to over take them. However, the last time they saw the girls team was at the start, the Ladies' Team stayed one hour ahead of the lads throughout the whole of first day. With the first day over for the Ladies, they set off to the bar in Troodos to quench their thirst and soothe their feet while waiting for the Lads' Team to finish. As a result of being navigationally embarrassed the lads were picked up by the 1KOSB between the last check-point and the Finish some four hours late. Never mind lads – better luck next year! Day Two saw the Ladies' Team set off in a less painful state than was expected, the lads unfortunately called it a day due to some very bad blisters. The Ladies' Team continued on in a slow but steady pace and got to between Checkpoints 3 and 4 on Day Two before they too made the decision to call it a day. By the time the girls got back to the finish (in transport) the winning teams had been finished for hours. Well done to all of 259 Sig Sqn for being brave enough to take part and to the 14 Sig Regt Team who got the fastest time over all.

EPISKOPI TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Sarah Covey-Crump**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Duncan**

Welcome to **SSgt Duncan** and his wife **Linda** from 15 Sig Regt. We all look forward to the JD PT. Hello to **Sgt** 'Ant Villa' **Tranter** posted to become the new line god. Radio section welcomes **Cpl Quilter** and his family and to **Sig Olive Taylor** from 19 Mech Bde. Tech Section also welcomes **LCpl Lyndsay Stewart** and also **Cpl Gordon** and **Nicole** from 11 Sig Regt Blandford. We hope you all have an enjoyable tour whilst in Cyprus. Fond farewells and Good luck to **SSgt Kev** 'Jinjaninja' **Tierney** in his new post as BTLO at 15 Sig Regt. Farewell to **Sergeant** 'Fudge' **MacPhee** posted to Cable Systems Group Blandford and also **Cpl Lance** 'Starbuck' **Swarbrick** posted to the big house in JHQ.

CRICKET - ARMY CYPRUS v RAF CYPRUS

Yet again, another fine performance saw the Army beat the RAF in Cyprus, although it went right down to the wire. The only Signallers to be chosen for the Army, were **Sgt** 'A-Z' **Szeremeta** and **Sig** 'Robbie' **Williams** 259 Sig Sqn and **SSgt** 'Roger' **Thompson** JSSU (AN). All made major contributions to the match. **Sgt Szeremeta** with his fine pace bowling and **Sig Williams** with his superb medium pace bowling kept the

RAF score down to a minimum. Although **SSgt Thompson** bowled very loosely, he more than made up with his batting as he scored an unbeaten 84, guiding the Army home and gaining the Man of the Match award.

AIRFIELD TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Gareth Kemp**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Stenhouse**

Firstly the traditional round of hellos and goodbyes to those who have or will serve with 'Fighting' Airfield Troop. We bid a fond farewell to **LCpl** 'Mac' **McCreaddie** heading off to be a rozzer in Germany. Hello to **Sgt Henry** and his wife **Karen** recently arrived from the bitter cold of Gibraltar and to **LCpl Bilby** the new tech tea-boy.

The last two months have been quite quiet with only one major sporting event taking place, the football round of the Hodgeson Shield. A competition we felt confident about winning but due to the un-sportsman like behaviour of all the other Troops (i.e. having twice as many players including some never seen before in the Squadron) we once again came fourth or to put it another way last. Several events are looming which the Troop look forward to in great anticipation, firstly the wedding or should we say the Stag Night of **Sig** 'Hoof' **Milevsky** (enjoy your last few days of freedom), and secondly Squadron Battlecamp. It is not hard to work out which everybody is looking forward to most. Finally to round off we would all like to say a big hello to **Sig** 'Gaz' **Fuins** who always complains that his name never appears in *The Wire.*

JNCO CADRE COURSE 11 - *by LCpl Bilby*

The 259 Sig Sqn JNCO cadre Course, set up by the 2IC **Capt Caie** was used to give JNCO's and potential JNCO's some preparation for the skills that they would need for the Corporal's Course. The course was held at Episkopi Garrison and proved to be an excellent challenge to the six intrepid candidates **LCpls Bilby, Barnett, Bagshaw, Tomblin, Taylor** and **Sig Reade.**

The first two days were taken up with revision lessons on orders, map reading, weapon handling and NBC. Followed by ten minute lecturettes ranging from **Sig Reade's** 'The Joys of Course Fishing' to **LCpl Bilby**'s 'Cricket is just an excuse to drink beer' and not forgetting **LCpl Barnett**'s 'I Want my Wings, The Dagger and X-Rifles to add to my X-Swords'. The cadre culminated in an Exercise, which involved a combat estimate and delivery of orders. The task was to navigate round 12 checkpoints in the fastest possible time and complete any given tasks on route. It all seemed so simple – what could go wrong? Well the inevitable miscalculations were made regarding time appreciation, and map reading, which resulted in the Team's idea, of being back in 16 hours for breakfast, having to be thrown out of the window. Despite these mishaps the Team's determination to finish the task in hand came to the fore, and with great team spirit we all mucked in and finished the course only 11 hours late. The most improved JNCO was awarded to **LCpl Taylor** and the best JNCO overall was awarded to **LCpl Tomlin.**

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT (FALKLAND ISLANDS)

NEWS FROM THE SOUTH ATLANTIC
UNIT HEADQUARTERS

OC **Maj C. J. McIntosh**
USM **WO2 D. Rook**

'Goodbye Maj Adams – Hello Maj McIntosh'

The picture shows the outgoing OC, **Maj M. W. G. Adams** (now late of 212 Sig Sqn 1(UK) Armd Div Sig Regt) handing over command of JCUFI, having baby sat until the new OC, **Maj C. J. McIntosh** could be released from his last tour.

The new Army Element, comprised predominantly of 212 Signal Squadron of the mighty 1(UK) – Charging Rhino – Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt has now settled into the 'routine' of life down in the Falklands. After an initial slow start period (of about three days…) the pace increased to high tempo…..maintained until the end of the first week of November when, collectively, as a unit, we had a chance to settle down (albeit temporarily!). So, a busy time is being had by all. We have received a new OC Squadron in the guise of **Maj C. J. McIntosh**. Within a month of arriving, we were launched onto Falklands major offensive exercise, Ex Purple Strike, which occurs every four months. An excellent exercise with regard to provision of service of comms to the Staff, with a stirling movement programme out to the exercise area. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for the recovery programme which resulted in manpower and assets being stranded on West Falklands for a long time after everyone else had departed to the comforts, hot water and sanitation offered by Mount Pleasant (such as they are!).

On the exercise front, since then, the Unit has tested and proven Y2K for theatre – yes, apparently there is a contingency plan, revolving around…..Clansman. We have re-enacted the feeding of the five thousand with loaves of bread and fish during Ex Cape Petrel, our theatre defensive exercise (yes, we really only do have four FFRs…..sometimes….). Somebody had the smart idea of doing regular 'fun walks' out into 'camp', starting with an easy one up to Mt Usborne, just to get a feel for the terrain. I don't think we'll be getting many volunteers for Ex Wandering Atom again!!

On the visits front….Oh My God!! It seems this theatre is a regularly sought, but little publicised number one destination on the good holiday guide 1999. Summer is here (apparently, but no-one thought to tell God…) and every man and his dog want to pop down to say hi. We have had our fair share of VIP visits with the likes of **CJO, CBF, CBF (Des), Master of Signals,** and **Air Marshall Jenner!** It keeps UHQ on its toes though…As for the rest of the visits – 'There's no room left at the Inn I'm afraid'. The Tristars ain't big enough to allow all the people down who want to visit JCUFI!

'A poignant moment'

Master of Signals, **Maj Gen I. O. J. Sprackling OBE, WO2 USM Rook** and **WO2 (FofS) Hubble** on Pleasant Peak, visiting the 1982 Gazelle crash site which caused the death of two members of the Royal Corps of Signals. These were **Maj Mike Forge** and **SSgt (YofS) Joe Baker** of 205 Sig Sqn.

JCUFI 'MOBILE PHONE CHALLENGE' CHILDREN IN NEED APPEAL 1999

On Friday 5 November 1999, 22 volunteers from the unit carried a replica telephone box in a relay style stretcher race over the 32 miles from Goose Green to Mount Pleasant Complex. Many hours of painting, drilling, sticking and other abstract work was completed by **SSgt (UQMS)** 'Chalky' **White** and **Sgt** 'Blue Q' **Vern Turner** to produce the finished article. A cloudy day with little wind proved perfect conditions for a team photograph followed by the official start by the Master of Signals. Teams were made up from all Departments within JCUFI and 'jointery' was truly achieved. Four teams carried the replica telephone boxes a distance of 1km each in rotation. The unfortunate RADCON and C Troop teams had most of the uphill stretches of the route. COMMCEN and UHQ teams luckily took over for most of the downhill stretches!

With 4km to go, our position was sent back to BFBS who broadcast our ETA. All available personnel were waiting to cheer the arrival of the

teams. After 5 hours and 42 minutes the boxes were finally permitted to touch the floor. A charity barbecue was held in 'Sharkies' with all profits donated from the bar to the Appeal plus an impromptu beard shave by **CY Moore** raised another £107. Our thanks go to all those personnel within JCUFI who were coerced into assisting in the event either as team members or as support staff. For the unit that is here in November 2000, the challenge is set to beat the £2420.08 raised. The amount is the most ever raised by any unit for the Children in Need Appeal here in the South Atlantic. The Challenge is there to be beaten – if you think you can!

– would this affect the second round scores? It was inevitable that the course eventually took its toll on some of the players with the usually calm **Sgt Ken Mason** losing his head completely and throwing clubs where he should have been throwing teddies! With the number of golfing expletives increasing with the strength of the wind, one figure was an air of calm and coolness that was our very own 'Gary Player' - **Capt Dave Ball**. Where the famous South African is normally dressed in black, **Capt Ball** adorned from head to toe in blinding white kept his cool to win the nearest the pin competition. Using the increasing wind he majestically stroked a ball 30

The JCUFI members and personnel prior to the start of the event at Goose Green
(L-R): 3rd Row:SAC Gray, Cpl Stowell, Sig Lake, LCpl Lenaghan, Flt Lt Russell, Capt Nichols, SSgt Dewar, Tpr Porter, CY Moore, WO RS Jackson
2nd Row: Sgt Turner, Cpl Hatch, WO2 (USM) Rook, Master of Signals, Maj McIntosh, SSgt (UQMS) White, SACW Hurren, Sig Philips
1st Row: Sig Stables, Sig Brydon, WOMC Holden, Sig Moore

The JCUFI Mobile Phone Challenge Team
at the finishing line, in Mount Pleasant
(L-R): WO2 (USM) Rook, LCpl Lenaghan, SSgt Dewar,
Tpr Porter, Sgt Turner and SSgt (UQMS) White

JCUFI UHQ OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP 1999
by SSgt (UQMS) Chalkie White & Sgt (Blue Q) Vern Turner

Forget the tension of Valderama and the severity of Augusta, the events that took place at Murphy's Belfry on Friday 19 November 1999 will go down in the annals of golfing history. Against the searing heat and rough terrain of the Falkland Islands, sixteen brave service members of the Joint Communications Unit took on and beat the old course at Mount Pleasant in a grueling Open Championship in fine style. This unique event was a pair's competition over 18 holes with the draw for teams taking place only minutes before the first tee-off. This provided added excitement for the crowds filling the galleries and threw up some interesting partnerships. There was a lot of initial betting interest on the CDA team of **Capt Keith Emmerson** and **FS Bob Walbyoff** and some serious money on the right and left hand combination of **Sgt** 'Kitch' **Kitchener** and **Sig** 'Spike' **Milligan**.

The first nine holes provided a steady display from all the pairs and at the half-way point all teams were still in contention but the high temperatures and poor fairways were beginning to take their toll. A solid round from the pairing of **Maj McIntosh** (OC JCUFI) and **Sgt** 'Blue Q' **Turner** gave them a slender lead from the pursuing pack. Another consequence of the high temperatures was that the players had to increase their intake of fluids in the clubhouse during the break, posing the question

yards off course destined for the rough only to see it gracefully veer back to land pin high, the first time an anti-cyclone has been used in a major competition.

As the final scores were being checked it soon became apparent the leaders had done enough to maintain their lead and finally won the competition by 14 strokes. Although there was a little consternation in the clubhouse about the fact that the OC and one of the organisers made up the winning pair, nobody could take away the fact that they played two superb rounds of golf and were worthy victors. Thanks must go out to the main organisers **SSgt** 'Chalkie' **White** and **Sgt Vern Turner**, the MPA PGA for hosting the event and of course all competitors . It was a display of 'jointery' at its best and golf that Peter Alliss would have been proud of - with the game of golf being the true winner.

CBFFI CROSS-COUNTRY RUN
by Sig 'Raggers' Ragni

In the closing stages of the CBFFI competition JCUFI closed the gap on the overall leaders FILU by gaining Second place points from this run. The course was 3.8 miles, the first part of which was uphill with the wind in your face. Despite this handicap **Sig Martin** 'Speed Demon' **Potter** finished with a convincing win over the rest of the runners (including the Ghurkas!), unfortunately the others in our team didn't perform as well as him. **SSgt Mal Pavier** came 5th followed by **Flt Sgt Ian Wiseman** in 12th place and myself in 16th. **LCpl Lenaghan** and **LCpl Wayne Topping** ran but only the first four runners counted for the competition results. Coming second in this race means that JCUFI can still win the CBFFI Cup, if we perform well in the remaining sports. Stand by for further updates!!!

THE 'DEWPOND RUN' FOR THE ANTHONY NOLAN BONE MARROW TRUST
by Sig Martin 'Mean Machine' Potter

Every year, on Ascension Island, a run takes place, but not an ordinary run. This is 7 miles long and all uphill - in fact up a mountain. Green Mountain is 3000ft high with a jungle environment. On top of the mountain is a man made 'Dewpond', which was to be the finishing point of our run. Eight of us flew out to Asi, seven runners and a PTI for admin. From JCUFI, the runners were **Sig Martin Potter**, **Sig** 'Raggers' **Ragni** and **WEW Fagan.** It was a sponsored run and the monies raised are to be donated to the Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow Trust.

We flew out on the Wednesday and ran on the Sunday, three days of acclimatisation and ensuring our bodies were getting enough fluids daily….drinking (I mean preparing). The Thursday was spent on recce – time well spent. The start of the run was from 'George Town' on the beach. The course then moved up a long incline to another town called 'Two boats', named after the two boats that form its landmark. This was to

be the base of the mountain. The terrain near the top of the mountain was very treacherous, lots of mud underfoot and a very dense jungle foliage. The incline was that bad that there was actually a rope along side to help you climb. The following two days were spent relaxing and consolidating our tans on the beach.

The start of the run was to be early (0730) in order to catch the coolest part of day. The weather was overcast and cooler than the previous three days. Tradition says that you are supposed to start with your hand in the sea and finish with your hand in the Dewpond. The sea was too rough to start with your hand in the water so we touched the water and opted for the start line. There was a fairly big crowd, (big for Asi!), and around 40 mutants (entries), though not all those started eventually finished. The start was fast but I managed to stick with the leader who happened to be the local that always wins. I was still with him at Two Boats as we started the ascent. The Gurkha was only 300m behind all the way. We were 800m up the mountain when the local started walking I thought my luck was in and pushed on up the hill. After another 100m I was forced to walking. The local slowly caught me back up and casually introduced him self as 'Al' – very friendly! As we marched up the hill together the Gurkha ran past and looked very comfortable. The local followed after him but I settled for (as my lungs allowed) third.

LCpl Gurung of the RIC in MPA finished in first position with a time of 1 hour 4 mins, upsetting 'Al'! I finished third with a time of 1 hour 7 mins. **Sig Ragni** finished sixth with a time of 1 hour 21 mins. A good party was had by all afterwards and over one thousand pounds was raised for The Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow trust.

A TROOP - THE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATORS
by Cpl 'Austin International Tech of Mystery' Dawson
Tp Comd **Flt Lt A. Cooksley RAF**
2IC **SSgt S. Déwar R. SIGNALS**

On my arrival at RADCON, I realised what a rag tag outfit we had. Royal Signals operators and All Arms Signallers manned RADCON, and the outlying dets for the first time. The experiment (so far), seems to have been a success! Welcome from RADCON to **'LCpl** 'Mini Me' **Hutchinson** and **Sig** 'I'm not from St Helena' **Brydon,** you have already brightened up our lives. To help with a bit of department spirit, a few members of RADCON spent a quiet evening in the thriving metropolis of Stanley. The trip was a huge success with one down side. Everyone on the trip developed flu like symptoms the next morning…….Apart from seeing the local sites, RADCON have been dominating the JCUFI squash ladder. With **SSgt** 'My bums cuter than yours' **Dewar** leading by example, we have four players in the top five. **Tpr** 'Nelly' **Porter** QRH keeps eating 'Slimfast' claiming it is 'Musclemax' weight gain powder, and **Sig** 'Buzz' **Burrell** is adding a sizeable increase to 'Sarah Lee Cakes' profit margin! **Sig Roche** is no-where to be seen apart from at mealtimes where he regularly helps himself to seconds, and sometimes thirds! Meanwhile, it hasn't been all fun and games; **LCpl Chris** 'Luckiest man alive' **Cowley** and **Gnr Scott Boyle** spent three weeks living in a tent on Poke Point Hill on West Falklands as part of the four day long Ex Purple Strike! Well, with R&R, adventure training and the millennium to come, we look forward to February and the end of our tour!

BRAVO TROOP – LIFE AS A SHIFTY
by Cpl Cath 'Spider Legs' McDonald

25 strong Bravo Troop, of all three Services, has only five Royal Signals personnel. One Corporal and four Signallers who, for their sins, work alongside the Navy and RAF – vastly outnumbering us, however we try and cope with the mad people that surround us, and bring a little sanity to the asylum.

Life down in the sunny Falklands is not proving to be as bad as we had imagined. There are plenty of sheep (250,000 of them!) for **Sig** 'Taff' **Evans** to chase after, so he is happy, and lots of bars for **Sig Alison Moore** to be brawling in, which she is ecstatic about; now the rest of MPC are scared to go out! We have been quite busy with all the charity runs. Well done **Sig Martin** 'Run like the wind but not with a bergen' **Potter** for his charity climb of over 3000ft in a hot humid atmosphere, and difficult terrain of Ascension Island – like our hearts really go out to him for having to spend a week in Ascension running 7.5 miles – but credit does go to him anyway. Also well done to **Sig Moore** and **Sig Red Stables** for their contribution to the Children in Need charity run organised by the Squadron where they ran from Goose Green to Mount Pleasant, in the process raising over £2000.

The COMMCEN got tired of **Red Stables** antics and loaded her on board ship to go to Montevideo, Uruguay, for ten days on HMS *Dumbarton Castle*. This left poor Taff to fend on his own for a bit on a shift full of scary Navy girls. Unfortunately, the ship didn't complete its part of the deal, and they brought her back too!

Sig Red Stables now picks up the line on her 'eventful' trip……

MONTEVIDEO WITH THE ROYAL NAVY
by Sig 'Red' Stables

The trip came about whilst working one day in the COMMCEN, I was asked by my DSO if I wanted a jolly to Uruguay on the HMS *Dumbarton Castle*, so naturally I said yes, (who wouldn't). So a week later on Sunday 3rd October I set sail, along with another 13 other guests. My four days in transit were spent working in the MCO on board (RN term for Commcen). Everything was manual (painful), but it was good to see how one of the other services worked while away from shore. My overriding impression was of lots of equipment humming electrically, and lots of nice sounding radios bleeping all day. Oh, how I miss and dream about the psyops-like sound of bleep-bleep-bleeep-bleeeep!!!

Sig Stables posing with the 'dishy' Navy bloke

The food was good although not many of the guest's managed to keep theirs down, because it was quite funny – intensely funny to watch others, until the wild rocking of the boat gets to you too!! On the way there the weather was brilliant, the sea was quite calm the sun was shining and the sea was a peaceful blue colour. The way back was a different story; I can still see the three Gurkha faces – as they looked a funny shade of green. On the Wednesday night before we docked we decided it would be nice if we cooked a barbecue for the ship's company, which was also fun.

The day we docked in Montevideo, all the guests couldn't wait to get off and go alongside - especially the three Gurkhas! At 1 o'clock we were allowed a run ashore – finally. The five days we were to stay in dock were spent sampling the variety of local ales (good as they sell bottles of beer by the litre – for me, paradise!). Of course, no social scene is complete without some form of eats, so we went in a few of the bar's, where the management were extremely hospitable, all night long they would bring us food out and then join us later for a drink. The food was excellent and the steaks were huge (and cheap – actually, everything was cheap!). I got to do the girlie thing and went shopping for a day - the good part though was walking round and seeing the cultural side of the city. Monuments seem to be a big feature, and in the more affluent areas, the buildings were out of this world – though there were constant reminders that not everyone was so well off. The weather was lovely, the people pleasant and easy going and the beaches beautiful. If anyone else ever gets the chance, then grab it with both hands! The experience in working as one with Navy contemporaries, combined with the culture and the stay in Montevideo will be memories I will always remember.

CHARLIE TROOP – ARMY! ARMY! ARMY!
Tp Comd **Lt L. Henderson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt M. Pavieré**

F.I.T.S. Roll of Honour.
Sgt 'Clive' **Kitchener**
Cpl 'Leave it until tomorrow' **Cleary**
LCpl 'I Love lasagne from Shorties' **Savage**
LCpl 'Why am I here?' **Loates**

We had been told that the weather was changeable down here, but we didn't expect to have three of the four seasons before we reached the MPA terminal. The missing one was of course Summer! After a slow start the team knuckled down to some hard loafing and within a matter of days we had all perfected it, especially **Sgt Kitchener** who developed a tendency to only go out on jobs if somebody important was visiting! Such is the privilege of power! Nobody was quite sure what to do with the three additional fixtures, did we have to sign for them or should we just ignore them and pretend we had no knowledge of them being anything to do with us? Of course I refer to two cats (Fits and Lister) and the resident Digifits God, **John Nichol!** In the end it was decided to ignore the cats and to sign for **John.** After a short interval in the never ending fun that is MPA (work) **Cpl Louis** 'Its not my problem' **Cleary** received word of his impending T1 entrance course, and this brought forward another excuse for him to do nothing every afternoon. We soon discovered his idea of revision is on the Internet in the WRVS. Good luck to him when the time comes though. When we do have to go and do some work, it really only involves driving to one of two sites and pressing one button, so as you can imagine, it's a really demanding job! Seriously some of the mountain sites can be quite exhilarating, especially when the Brintel drops you off with 60kgs of kit….at the bottom! This wouldn't be too bad if it meant you would be picked up from the same place, but usually, wherever you end up DRAGGING your kit for the pick up, you are guaranteed the chopper will land at the other site! Plans have begun in earnest for the Millennium, and any other weekend that happens to get in the way! Generally this all revolves around eating, drinking and being merry…..or more likely, troughing, getting lashed and finding pizza in your shoes the next morning…

LINE SECTION (AKA THE T MECHS) - *by LCpl Farrow*

All of us, from the elite section within the Falkland Islands say, 'Hello' but would like to inform everyone that we are, in fact, Tele-Mechs not Liney's!!! With the exception of recently promoted **Cpl** 'Pathetic shark' **King,** who is actually no longer a Mech, but a Hom Tech. Never mind Jase its legal now.

We have recently had an influx of new mechs from Germany, the new arrival's to this wonderful & warm island were **Sigs** 'Dreamboy' **Lake**, 'Tim nice but dim' **Duggan**, 'Where's the mail' **Peart**, 'Gobby' **Love**, 'John Merrick' **Wride** and 'Scouse 'Ive just found it, honest!!!' **Ennion.** As you can imagine the island has been running smoothly, since their arrival. With three new Faults Installation teams about, work has been down to a minimum. Not! Also indulging into the wonders of the island are **Sgt** 'Dr Evil' **MacDonald, Cpl** 'Why's the wagon sinking' **Stowell, LCpl** 'Here's some flowers love, Im off to the bar' **Welsh** and **Sig** 'Honest, I didnt do it Guv' **Taylor.** To keep the Liney's presence at line section we have adopted **LCpl** 'Raaaaaaa' **Montgomery**, from the resident 1(UK) ADSR. Monty has certainly needed his Armoured title.

During his tour, **Sig Peart** has organised, a five 'A' side football tournament for all JCUFI personnel. With us at Line section, being the elite, it is only correct that we are top by 4 points. With us, it's the winning, not the taking part that's important, so obviously the celebrations in the bar after each winning game can get a bit rowdy (apparently…).Recently the section has said goodbye to **Cpl** '? days to the womb' **Lees**, who on his way back to RAF Bruggen had a flying visit to good old Blandford. Also yet another farewell from the Falklands goes out to **Cpl** 'I've just finished painting the ceiling' **Wilson**, we'll see you again next year!!!

We would finally like to put out a message to all Mechs everywhere. That on their next tour, they will be able to view the new rest room. Due to a flying visit from the changing rooms team, made up from **LCpl** 'I got married in the Fallies, but am now divorced' **Farrow** and **Sig Lake**. We would also like to wish everyone a Merry Xmas and a happy Millennium.

POWER SECTION – We Live On……..

Since arriving in the Falkland Islands, Power section has been involved in the refurbishment programme of the FITS generators. So far we have managed to replace two of the five gene cabins and are presently in the process of refurbishing the third. We are also in charge of the Squadron bar, which goes by the name of 'Sharkies'. So far we have had 2 Band Nights and a Karaoke Night which went really well, but the rest of the time, it sort of dies a death. But trying his hardest to get the place going again is **Cpl Dave** 'Where's my b****y keys' **Turton** who also gives the Squadron their duty haircuts (nice haircut **Maj Adams**). **Sig Sully** 'Gym Princess' **Sullivan** is still trying to get everyone to turn up to his PT lessons with little success. We also have our duty oil rag **Sig Chris** 'The Galloot' **Beazley** who when unable to find any rags decided to use his field jacket to mop up an oil spillage inside one of the cabins, while he was still wearing it. Our resident whippet **Sig** 'Where's My CR' **Ragni** who is the self professed Fastest man in the Squadron NOT. Another one of our characters is **Sig Oz** 'I'm not going out over night' **Phillips** who decided that a night in front of the TV is much better than a night on top of a hill doing his job. Our illustrious leader is **Sgt** 'Well 'Ard' **Leader** who is the duty JCUFI Heli-cabs dispatcher and MT monster. Not forgetting our Hello's and Farewells. Hello goes to **Sig** 'Smurf' **Murphy** who has recently arrived at 1(UK) ADSR and came out here to escape the rat race in Herford. We say Bye to **LCpl** 'Slim' **Humphries** who escaped back to the UK on his Class 1.

SYSCON ROLL OF HONOUR

Blue Team:	**Green Team:**
Sgt Dave Place	**Sgt Paul Haigh**
Cpl Dan Archer	**Cpl Jim Healy**
J/T Allie Hunter	**Cpl** 'Egg' **Hatch**
J/T Chris Gill	**LCpl** 'Chartlie' **NG**
J/T Helen Hammond	**LCpl Wayne Topping**
Cpl Andy Blay	**LCpl Dan Mountford**
J/T Daz Penny	**LCpl Nate Dorrian**

Our indoctrination into the Falklands scene occurred when, following all the briefings on the day we arrived, to be told to be back by 17:30hrs at the bar where we would meet our RAF co-workers. There is a tradition where the FNG wears an FNG suit, (a stupid looking outfit made from bubble wrap, electronic flashing lights and an annoying musical melody.) This privilege was bestowed upon **Sgt Paul Haigh** and soon slipped into the 'Blue Syscon Way' of swilling liberal amounts of beer and uttering words like 'come on' as each tin was drained.

Day One and the RAF, bless em, were suffering but managed to maintain an air of professionalism at the workplace (they must have done this before) We were introduced to our responsibilities for the next six months, which seemed more in depth than we were use to back home. The shifts were sorted and we were informed that there would be a RAF person on each shift, they were to be treated like a supervisor, as they 'allegedly' knew the score. This soon transpired into knowing who to blame for each fault reported when it went wrong, not to mention their large capacity for hot beverages only matching their intake of alcohol. The work itself proved very good due to a wide diversity of circuits we were to look after. Much liaising with outside agencies (trying to get them to do as we wanted them to do and not them doing their own thing and making things worse) all this improved our telephone techniques no-end.

The USM organised PT four times a week to which the RAF & Navy elements were invited to attend but not many of them took up the challenge. The gym facilities are superb with more machines than you can shake a stick at, organised circuit training, Boxercise and a large indoor swimming pool. One of the successful Tri-Service ventures have been a 5-a-side league started by the Line Section. Syscon were showing that the RAF influence was rubbing off on them until the arrival of the new Foreman **WO2 (FofS) Paul Hubble**. Seeing as he fancies himself as a bit of a David Beckham, he moulded the team into something better (more of a netball team than football).

Worthwhile things to mention are the long overdue promotion to Full **Cpl Matthew** 'Egg' **Hatch**, the sitting and passing of the EFP1 exam by **Cpl Jim Healy**. **LCpl Wayne Topping** followed this by passing his 3-2 exam. Just to prove he can do it in style, **Cpl Healy** and **Cpl Lewis Cleary** (friend to the Syscon crowd) then sat their 2-1 exam and are anxiously awaiting the results. Does this mean more promotions in the pipeline? The RAF element hope so, makes them more bitter with their promotional track record but it is an excuse for another party.

This covers the tour for us serving in Syscon who are patiently awaiting the 'Timmy' to come and take us away, resting assured that Crab Air will fail to turn up on time. Well maybe we will be lucky and the plane will land on time for the first time in written history (well this one anyway).

EXERCISE WANDERING ATOM
by LCpl Nate Dorrian

The Wandering Atom roll of honour
SSgt 'Chalky' White, Capt 'Jase' Nichols, Sig 'Murf' Murphy, Sgt 'Sean' Arundel, Sig Matt Rees, Sgt 'Kitch' Kitchener, LCpl Nate Dorrian, Sig 'Potts' Potter, SSgt 'Mal' Pavier

Day 1: It was a chilly bright Saturday morning when **Sgt Chris Leader** dropped us off at the Quarry on Pleasant Peak (PPQ) with bergans that weighed far too much for a two-day walk. We would like to thank **Chris** for hitting as many pot-holes as he could, really starting the day off nicely. **Sig Matt Rees** was given the first leg to lead from PPQ to Mt Mustard, which to start off with looked all right, but it got worse. We dropped down from the Peak and headed straight across the valley for Mustard. By now Mt Mustard was huge and every one was thinking what the hell are we doing here. We trekked long and hard across the valley floor to what seemed to be the top. Ah-ha! It was a false summit and there was still a long-long way to go. We pushed on up to the top to shelter behind a large outcrop of rocks for a well earned rest, and a great sense of relief as the high ground had been conquered! After a half-hour **LCpl Nate Dorrian** led the next section, which was across the ridge, which wasn't too bad at all. We contoured around most of the peaks until we got to 'Unknown Peak'. Blue Mountain could be seen in the distance and it was huge! By now the bergans were like lead and tired legs had set in, but we cracked on to Blue Mt and another well deserved rest and dinner. From here our goal, Mt Usbourne could be seen and it looked so far, far away.

After food **Sig** 'Potts' **Potter** took the next leg, as we were contouring a large rocky area that wasn't on the map I decided to take a dive in true premier dive style. One minute I was walking along minding my own business the next I was forward rolling down the mountain, bizarre! It was here that we started to have to negotiate the 'rock rivers' that feature so widely on the Islands. Not easy with a lead lined bergen I can tell you. There were a few thrills and spills but no injuries. However, time and fatigue was pressing. It was decided that Mt Usbourne was an unfeasible option so camp was struck in some hollows next to Table Rock some six Kms from the objective. **SSgt Mal Pavier** and **Sgt** 'Kitch' **Kitchener** really wanted to bag the peak so a fast and loose attempt was to be made. **Capt Jase Nichols**, **SSgt** 'Chalky' **White** and **Sgt Sean Arundel** stayed at base camp while the rest of us struck out for the peak. I remember the words 'Don't worry we'll just go at the pace we were going at with the bergans' yeah right! **SSgt Mal Pavier** and **Sgt** 'Kitch' **Kitchener** set off at about 5kms a minute. We were running to keep up with the wild gazelles. The pace slowed a little bit but not much, we reached the base of the mountain and had a re-org. Time had run out and we were in no condition to strike for the summit, so within 2kms a disgruntled motley crew trudged back to base camp and FOOD!

The throwbacks had set up camp nicely and had seen us coming up the valley and put on the boily's for us. Then we stood around the 'virtual fire' and **Sgt** 'Kitch' **Kitchener** regaled us with his marvelous tall stories. We all were in bed early for a well-earned rest!

Day 2: We awoke at 07:00hrs to the sound of **Sgt Sean Arundel** stomping around very noisily outside. Everyone then got up to a frosty clear morning, cooking and sorting out their admin. After camp was struck at around 08:30hrs and it was my turn to lead a leg. So after establishing our position I picked our route back, once more over those rock rivers we had negotiated yesterday. We had thought it would be an easy stroll, as there had been a Heli pick-up organised. However, it did not appear, so the reality of a long, long walk lay before us, gutted! The route back was to drop down on the south side of the ridge then strike out towards PPQ, contouring around the ridge and dropping onto the 'flat ' ground.

However, the ground started getting very boggy and more 'babies heads' started to appear. Also all our feet, knees, shoulders & hips, at this point were very tender. When we got to see PPQ it was miles away! – MPA seemed to be the other end of the Island. Subsequently the stops got more often and the legs shorter, and somebody kept pushing MPA further and further away the more we walked! After a rest close to PPQ it was decided to push on to MPA, as there was still the option that Brintel would pick us up, nice thought that. A thought it remained as our hopes were dashed when we saw the Sikorsky take off, totally ignore our calls on the radio and disappear over Mt Wickham towards Onion range. The ground now was very undulating and marshy, and MPA always dropping in and out of sight as we crossed this barren windswept landscape. The weather, which had been so good to us started to cloud over and threatened rain if we didn't get a move on. But eventually we made the ring road by the runway lights, shower and food were only 2kms away. We could now see the end of what had been a very tough two days hike in the hills. It felt good to be back and proud that we had walked about 60kms in the two days over some very rough terrain. One final photo stop and then the short walk back to the accommodation and our sorely missed pits.

MPA LEADERSHIP – THE GRUELLING TESTS (AKA THE INQUISITION) - *by LCpl Topping*

1-2 November, the Education Centre here at MPA held a course on behalf of JCUFI in which eight personnel were to be tested in the art of leadership. The course was run in much the same vein as RCB is for potential officers. The first day mainly consisted of theory work, where the general theme seemed to revolve around who could have the biggest headache!

This started with a psychometric test, in which you had to say which shape followed the previous four. This went ok for the first ten minutes, after which you started to see double and just had to guess which meaningless bunch of lines came next. This bundle of fun was followed by a number of general knowledge and current affairs tests. The high percentage achieved on the current affairs test was due to the regular daily papers we get to read (NOT…)! The afternoon that followed was even more fun. We were to have an at the board interrogation, which involved receiving a scenario and from there creating a plan which suited best. You were to present this idea and then get a good grilling from the Captain in command. Basically, whatever you said was wrong and wasn't feasible. What came next seemed easy in principle but wasn't. You were given a topic to speak on, for five minutes, but with only fifteen minutes to prepare! What became par for the course, was that everyone spoke really well for the first two minutes and then started to fade fast for the remaining three. With that, thankfully it was time to go and reflect on how hard our brains were hurting.

The second day was to be a lot more fun, and a day everyone enjoyed. For most of the day we were to practice our leadership capabilities at the dreaded command tasks. These involve the usual 'Get over this stretch of land using only this barrel and this useless bit of string'. Everyone learned a lot about how to command a set of people in the right way and keep everyone's morale soaring – even when you are still at the start point after using twelve minutes out of the allotted fifteen! What was to follow, nobody expected, we were to do an individual obstacle course for four hellish minutes each. To say everyone was tired would be an understatement! This was finally the last part of the training.

On reflection, the course was superbly run, in particular, by **Capt Rowlands**. Everyone involved gained a great deal of experience. If some of the course do try to go and attempt RCB this course would stand them in excellent stead.

Sig 'Red' Stables storms across the cargo net on the Individual Obstacle Course

Sig 'Red' Stables leans across the acid pool to assist colleague Pte McDonald to safety

Nerves are frayed as the team consider their impending 'river' crossing using their own raft. Shown are LCpl NG (left), Pte McDonald and LCpl Topping (holding the float)

LCpl Topping (left) and LCpl NG (right), resident technical gurus of the course contemplate a more practical solution

1 (ROYAL BUCKINGHAMSHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS)

OC **Maj David Raleigh**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Dave Scott**

The last two months have seen a phenomenal amount of activity for this small unit. There have been two highly successful overseas exercise deployments, in addition to the usual round of weekend exercises. The Squadron recruiting team has been busy, visiting most UK-based units in the last few weeks.

A warm welcome goes to **WO2 (YofS) Dave Hughes**, fresh from 261 Sig Sqn and Kosovo, who rapidly found himself in the hot seat. As this is published we will have said farewell to **Cpl Jase Timmer** – with many thanks for all his hard work over the years. Congratulations go to **Sigs Karen Clarke, Clare Maslin, Trevor Spinks** and **Karen Bramley** on passing their TA Recruits Course and **LCpls Wayne Miller, Don Shore, Stu Penmen**, 'Scouse' **Hardy** and **Simon Hodgson** on being selected for promotion. Also well done's to **Sgt Steve Milne** and **Cpls Vinnie Hill** and 'Doobs' **Rodgers** on being selected for Yeoman of Signals training.

EXERCISE GLOBAL LYNX 2 1999 – CYPRUS

Not content with two weeks in June, elements of the Squadron deployed to Dhekelia for two weeks in September for another round of comms training and testing. This took a very similar format to the previous exercise, only at a slower pace as there was no SC Course to put through their paces. Consequently there was time for classroom teaching, with **LCpl Sam MacGillivry** doing her best to make modems sound straightforward and **LCpl** 'Rosy' **Roseveare** doing something similar with 16/24 kVA generators. A little learning is a dangerous thing, so **Sgt Ian Lumsden-Gordon** ('L-G') made sure that it was all washed down with copious quantities of Brandy Sours. After a lifetime in SC he knew most of the bars in the area, although most also seemed to be run by the Russian Mafia. Surely some concidence? Back at the ranch in Bletchley, **Lt Angus Evers** ran a very successful training weekend to tie in with the Cyprus comms deployment. It tied in even better when **Cpl Mark Gott** remembered how Zulu time worked.

LCpl Al Shewsbury, venting his frustrations in Cyprus

EXERCISE RUNNEL STONE 1999 – DENMARK

Mid-October saw the Squadron deploying to central Jutland for the annual patrolling and comms exercise, operating against the Danish Home Guard. The Home Guard always take their defence of designated Key Points very seriously, making sure all the local civilians are warned off, and this year was no exception. Patrols from 2, 63 and 264 Sig Sqns and 30 Sig Regt joined two patrols from 1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) for the weekend's operations, coordinated by the rather stressed Ops Officer, **Capt Richard Newhouse.** Patrols were inserted into their areas late on Friday evening by a combination of parachuting, tactical landing of a C-130 and by helicopter, to carry out recces of their respective targets. Reports were filed, and subsequently further observation carried out by air recce and helicopter-inserted Ops. Saturday night saw the targets attacked, and in most cases destroyed. **WO2 Dave Scott**'s patrol caught the Danes by surprise at a key airfield, by jumping out of a helicopter right in the middle of their defensive cordon – the footage captured by a tame TV crew made it all look a little like Somalia, only better organised! **Lt Angus Evers** found the outer reaches of his radio mast target undefended, but then got carried away and his patrol was scattered by the 3rd Danish Shock Army, which had been hiding in the bushes in 4WDs with searchlights. Many thanks once again to the Danish Military for their assistance and overwhelming hospitality. No thanks however, to the Camp Commandant and his mate **Sig Dave Carrington,** for the lashings of Gamel Dansk and whisky on Sunday night, which made everyone so ill on Monday morning (especially the Ops Offr).

Dangerous and Deadly - Sig Stu Adams poses for the 'WANTED' poster for Runnel Stone

Cpl Stu Searle practising to attack an airfield in Denmark

60 SIGNAL SQUADRON

by 2Lt Cropper

Sqn Comd **Maj Miles**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Ward**

A new Royal Signals Squadron has recently been established in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. As a result of SDR the Infantry has been scaled down in the Thames Valley and the Signals presence increased. Consequently in July 1999, with equipment and instructors from 55 Sig Sqn (V) (Liverpool) and former soldiers from 5 RGJ (V), 60 Signal Squadron came into being. Recent months have been a busy time for everyone in the Squadron including its PSIs, **FofS** 'Where's me screwdriver?' **Fletcher** and **Sgt** 'Preston forever' **Brown,** and finding

stores for radio kit and land-rovers is a continual headache for RQMS, **WO2** 'The answer's no' **Pennel**.

EXERCISE AINTREE DOWNS
WEYMOUTH 20-22 AUGUST 1999

It's not all been donkey work, the Squadron has conducted training which has integrated the new squadron. In August the Squadron operated its first communications exercise on Portland Bill, Dorset. This orienteering NAVEX took troops around most of the Isle on a fine day, although some including the SSM saw more of certain areas than others! Thanks go to **Capt Mather** and his team for allowing everyone to drink their winnings. The weekend was completed with an interesting visit to the Tank Museum, Bovington.

Portland – August 1999 - Ex Aintree Downs

REBADGING CEREMONY, AYLESBURY
4 SEPTEMBER 1999

On 4 September members of 5 RGJ (V) who chose to re-role received their beret and cap badge at an official ceremony in Aylesbury. Several important guests joined family and friends of the parade, including the Mayor of Aylesbury and the Inspecting Officer **Col McLay,** Deputy Commander of 11 Sig Bde. The ceremony marked the beginning of a long relationship between the Royal Signals and Aylesbury, and also the integration of former RGJ members into the Corps, including the change from Light Division drill! The remainder of September focused on recruiting with good results from open days and advertising in the local press and the town centre. As a result eleven people have embarked on training, ably led by the newly formed Military Training Team. The Squadron wishes them all the best for RSS Blandford early next year.

EXERCISE TOPHAM HATT–SWANAGE 1-3 OCTOBER 1999

Organised by Alpha Troop 2IC, **2Lt Cropper,** an element of the Squadron took part in Ex Topham Hatt on the Swanage Railway, Dorset. Over the weekend troops were involved in track-side clearance and telecom work in support of Project Herston, an ongoing Corps project. Although faced with a demanding task everyone was surprised with the excellent work achieved over two days, especially **Cpl** 'Lucky' **Guest.** The weekend was thoroughly enjoyed and allowed members to begin working as a team, including the new Troop Commander, **Lt** 'Where's me skis?' **Williams.** Thanks go to **SSM** 'right-o' **Roberts** and troops from 222 Sig Sqn, Bulford for their support over the weekend. All are looking forward to Topham Hatts in the future.

Looking forward, the winter months will see continued hard work in establishing the Squadron with planned refurbishment of the TAC, along with trade training at Blandford and continual recruiting. The formation of 60 Sig Sqn marks a new beginning for the Corps in the south and for the TA in Aylesbury. If you know anyone who is about to leave, or has recently left the Corps and is looking for a TA unit to pass on their experience and knowledge, 60 Sig Sqn would like to hear from them.

3 COMMANDO BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS & SIGNAL SQUADRON ROYAL MARINES

3 Cdo Bde HQ & Sig Sqn RM deployed to Egypt from 3 October as part of the ARG on Ex Argonaunt. For the lucky few, which included **WO1 FofS Steve Bason** and all the Brigade Staff, it was a case of sailing from Plymouth on 16 August aboard HMS *Fearless* for a few weeks cruising around the Mediterranean. With a busy programme involving lots of Navy type things, the weeks of bobbing around the sea were broken up with plenty of runs ashore. The rock race in Gibraltar was not for the faint hearted and the 10km race up Mt Vesuvious in Naples is nothing short of a nightmare. The exercise continued with beach landings in Turkey finishing back in Marseilles for R & R.

By this time the Foreman was winging his way back to the UK having escaped in Naples only to re-deploy on Ex Bright Star to Egypt. As far as the Royal Signals ranks were concerned **Sgts** 'Taff' **Morgan** and **Mick Lee** with the 501 dets and crew left on 3 October with **Steve Bason** deciding to join a day later (and rightly so). Due to the sudden climate change **Sgt Mick** 'I can drink ten pints' **Lee,** thought it would be in his best interests to drink the entire stock of the transit accommodations water supply, however, to his detriment he found this was not going to be the case, as his stomach decided to revolt and eject his new found reservoir. This led to **Mick** spending the night in the local air-conditioned nursing home with a needle in his bum. Both dets were initially co-located with Commando Log Regt, with 501 Wine taking all their traffic and 501 Violet preparing to take the Brigade's traffic.

The first two weeks were a steep learning curve for both 501 crews as all did not go as planned. Some of the problems we had to overcome, included not being allowed to wash and shave (not that the techs needed to) due to water shortages and then some recce type person, probably an Officer decided to set-up the Commando Logistics Camp 100 yards from a Second World War minefield. So having spent 24 hours setting up camp, everyone had to pack up again and move 500 yards down the road. After a few hiccups and minor adjustments the kit was up and running and we then had to contend with a few visitors such as the odd scorpion, spider and hungry gerbil. On a few occasions we were able to visit MMC (Mubaraq Military City) and admire the hotels and hard living of our 30 Sig Regt (MacDonalds R us) counterparts.

501 Violet then split and went to the HQ & Sigs location to take on the Brigade traffic and this is where **Sgt Rob McAdam** and **Cpl Jim Baxter** (anytime you like lads) joined the exercise. The day to day running of the det went quite smoothly and the odd hotel visit started to happen. R & R was in the form of a trip to Cairo and the Pyramids although the 501 crews were unable to go with the main party, which wasn't a bad thing in the end, as there was a bad case of salmonella amongst some of the Royal Marines. **Sgt Rob** 'Pathfinder' **McAdam** took advantage of the fine weather to do some training. A bit of local sight seeing/running from Cdo Logs location to the Brigade HQ (a mere 10km away over flat land and visible after 15 minutes) geographically challenged **Rob,** in that he was within 1km of the

Brigade HQ and still could not see it. The end result being him having to return to Cdo logs in map reading failure completing a round trip of some 20km in blistering heat. (Sensible guy) The Brigade Cypher cell was co-located with 501 Violet where a close working/recreational relationship with the techs and operators developed. The operators doing all the work as always and the techs going off every day to the beach and local hotel. The main hobby of the deployment became golf, but unfortunately **Sgt Gibbins** only came out with a 7 iron, and a sand wedge was in great need. However, everyone adapted to bunker shots and **Cpl Sean McIlroy** became the Egypt Open Champion. The Brigade FofS even took up the challenge but lost in the second round to **Tom Gibbins**. The remainder of the exercise went quite smoothly with little bits of phys and lots of sunbathing by the techs while the Foreman continued to beaver away. The Brigade completely recovered back to the UK on 4 November and it's back to normal work.

As for normal life back in the UK, while we were hard at it, **Sgt Lou Walker** was off swanning around Plymouth C of E playing student on resettlement. We welcome **Cpl** 'I actually play basketball for a living' **Jonah Jones**. We bid farewell to 'Tall' **Morgan** as he leaves us for 14 Sig Regt and good luck to **Cpl** 'Jacko' **Jackson** as he leaves the Army to do some real work. **Tom Gibbins** will be leaving us early next year (at last) for Germany and 20 Armd Bde, which will be nice for him and we wish him well and I hope you like Armour **Tom**. Finally we would like to say a belated farewell to **Maj Pete** 'No photo no *WIRE* notes' **Drew** who allegedly did some work at HQRM in Portsmouth and is now somewhere doing lots of exams. We miss you lots and lots **Peter** so stay in touch. Can you send your belt to 'you know who' please.

NEWS FROM THE TROOPS

BRUNEI SIGNAL TROOP

ADVENTURE TRAINING IN KOTA KINABALU II
15 AUGUST 1999 – *by Cpl Winder*

After nine and a half years of managing to dodge it I've finally been collared to write an article for the *Wire* (what on earth did I do before spell check was invented?). First of all, let me fill you in about Brunei Signal Troop. There are currently two Royal Signal personnel attached to the Queens Gurkha Signals and we are employed in the Crypto office but also oversee the running of the COMMCEN, which is manned by the QG Signal guys. There is also a R. Signals Captain who is double hatted as the Crypto Custodian and the AO/QM for Training Team Brunei (how much stress sir?). Life with QG Signals is like being part of one big family, which is appreciated in a small close knit community, as it is in Brunei. It also means that as well as having our respective mess do's and Garrison do's, we also have functions in the Gurkha Community Centre. Another year here and we might master the art of Nepalese dancing, however, try as we may mastering the Nepalese language is a lot tougher.

Life is not one big party though and the smooth running of the Troop goes down to **Capt Santa Pun** and **SSgt Raju,** involving not only the official business of running a Troop but also the personal welfare of everyone. To this effect **Capt Santa Pun** decided that the Troop needed some light stress relief (see we do work hard!!) and this was in the form of Adventure Training. Names were put in a hat and eventually three family groups and five singlies set off in two Land Cruisers on a hot sunny day full of excitement, mainly because we were escaping Brunei to a country that actually had pubs down town!! Ten hours later (and how many stamps in our passports) we arrived tired, hot, dusty and extremely stiff in the town of Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia. A quick shower and it was off to the local Chinese where **SSgt Raju** asserted his leadership skills and we were soon fed. After our batteries were recharged it was time for us singlies to hit the local nightlife (where the cost of beer seemed to double on our arrival!).

Brunei Signal Troop

Next morning and with a few sore heads it was back in the Land Cruisers off to the base of Mt. Kinabalu to climb the mountain (which by the way is the highest mountain in South East Asia), easy I had thought to myself, especially after doing Adventure Training in Scotland. I soon found out the difference, four hours later and in the dark we finally reached the halfway point which was a very welcoming chalet where we could get food and a bed to sleep before we set off on the next leg of our journey. After a hot cup of tea and some not so hot food it was off to our dorm to try to snatch a few hours sleep. Before we knew it, the guide was knocking us up at the unsociable hour of 0230 (the idea apparently is to reach the Summit to see the Sunrise UMMM!!). The families waved us off and wished us good luck from under the warmth of their blankets and the rest of us still wiping the sleep out of our eyes went on our merry (or not) way. The second half was much more difficult as it involved pulling ourselves up the rock with the aid of ropes, it was slow progress as we only had two torches between the group. **LCpl** 'Mountain Goat' **Suresh** was IC of one of the torches and therefore ran up every 100m or so before turning round to shine the torch down for the rest of us. Where he got his energy from none of us knew but we could have done with a 'Pint of what he'd been drinking'. Unfortunately due to injury and/or altitude sickness a couple of us didn't quite reach the Summit which was disappointing until the others who had made it returned (shattered) with the news they never actually saw the sunrise due to bad weather (ha), bit of an anticlimax!

Brunei Signal Troop and Families

The walk back down the mountain was a lot quicker than the one going up and to see the locals making their way up with heavy loads of supplies for the chalet soon wiped any thought of aching bones clean away! Finally at the bottom, very tired but very pleased, we collected our certificates of achievement saying how far up the mountain each of us reached and for those who reached the Summit (4095.2M), it was a 'FIRST CLASS' certificate. That night it was back to Kota Kinabalu, where some of us spent the whole night in the hotel, (not through choice I might add!), all to be said on that is, it must have been the Malay food!!

The last two days we were able to spend at leisure on the Island of Labuan, just off the coast of Malaysia. Everyone had recovered (just) to spend most of it shopping, which is a novelty when you have been in Brunei for a while. We all returned to Brunei with extremely sore muscles and tired but very happy, (especially when we were told PT had been cancelled for the next day!). *JAI QUEENS GURKHA SIGNALS*

SPORT

LUGE

ROYAL SIGNALS GIRL TRIES HER HAND AT LUGE

Sgt Daphne Clash from Aldershot has just spent a week hurtling down the Olympic Bobsleigh track at Lillehammer in Norway. When she first arrived at the Army's 'Ice Training Camp', **Daphne** and the other members of her group had never even seen a Skeleton Bob before but, after only one day of off-track tuition, they were allowed to set off from the Junior Start.

'I'd read an article in the 'Soldier' *magazine and I knew someone who was already doing well in Skeleton Bob events,'* said **Daphne**. *'I felt utter horror the first time I set off - I realised how fast and how close to the track it would be!'*

At the Ice Camp the students, who are all volunteers, can choose to try their hand at Bobsleigh, Luge (sliding down the track feet-first on a sled) or Skeleton Bob, (where they travel head-first on something that resembles a tea-tray!)

'My first run was awe-inspiring and nerve-wracking - full of adrenaline and fear,' added **Daphne**, whose husband **Russell** is an Army PT Instructor in Aldershot. Although the course is run by the Army, there are students from the Royal Navy and RAF, as well as some civilians. The Camp also offers excellent training facilities for Great Britain's international teams so novices like **Daphne** benefit from training alongside international athletes such as **Sean Olson**, who won a Bronze medal in the last Olympics, and their coaches. **Daphne**'s thoughts on Skeleton Bob after several days of training? *'This sport is absolutely tub-thumping! It's absolutely fantastic!'* When she returns to her job with the Royal Signals in Aldershot, **Daphne** will be able to look back on a week in Lillehammer full of thrills and just a few spills.

SHOOTING

THE BRITISH ARMY COMBAT SHOOTING TEAM (B.A.C.S.T) - EXERCISE UNCLE SAM - U.S.A 1999

Some notes from a wandering correspondent,
Licensed to shoot and happy to travel.

The BACST was selected from the best 20 firers in both disciplines of the British Army from achievements of the Army 100 (QMC) held at Bisley ranges in July 1999 and the Army Services Pistol Championships held also at Bisley in June 1999. Regimental Units and Battalions that can shoot at the high standards required and achieving consistent level of marksmanship attend both competitions.

Both disciplines were split into a rifle team of ten firers and a pistol team of nine firers with a team coach appointed to the Rifle Team to ensure continuity of shooting standards within the team and to ensure no officials/ opposition show any bias. **Lt Col R. T. Hoole,** the COS within the Royal School of Signals and (SI) **Sgt D. Copley**, a Military Training Instructor with Whitespear Troop, 1 Sqn, both serving members within Blandford Garrison were selected for the BACST as members of the International Team competing in the United States of America. All team members were deployed to the USA (Little Rock) via Atlanta, departing from Gatwick Airport on 6 October 1999. The USA National Guard Bureau and the National Guard Marksmanship Training Centre (NGMTU) hosted AFSAM at Camp Joseph T. Robinson, Little Rock, Arkansas.

All matches for both the Rifle and Pistol Firers were fired on Gallery ranges from 10m to 50m for pistol and 50m to 300m for the rifle. Throughout the competition match formats differed immensely from UK style matches especially firing from prone left and right handed 50m (John Wayne style), there were also a 'Little notice conditions' 4-man team match, with every member firing pistol, M203 Grenade Launcher, Combat Shotgun, M 16 Rifle and M240B LMG, against a series of pop-up and paper targets.

Sgt D. Copley firing M240B LMG
Match 203 'Little notice conditions'

Lt Col R. T. Hoole and Sgt D. Copley - M203
(Mixed weapons shoot)

All international teams were accommodated in the Professional Education Centre Senior Ranks Accommodation, in a 318 bed hotel with individual rooms with en-suite facilities, TVs, air conditioning, steam iron and ironing board, washing machines, tumble dryers, ice making machines and a microwave. Despite all difficulties encountered by team members the exercise was finalised with four days Cultural and Exchange visits, where **Sgt D. Copley** was indulging with great anticipation in a 3-day package on a golfers paradise tour. This covered ten Masters courses throughout the USA and finally a trip to Graceland, Memphis, Tennessee to visit the homeland of Elvis Aaron Presley ('I'm all shook up').

MARATHON

SHAPE WIN THE ARMY MARATHON CHAMPIONSHIPS

On Sunday 10 October four members of Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) Belgium, travelled to Manchester to compete and complete the Manchester Marathon, which incorporates the Army Marathon Championships. The Team of three Army runners and one navy runner, were successful in not only winning the Minor Unit competition, but in fact beat all 15 units to be the outright champions. The times for the first three runners was not as good as the team had expected, with **WO1 (SSM) Mark Elliott** and **Cpl Paul Nesbitt** having run the Berlin Marathon the week before to raise money for British Charities and this was the first marathon for **LWTR Matt Hayes**. The finishing times were:

Cpl Paul Nesbit	(Royal Signals)	2hrs 47mins
WO1 (SSM) Mark Elliott	(AGC(SPS))	2hrs 55mins
SSgt Stu Taylor	(Royal Signals	3hrs 00mins
LWTR Matt Hayes	(Royal Navy)	3hrs 29mins

The team very much hope to repeat its success next year with a great deal faster times.

The Commanding Officer UK Sp Unit presenting the Army Championship Medals to the team (L-R): Lt Col R. D. F. Millington RTR MBE, LWTR Matt Hayes, Cpl Paul Nesbitt, SSgt Stu Taylor, WO1 (SSM) Mark Elliott

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. Cornick — **Administrative Officer: Mr. P. J. Cuckow (Membership & Records)**

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. Internet: www.royalsignals.army.org.uk/museum/rsa.htm

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.*

NOTES FROM THE AO'S DESK

Branch News: With the demise of 216 Para Sig Sqn, the Hon Secretary of the Airborne Signals Assn, is now **Capt Steve Clarke**, QM, 16 Air Assault Bde Sig Sqn (216), Goojerat Bks, Colchester CO2 7NZ. Tel: 01206 782784. Those maintaining the list of Association Branches should delete the affiliated branch 'AFCENT'. May I correct the telephone number of **Wilf Scurr** (West London Branch) as published in the December *'WIRE'*; it is 01932 711455. The 112th meeting of the Central Committee granted approval for the new branch in Rotherham and the contact for details is the Hon Secretary, **Mr Mick Hickey**, 53 St Mary's View, Munsborough, Rotherham S61 4NH. Tel: 01709 324971. I was extremely sorry to be informed of the death of **Tony Whiles**, Hon Secretary of the South Staffordshire Branch. Until a successor is elected, contact is through the Chairman, **John Mobbs** at: 6 Hillcrest Close, Tamworth, Staffs B79 8PA. Tel: 01827 57315. My thanks go to **Brian Overland** for holding the Peterborough Branch reins whilst **Bob Rowland** was off the road. Good to have you back on board **Bob**.

The Royal Star & Garter Home: The Corps has several former members residing at the home in Richmond. Each year the Regimental Secretary and others visit them to say hello. **Maj (Retd) Donald Clark** (served 1944-67) was admitted to the Home in October and we wish him well.

RSA Millennium Badge: This extremely smart metal lapel badge is still available from your local branch or Association HQ. 3/4 inch diameter, in Corps colours, with '1920-2000' annotated, they cost £1.00 each, which includes P & P. Cheque (payable to 'Royal Signals Benevolent Fund') or coin please.

Freedom of Richmond: A further reminder to all, that the Freedom of Richmond is being celebrated over the weekend 16/17 September and not 9/10 September as previously published. Further details are awaited, but it is understood that there will be a parade and social function on the Saturday, with a church service on the Sunday.

RSA AGM: A final reminder that all members are eligible and very welcome to attend the RSA AGM, which will be held in Chelsea Barracks, London starting at 1030 hours on Saturday 8 April 2000. To assist with the administration, please let Assn HQ know if you plan to attend, plus any vehicle details. Chelsea Barracks is a five minute walk from Sloane Square underground station, on the District/Circle Line. This is the chance to have your say in Association matters, but any points for the agenda must be with Assn HQ by 1 March. Calling all Branch Secretaries: If you have not yet forwarded your return for the AGM/Branch Reps Meeting, please do so as soon as possible.

Reunion 24/25 June: If you are expecting to receive full details of the forthcoming Annual Reunion at Blandford and do NOT receive them by the end of March, it is most likely that your name is not on the mailing list. Call Assn HQ to put your name on the list. Assn HQ has the list of local accommodation, but don't leave it to the last minute.

Corps Luncheon at Blandford: The Corps Lunch has been moved from the Saturday of the RSA Weekend to the Sunday. An 'All Ranks Luncheon' in the Regimental Restaurant is planned for the Saturday. This should allow everyone plenty of time to get to the Arena Display, which should start at 1500 hours on the Saturday.

Member detail change: **Andy** 'Wiz' **Wiseman**, who served 1986-96, would like his former pals to know that he has changed his name to **'Harban-Ridler'**. **Andy** can be contacted through Assn HQ.

The Corps Collect: I have been asked by **Kenneth Taylor**, a member of our Tayside & Fife Branch, for the history or origin of the Corps Collect. I have to pass on this, as do the Museum Archives. Can anyone help??

New Life Members: A warm welcome is extended to the under mentioned recently enrolled Life Members. We wish the best of luck in their second career to all those who have just left the Corps and hope that they might make contact with their local branch. We also hope that they will stay in touch with Association HQ by informing us of any change to their address.

Rank & Name	*Branch*	*Service*
SSgt Carlos Sinclair	Dorset	1976-00
Dvr A. C. Hiscox	Bristol	1953-57
WO2 Phil White	RHQ	1972-99
Cpl Paul Postance	RHQ	1990-99
SSgt Graham Owen	RHQ	1976-99
Cpl Amanda Robertson	RHQ	1989-99
Sig Michael Gibson	RHQ	1991-98
SSgt William Kilburn	Leeds	1948-71
SSgt Willie Craig	RHQ	1964-89
Sgt George Cowan	RHQ	1987-99
Cpl Jason Page	RHQ	1985-99

LCpl Bill Sabor	RHQ	1972-84
LCpl Darran Kenyon	RHQ	1990-99
Capt Bunny Lord	RHQ	1939-70
Dvr Spenser Belton	RHQ	1941-?
Cpl Glynn Warburton	RHQ	1989-99
Sgt Phil Harvey	RHQ	1976-99
Sgt Neil Wheatley	RHQ	1974-99
Lt Col Steve Jones	RHQ	1975-99
Maj Craig Treeby	RHQ	1965-99
Maj George Odling	RHQ	1982-99
Maj Nigel Fairley	RHQ	1967-99
Maj Paul Pople	RHQ	1982-99
Maj Lew Lawton	RHQ	1969-99
Maj Tony Shaw	RHQ	1969-99
Capt Martin Fielding	RHQ	1975-99
Capt Darren Watts	RHQ	1989-99
Capt Phil Newton	RHQ	1995-99
Capt Harvey Woods	RHQ	1994-99
WO2 Paul Willimont	RHQ	1976-99
Sig T.P. Clayton	Bradford	1959-65
Pte Tina Nobbs	Norfolk	1978-80
Cpl Peter Law	RHQ	1958-73
SSgt Adrian Broadbank	RHQ	1975-99
Sig D.H. Woodward	Bristol	1942-46
LCpl J.A. Palmer	Bristol	1952-55
Sig Charles Gwilliam	RHQ	1966-70
LCpl James Patton	RHQ	1977-99
WO2 Jay Allen	RHQ	1977-99
SSgt David Hopkins	RHQ	1949-68
Sgt Clive Garratt	RHQ	1984-99
Sig Dennis Newland	RHQ	1943-47
Cpl Kenneth Sowter	RHQ	1942-46
Sig Kenneth Smith	RHQ	1942-46
LCpl Danny Hold	RHQ	1992-99
WO2 Kevin Munnelly	RHQ	1976-99
Sig Victoria Battison	RHQ	1991-98
Cpl James Barber	RHQ	1947-53
LCpl Richard Ramharak	RHQ	1985-97
Cpl Matthew Clegg	RHQ	1986-99
Maj Ruth Maltman	Glasgow	1975-89
Pte James Roy	Glasgow	1934-45
Cpl A. E. C. Ferguson	Glasgow	1959-72
WO2 Dougie 'DY' Smith	Glasgow	1978-date
Cpl Graeme Sawyer	RHQ	1987-99
Sig Ivor Crew	RHQ	1948-49
Sig Ken Rawlings	RHQ	1948-49
Maj Jim Lawrence	RHQ	1955-85
Sig Eric Baxter	RHQ	1952-54
Sig John Larke	Aldershot	1950-52
LCpl John Batty	East Kent	1959-72
Maj Jim Mill	31 Sig Regt	1970-90
LCpl Peter Worley	West London	1957-59
Cpl Selwyn Williams	Cardiff	1959-68
WO2 Cheryl Jackson	Reading	1976-94
Maj John Stevens	Reading	1969-91
SSgt Fred Skene	RHQ	1977-99
Sgt Merrick Evans	RHQ	1939-45
SSgt Eric Strefford	RHQ	1976-99
SSgt Ian Philo	RHQ	1976-99

BATH & DISTRICT BRANCH

The Branch has had two functions since we last reported. In August we had our Annual Barbecue in the lovely grounds of Pockeridge House, 2 (NC) Signal Bde, Corsham, Wilts.

The President of the Branch Maj J. F. Everett MBE TD and member, Greta Keeling with guests

In October we celebrated in grand style our 50th Anniversary at our Annual Luncheon held in the WOs & Sgts Mess, 21 Sig Regt at Colerne. Our 50 Year Pennant for the Standard was presented by **Brig P. J. Evans CBE** (Vice-Chairman RSA) and we had the pleasure of the company of **Brig G. S. Hughes CBE** (Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde), **Maj B. P. Avison** (21C 21 Sig Regt) and both RSMs (one going-one coming) of 21 Sig Regt, **WO1 D. J. Williams** and **WO1 A. Jenkins.** Both **Maj John F. Everett MBE TD** (the President of the Branch) and **Capt (Retd) Denis Gilmer** who were present, were Founding Fathers of the Branch. **Sig Antrobus** (once of the Royal Signals Pipe Band) piped the Standard round the tables before and after the presentation of the Pennant.

Lt Col Geoff Oakley-Chairman of the Branch, Mr Roy Platten Committee member and Standard Bearer, Brig P. J. Evans CBE-Vice Chairman RSA, Sig Antrobus (ex-Royal Signals Pipe Band) Brig G. S. Hughes CBE-Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde

After our struggles to get a young, healthy Standard Bearer, **Capt W. Myles** (PSAO of 21 Sig Regt) has come to our aid and produced **LCpl Mark Mitchell** of 21 Sig Regt (AS) HQ Troop (V) who paraded our Standard with dignity not only at the Combe Down Parade on the eleventh of the eleventh, but also at the Static Parade at the Bath War Memorial for the laying of the wreaths on 14 November, and also paraded it through the City to Bath Abbey on 14 November. Committee member **Roy Platten,** although feeling he can no longer do the full honours of Parading the Standard, did so at the Dedication of the Field of Remembrance outside Bath Abbey on November 7, and also at our 50th Anniversary Luncheon.

We have received into the Branch the following new members this year. **Sgt Neil Stewart, Maj (Retd) P. J. Benyon, Maj (Retd) G. K. Parsons MC, Lt Col R. G. Vale, Maj (Retd) D. A. Dunbar.**

BRIGHTON BRANCH

During August, Brighton Branch takes a siesta as the different members go on overseas trips. Those poor folk like your humble scribe have to make do with a cup of coffee under the Royal Pavilion palm trees. However, come September all is activity. First of all we had an Italian Evening, courtesy of **Brian** and **Carol Nardy**. Even those recently returned from the Neapolitan beaches had to admit that it was good. Many thanks go to **Carol** and **Brian**. In October we went to Bletchley Park to see the Colossus, amongst other items. It was organised by our new committee member **Steve White** and was a great success. Some 30 members went on the outing. Your humble scribe transferred from the RS Army Pigeon Service to Codes and Ciphers in the last two years of the war, so I was delighted to discover that one of the guide/lecturers had also been in Codes and Ciphers.

The breaking of the Enigma was a massive triumph. The girl who broke Matalan was only 19. When the Admiral came personally to thank her she was more interested to see him get covered in whitewash! The fate of those at Bletchley varied a lot, from one man becoming a Peer of the realm and Chancellor of a University to one poor devil who was driven to suicide. Life deals some funny cards.

We had our November meeting on Guy Fawkes Night but fortunately nobody tried to blow us up! What did we do? – We had a fish and chip supper, which was super but dare we say that some people cannot add up to thirty. Honestly they can't.

What of our Annual Dinner – it just seems to go from strength to strength. 118 people sat down to dinner. We decided to enforce stricter controls on dress and that was appreciated by everyone. Our Guest of Honour was **Lt Col C. Turner**. He gave a splendid address dealing with his present command and the need for graduates in the future. The next item was to present a giant-sized cheque to **Maj Neville Hogan** to help the Retired Gurkhas. £120 will keep a Gurkha family for a year. More anon on this subject. There is one more item to mention, we were delighted to welcome our Branch President, **Brig Colin Brown** and his wife **Heather**. They were really missed last year.

December has been really hectic – for our evening meeting we decided to have a fancy dress evening as well as the children's party. We also decided to sing carols. The fancy dress costumes varied from a Victorian aristocrat to an impoverished Victorian Cabinet Maker. It was all good fun. We still had the coffee morning and were asked if we could have a lunch. We met at the Preston Manor Ashley hotel and by good luck they had a Christmas Lunch every day so we booked in and 28 members came

along. We were delighted that **Colin** and **Heather** could manage all three events. In all a good year.
Your humble scribe……

Joy and John Lovelock
who are Treasurer and Welfare Officer respectively

DONCASTER BRANCH

The Doncaster Branch are pleased to announce the recent holding of their inaugural AGM. Many ideas and suggestions where forthcoming from those present on encouraging other members to attend the evening meeting and future social events. All the signs are that the Branch will go from strength to strength. Our first social evening will be a buffet evening for members and partners at our December meeting. Anyone wishing to find out more about Doncaster Branch should contact **John Pell** at 36 Homestead Garth, Hatfield, Doncaster, DN7 6RN or telephone evening on 01302 843020.

EAST KENT BRANCH

The October Sunday lunch at the Shant Hotel in East Sutton attracted about forty members including **Jean Saunders** who has not been with us for some time. There would have been over fifty but a number had to call off which was a shame because it was a most enjoyable occasion by all accounts. **Peter Warr** who makes a hobby of glass engraving and collecting brought a collection of his work and other's and gave a most interesting talk. This was followed by a delicious lunch and the inevitable raffle organised by **Marion de Rose** which netted a profit of over £50-our members become more generous by the day. Life on the Committee seems to go along on well defined lines and those sitting round the table seem to have been there for a long time so it is sad when there is a change and October has brought about two in quick succession. **David** and **Sheila Geary** have for some time, had ambitions of moving away to the North of London from Ramsgate but the months have passed on and **David**, as members are well aware, has been a leading light as Social Secretary in finding new and interesting events for the Branch to hold (the trip up the Thames, the Cricket Match and last month the Photograph Competition are examples) so it was a shock when he told us that the meeting in October would be his last, the very next morning they were off to a new home in Suffolk. We shall miss them both and hope they will visit us whenever they can. And if that was not enough, the Chairman, **Donald Crisp** announced that they were moving house forthwith but at least not out of Kent, they move to Biddenden. We wish both parties a very happy life in their new homes.

It is amazing how quickly anniversaries seem to come round. Many of those who had volunteered to march on the Remembrance Day Parade will recall only too well **Donald Crisp**'s cartoon of last years event which was conducted in driving rain and will have watched for this years Sunday forecast with trepidation. Fortunately the rain held off and **Brian Calladine** on his first major parade flanked by **Charles Skingle** and **Roger Stone** as escorts and about eighteen other members strode out after the PWRR Band towards the Cathedral. The OC of our detachment, **Donald Crisp**, carried the Branch wreath and broke off at the Buttermarket War Memorial to hand it to **Bert Sawyer**, our first Chairman who, in his turn amongst the dignitaries gathered around, laid it on the Memorial. It so happened that there were no Gunners or Sappers on Parade so the Corps detachment led the parade into the Cathedral Gate to be confronted by the dignitaries including the Lord Lieutenant of Kent who were heading in the opposite direction for the War Memorial. After the usual moving service which included an excellent address by Admiral of the Fleet, **Sir Julian Oswald**, the marching party reformed in the Burgate and set off to march past the Reviewing Officer, The Lord Lieutenant of Kent. Meanwhile the wives applauded from the pavement which was taken up by the public around them. The parade having been dismissed by the RSM, 26 members enjoyed an excellent lunch at the County Hotel.

Four years ago, **Charles Skingle** composed a March which he dedicated to the Branch. Being an organist, the score had to be transcribed for a military band and this was done by the Corps Director of Music. It was played by the Corps Band at last year's RSA reunion at Blandford. **Charles** then approached the Bandmaster of the local PWRR TA Band and, as it is based on the Corps March, Begone Dull Care, we hope that members present recognised it as it was played in the Buttermarket. Unbeknown to us, we had been watched and supported by a party of veterans and their wives from 329 Sig Sqn (TA) from the Bromley area who for some years had held their own Remembrance Day reunion based at the home of **Frank** and **Olive Castle. Frank** had been their SSM. **Olive** has sadly not been well recently and it is probable that they will all join the Branch. If so we shall welcome them at next years Parade if not before.

News of Members: Chas and **Rita Hughes** would have been at the Shant lunch had it not clashed with the birthday of their twin daughters. We hope they all had a lovely day. **Donald** and **Kit Robathan** were also coming but it was a question of the mind being willing but in the end the flesh being weaker than expected for he is very lame. However, they are to be congratulated for achieving their Diamond Wedding on 2 September last. Which meant that they were married at that fateful time of 2 September 1939. Rejoining the Branch after three years in the wilderness are **James** and **Shrilly Hehir,** still at the same address in Folkestone, **James** said they missed the comradeship of their fellow Signallers. We look forward to seeing them again soon.

It is with the greatest sadness that we have to report the death of **Edith Thomas** on 28 October after three heart operations which she faced with conspicuous courage in almost as many days. There is hardly a person in the Branch who did not know her for she attended every event that she could and the success of the Branch Raffle over the years was entirely due to her leadership and enthusiasm. Her children, **Pat, Linda** and **Bryan** together with many of their children gathered, as they had done at **Tommy**'s funeral in June, to say farewell at the same church on 8 November. Everyone will be delighted to know that **Pat** wishes to be an Associate member of the Branch-she came to the Remembrance Day Parade and we hope that we shall see a lot more of her. Meantime our sympathy goes out to her, **Linda, Bryan** and all their chi1dren.

GLASGOW BRANCH

The Local Authority held a short service at the War Memorial in Bishopbriggs on 11 November with a 2-Minute Silence. After the Provost had laid his wreath, this scribe also laid a poppy wreath with the 'Jimmy' as a centrepiece. This year a number of local school children were invited to attend the ceremony, to inform them why the annual ceremony has been revived. Thirty members were on parade at the War Memorial in George Square Glasgow on Remembrance Sunday. **Jim Prentice** laid the wreath on behalf of the Branch members, **Bill MacNamara** paraded the Branch Standard. After taking the coach back to 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V) HQ the members marched into barracks to the skirl of the Pipes of the Regiment. A choice of various curried meals or cold buffet was provided by Chef, **WO2 John Wren** and his chefs, which was up to his very high standard, and very welcome by the members after standing in the cold during the ceremony.

The annual St. Andrew's Dinner Dance was held on Saturday 27 November in the main hall at Jardine Street, courtesy of 32 Sig Regt CO, **Lt Col J. K. McKee MBE**. It was attended by 88 members, family and friends, presided over by the Branch Hon President, **Maj Gen A. A. G. Anderson CB**, who was joined at the top table by **Mr Bill Taylor** the Branch Chairman and his wife **Betty, Mr Eric McWaters** Branch Treasurer and his wife **Annice**. The guests were **Lt Col J. K. McKee,** his wife **Rachael** and **WO1 (RSM) A. B. Hilborn.** The Band was provided by the Tommy Sweeney Trio, catering for all ages. The Branch members their families and friends were greeted with a sherry, before being ushered into dinner, where they awaited the arrival of the top table members, who were piped in to dinner by **Pipe Major D. Moire**, of the Royal Corps of Signals Pipes and Drums, who played several tunes, before being rewarded by the Hon President with a dram or two in the quaich. The grace was said by the Hon President, who then welcomed the company, thanked the Regiment for the assistance they give to the Branch, saying the members are very fortunate to have the use of the premises, and the help in many ways, other branches do not have extended to them. The President also complimented the members for the support they give to the branch committee, and the committee members, for their efforts in arranging a variety of activities throughout the year in conjunction with the Regiment.

Once again the members were impressed by the excellent choice of menu provided by **WO2 John Wren** and his staff. The attendant waiters and waitresses, volunteers from the Regiment kept the food and wine flowing. The Loyal Toast was proposed **by Jim McLachlan, Mary McGregor** proposed the toast to the Colonel in Chief and **WO1 (RSM) Angie Hilborn** proposed the toast to the RSA Glasgow.

The Hon President asked the CO to say a few words, and **Lt Col McKee** informed the company of various changes in the life of a soldier and the commitment required in the various trouble spots in the world, as peacemakers between the various factions, where communications are a vital element in solving the problems. At the end of the dinner, and before the company retired to the lounge downstairs for coffee and mints, the Hon President had **Chef John Wren**, his staff and the waiters, assembled in the hall to thank them for their efforts and excellent service, with a thoroughly deserved round of applause from the company. The proceeds of the raffle on the night for items donated to the Branch, were to be given to the newly formed Royal Corps of Signals Pipes and Drums, to help towards the cost of sets of bagpipes. The request to give generously was printed on the reverse of the menu, and a magnificent sum of £200 raised on the night, has been handed over to **WO2 Band Sergeant Major Douglas Smith**, of 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V), as a contribution from the Glasgow Branch.

The next event will be the social night on 14 December 1999, where there will be a Christmas draw. This will take place in Jardine Street and, as many members as possible were asked to attend this final function of this century. The Chairman and members of the Glasgow Branch send the Compliments of the Season to fellow members of the RSA for the year 2000.

MANCHESTER BRANCH

This is the first article to *The WIRE* for some time, from this Branch, but we hope to be more active in the future. The Branch continues to flourish under the leadership of it's Chairman, **Ron Taylor**. We had a good turnout on Remembrance Sunday and marched to the Manchester War Memorial, led by our President, **Chris Reynolds-Jones**. I can also report that our recent Christmas Dinner, held at the Trafford Park Hotel was a great success, thanks in the main to the hard work put in by **Ian Ashworth-Davis**. We were very fortunate this year to have as our Guest of Honour **Maj Gen Alan Yeoman CB**, in his capacity of Chairman of the Royal Signals Association, together with his charming wife, **Barbara**. The General made a very good and humourous speech which was the highlight of the dinner. He then surprised us by promoting **LCpl Vincent,** his Driver for the evening, who was on loan from 42 Sig Sqn (V) by kind permission of the Sqn Comd, **Maj Ian Kelly**, to Officer Cadet. This added a nice touch to the proceedings and was enjoyed by all present and not the least by **LCpl Vincent** himself.

It should be added that this Branch has been blessed on the three occasions of the last three Christmas Dinners by having a hat-trick of distinguished Royal Signals luminaries as our Guests of Honour. Namely, **Gen Archie Birtwistle** in 1997, **Gen Ian Sprackling** in 1998 and, of course, in 1999 **Gen Alan Yeoman**. This has given our Secretary, **Harry Ferguson**, a major headache for the Millennium Year. How does he follow that?

Gen Yeoman with the CO 33 Sig Regt (V) on his left and the OC 42 Sig Sqn (V) on his right. Also in the picture is a very smart pikeman from 42 Sig Sqn (V), **Sig Alex Thomas**, and just out of the picture is his colleague **Sig Barry Smith**.

MIDDLESBROUGH BRANCH

Time marches on and I am pleased to add that as it does, so does our membership increase and with it our activities. We now have 74 Full members and 31 Associate Members.

We had a change of venue for our Annual Dinner and on this occasion, it was held at The Bluebell Hotel on 27 March and was attended by some 40 Members. The Raffle provided an opportunity to raise a small contribution towards the 'Bagpipe Fund'.

Our AGM, held on 29 April, resulted in the re-election of our Chairman – **Colin**, Secretary – **Margaret**, Vice-Chairman - **Dick Grainger** and Assistant Secretary – **Audrey**. These husband and wife partnerships certainly provide an ideal administration base. This has been affected on occasions, now that **Dick** is employed outside the area, and on such occasions —- **Howard** is available to stand-in.

Sunday 13 June, we had a day on the Rochdale Canal, travelling by horse-drawn barge through some of the more scenic stretches and 'legged' through the tunnels. Due to a previously arranged appointment, we missed the annual Remembrance Service and Parade at Eden Camp last year, but made up for it this year with a bus-load of 54 members and friends. This event goes from strength to strength. Some 3,000 ex-servicemen attended and more than 1,000 marched in the parade behind 128 Standards and the Band of the Yorkshire Volunteers. The salute was taken by **Gen Sir Murray Naylor**, who was accompanied by a polish General, who has attended this Service of Thanksgiving since it began seven years ago. For the first time, members of the former Land Army joined the parade and were given a hearty welcome.

John, has reluctantly stood down as Standard Bearer after giving the Branch some four years excellent service. Nevertheless he agreed to officiate at Eden Camp and also attended the Remembrance Parade this year on 14 November.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

As part of our continuing programme of talks at our monthly meetings, we were given a talk by **Mr Gordon Lucy** of the Ulster Association on 'The Americans in Ireland'. This was a most interesting historical talk on the American Forces arrival in Northern Ireland in the early stages of the Second World War and their posting to various unusual parts of the Province backed up by an interesting photographic display. We hope to continue with various speakers in the future.

In the sporting world our congratulations must go to our 'Representative to the Central Committee' **Lt Col (Retd) Terry Lightfoot** on his winning the Widdicom Seniors Trophy at the 'Royal Signals Autumn Golf Meeting'. It is good to have this cup come across the Irish sea for the first time. Our Hon Sec, **Ian Wolfe** has just returned from TAVR duties in foreign parts. He seems to be none the worse for it, I am sure **Debbie** will be glad to have him back to help with the three young **Wolfes** (no, not Wolves) again.

November of course is a time for remembering and is usually a busy period for the Branch, as I am sure it is for most others. Some of the activities involved were as follows. At the Royal British Legion Pageant in the new Waterfront Hall, Belfast, **Billy Dixon** paraded the Branch Standard. Others in attendance were **Heather Loveday, Harry Stanley, Ernie** and **Mrs Mansell. Jim Reilly** once again represented the Branch at the ceremony of Remembrance and wreath laying at the City Hall, Belfast. On Sunday 14 November, at the invitation of the CO and RSM, 40 Sigs Regt (V), the Branch led by Chairman, **John Loveday** paraded to a Service of Remembrance. The Branch Standard was carried by **Billy Dixon**. Branch President, **Maj (Retd) Bill Douglas TD**, attended the service where **Jim Reilly** laid a wreath on behalf of the Branch. On return refreshments were provided. Our thanks to **Jim Vance** for his efforts with the charity-box. After the Sunday parade Members gathered in the TAVR Centre, for a short ceremony of dedication of a rowan tree and memorial stone to our late Chairman and friend **Tom Maguire**. The eulogy was given by Chairman, **John Loveday** and the dedication was carried out by **Rev Ian R. Gamble, RAChD**, With this prominent memorial **Tom**'s good work and service to the Branch will never be forgotten. **Tom**'s widow **Joyce** and son **Nicholas** were present. Our thanks go to **Lt Col A. P. R. Roberts** for granting permission to establish the memorial and to **WO1**

(RSM) Chris McGinley for his assistance. The Members were pleased that **Bill Ogden** came across the channel to pay his respects to **Tom**.

Lt Col (Retd) Terry Lightfoot represented the Branch at Palace Barracks, Holywood when a wreath in memory of Royal Signals personnel who laid down their lives. We were delighted to learn that Branch Member, **Lt Col Nigel Beacom,** was one of the first in the UK to be awarded the new Queens Volunteer Reserves Medal and we offer our congratulations to him.

READING BRANCH

Talk about 'In His Masters Steps He Trod...' We had our Christmas Carol and Social evening early this year. It had to be the coldest day of the year, didn't it? As the guests entered the hall they were rubbing their hands together - and complaining of the cold. It didn't take long to warm the cockles of their hearts. We had probably the best evening so far. More than expected turned up so we had to do a bit of table shuffling to get them all sat down in time for the horse-racing. As usual we had a tight programme, but our Master of Ceremonies did a grand job of keeping it all together - and mostly on time. It really made your mouth water just to see the spread, the buffet supper all laid out ready for the 'GO'. Sorry, for the second 'GO', the first being for our Horse Racing Game. **Alan**'s Quiz was won by **Alan**'s own daughter and partner. Could it be nepotism? After the quiz and during the races there was lots of shouting for horse number 2 to win. Oddly it did. Could it be that the thrower (of the dice) heard the general and managed to squeeze the dice to make it fall with a 2 facing upwards? During the Grand Draw many heads were turned to our grand old man **Graham Robinson** who usually walks away with several prizes even after cries of 'Put it back in' from him. Something went wrong this year - he only got a nappy and a tie - and a laugh. The evening was rounded off with a rousing chorus of time honoured carols.

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

Two of our youngest Branch Members, **Wayne** and **Laura Broadhurst** were married on 4 September 1999 at St Johns Church, Rownhams. **Wayne** was serving with the Royal Signals when he met **Laura** in 1992. He served eight years as a regular soldier and was attached to 3 UK ADSR and 1 ADSR as a Systems Operator. He also served in the Gulf from December 1990 to March 1991. Leaving the army in 1996 he is still in the field of communications. Since joining the Branch, **Wayne** has helped out in various Branch social activities.

The end of 1999 saw three of our stalwart members celebrating their 80th birthdays. **Major John Daw B.E.M.** - 2 November. **John** joined the Corp in 1938 and retired in 1974. He served in Poland in 1939 prior to war breaking out. He then saw action in France 1940, the desert in 1941 and in Italy in 1943. He was de-mobbed in 1946 but re-enlisted as a Signalman in 1951. He rose rapidly through the ranks passing the Foreman of Signals Courses Pt I and II and acquired expert knowledge in Radio Relay. He served in Trials units and Comcen in Singapore. The last ten years of his service was with the School of Signals, first in Catterick and then at Blandford. The first eight years as an instructor and the last two as a Squadron Commander. **John** is also the President of the West London Branch of the RSA.

Mr E. Budd - 6 November. **Ernie** joined the Corps in 1936 starting his service in 43rd Wessex Infantry Divisional Signals. In January 1939 he was transferred to 5 AA Div Signals serving in the Control Room at RAF Tangmere until the July when he was demobbed. Recalled to the Colours the next month, August, he was posted back to 5AA Div where, in his trade as a LCpl Teleprinter Operator, he alternated between Tangmere , the Gun Operations Room at Fareham and at Halton Heath. He was badly injured in a traffic accident which resulted in his being invalided out of the Corps in February 1940. He continued to serve his country through the war as an active member of the Home Guard and working on the railways and at Southampton docks.

Mr G. W. Packer - 31 December. **George** enlisted in the Territorial Army in August 1939 and was embodied into the Corps on 1 September 1939. He then served throughout the war as a Despatch Rider with the 43rd Wessex Infantry Divisional Signals and saw action through France, Belgium, Holland and Germany ending in the Cuxhaven Peninsular. He was Mentioned in Despatches. He ended his service in Celle, Germany and was discharged in May 1946. In civilian life he served 28 years in the NFS and Local Authority Fire Service in Birmingham, Hampshire, Bournemouth and Dorset, retiring as a Station Commander. **George** has served on the Committee of the RSA Southampton and District Branch since 1976 and has been Chairman for the last two years.

Ten members of the Branch attended the Remembrance Day Parade and Service at Romsey on Sunday 14 November. The Standard was carried by one of our newest members, **Brian Littlecott** who volunteered, as our regular Standard Bearer, **Tony Dear,** was unable due to medical reasons. **Brian** also carried the Standard at the Festival of Remembrance at the Guildhall, Southampton on the 15 November. **Brian** joined the Royal Signals in 1954 as a National Serviceman. He joined the Association in 1956 and the Southampton Branch in July 1999.

MALTA/LIBYA COMMAND OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION

By Roy Andrews

There were no crossed wires when members of the Malta/Libya Command OCA met at the Friendly Hotel, Loughborough for their annual re-union. This year we were pleased to welcome three new members who were stationed with 245 Squadron in Benghazi in the 1960's. **Paul Lewer, Brian Watford, John Hyde** and his wife **Sheila**. It was also a pleasure to meet 84 years young **Maj Bill Lavers** and his wife **Jennie. Bill** first joined up in the Royal Tank Regiment in 1937 and was transferred to Royal Signals in 1942. He retired from the army in 1970 so you can imagine he had lots of tales to tell. He wishes to be remembered to anyone who knew him during that time especially 234 Squadron Malta. **Dennis Croot**, ex 235 Malta, and his wife **Rita** were the only representatives this year. Come on ex-235 members give them your support in September 2000.

1999 Reunion
(L-R): Julie & Ernie Johnson, Brian Watford, Paul Lewer, Dennis Croot, Peter & Betty Charles, Arthur & Angie Harris Pat & Roy Andrews, Rita Croot, Beryl Harvey, Bill & Jennie Lavers, Maggie & Bill Lawrence, Sheila Hyde Kneeling: John Hyde & Dave Harvey

21 members sat down to dinner on the Saturday and except for a slight hiccup on the timing and a little noise from a reception nearby, it went off very well. The hiccup was caused through a slight communication problem for which Chairman, **Roy Andrews,** takes the blame. Next year we will hopefully have a private room for the Saturday night. We received over 20 apologies this year. It would have been quite a party if they had all

turned up. So please make a big effort next year. Don't forget partners are particularly welcome.

Dennis Croot has managed to get us on the Internet. Thanks **Dennis**. Details can be obtained from either **Dennis** or the Chairman, **Roy Andrews**. Members are asked to publicise the Malta/Libya Command OCA. If you are in touch with anyone please encourage them to come along. We do all enjoy our weekend.

Note for your diary: The next re-union will be the last weekend in September 2000, at Loughborough. Details will be forwarded at a later date. Anyone interested in joining us! Please contact Secretary, **Pat Andrews** on 01227 264551.

It is with regret that I have to tell you that one of our founder members, **Gordon Philips** passed away earlier this year. Our sincere sympathy goes to his wife **Ann** and his family. We will all miss him.

5TH (LONDON) CORPS SIGNALS OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION

The 5th (London) Corps Signals Old Comrades Association held its 54th Reunion meeting on 23 October 1999 in the Duke of Yorks Headquarters Club in Chelsea. Despite the Association's inevitably declining membership over 70 members and guests were present to enjoy each others company, reminiscences and lunch, the latter presented by the new Club Catering Manager and his staff. The level of conversation on these occasions is the indication of success and the Association Committee was well pleased with the 'buzz' rising from the tables. Sadly the Association's oldest member could not be present so a card signed by all present was sent to him for his coming 96th birthday. The oldest member present at this Reunion was heading for 90 in the early months of the Millennium year. After lunch the 1999 Annual General Meeting was rather longer and more serious than usual. It was decided that the 55th Reunion in year 2000 should be a special occasion and that the Association would try to continue to hold Reunions annually beyond year 2000 so long as sufficient members with their guests were able to attend.

The theme for the 54th Reunion was 'Return to Civvy Street' and Secretary, **Sid Prior** had mounted a display of 'Before and After' photographs and information about members and their families. Supporting the display **Ernest Lampard** had again produced a poem on theme and this was printed on the menu. Poem and display revived many memories of 'demob' and after.

All a long time ago! It is the efforts and enthusiasm of **Sid Prior** the past and present members of the Committee, coupled with the support of all members, which have kept our Association active since 1945. At the AGM **Bob Roberts**, our long serving Chairman, was glad to acknowledge and praise the contributions they had made which would ensure the Association's continuance into the next Millennium. Once again the Old Comrades are grateful to **John Akhed** and his colleagues of 238 (London) Signal Squadron for their contribution to a happy occasion by providing amplification for background and for the Annual General Meeting.

31 SIGNAL REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

At last we have settled the venue for our Annual Dinner. It will be on 15 April 2000 at the Central Mess, Duke of York's HQ. Further details can be obtained from out Secretary, **Henry Holman** on, (wait for it)..... Phone: (020) 8581 1733, or mobile: 0468 075657, or E-mail: henry@prestolite.freeserve.co.uk (**Henry** is a *WIRE* note all on his own). Our trip to Europe this year is still on: Plan A – on 26/28 May 2000 staying in Brussels and visiting La Capoule and the German V2 Rocket sites, not forgetting the beer and wine warehouses tour, to some the most important part of the weekend. Once again it has all been organised by our Social Secretary, 'Dusty' **Miller**.

Yeah man, retire ASAP

Our picture shows two former Commanding Officers, **Col Donald Crawford** and **Col John Eversfield**, taken somewhere in the world, they know not where, because they had been sniffing something, they know not what and by that stage they did not care! So if you should see them selling 'The Big Issue', don't give them any money.

Several other outings and events are being organised including the Royal Military Tattoo 2000 on 15 July at Horseguards. Details will be sent to all members, 'Dusty' can be reached on 01784 250756. The Committee wish all ex-31 where ever they have dispersed to, all the very best for the year 2000 and the new 21st Century.

RETURN TO 'CIVVY STREET'

Conquering heroes everyone,
We'd had our share of strife,
Now we could put our feet up
And enjoy the easy life;
The Channel crossing on the day
Was smooth, the weather bright,
And the White Cliffs in their glory,
Filled our hearts with pure delight;
When we disembarked at Dover,
One wise guy raised a cheer,
As he said , 'We must be home lads,
They're all speaking English here!'
What.....civvies .....speaking English?
Ye Gods.....that sounded strange,
But 'twas music to my ears
And a very welcome change,
From 'Buon giorno Johnny'.... 'Guten Tag,'
Or..... 'Comment allez vous?'
Which never sounded quite the same
As.... 'Good day, sir.....how'd you do?'
But home again in 'Civvy Street',
A new life had begun,
With tearful hugs from Mother
And Dad's, 'Welcome home my son,'
Big kisses from my sisters,
Grown up and looking sweet,
Yes.....that's how I'll remember.....
My return to 'Civvy Street.'

THE MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY ASSOCIATION

The Annual Dinner went with a swing thanks to our hard working Dinner Committee of **Len Smith** and 'Dusty' **Miller**. Eighty Five members, wives and partners sat down to a very good meal. The Guest of Honour was **Lt Col John Crackett TD**, Commanding Officer of 39 (Skinners) Signal Regiment. The Squadron Commander, **Maj Mike Lansdowne**, updated everyone on the progress of the Squadron, who are in fine fettle. This was reflected by their very fine turnout on Lafone Day and Remembrance Sunday, the example being set by **SSM Brent Copsey**. The Lafone Day parade was led by the Association's Military Band. The memorial tribute at St Paul's cathedral was given by our Chairman, **George Key**. Afterwards fifteen members of the Association led by **Col Ted Scarlett** marched with the parade to St Martin's for the service.

By the time you read this the Band will have moved to Uxbridge, after many years at various locations around West London. The Band was originally formed in Uxbridge in 1834 by twelve members of the Uxbridge Brass Band, so it is a long overdue homecoming. The Associations next big outing will be in Hyde Park on 14 May 2000 for the Cavalry Memorial parade. It is hoped that **the Queen Mother** will take the salute for the march past. Please make every effort to be there, wearing your Middlesex Yeomanry tie. Tickets for the enclosure for wives and partners to be seated, may be obtained from our Secretary, **Andrew Bridges** nearer the time.

It is with regret that we learn of the death, after a long fight with cancer, of **Evelyn Lewis** on 13 November. She was a former member of the Squadron and a long time partner of **LCpl Alan Holland**. Our thoughts are with **Alan** and **Evelyn**'s family.

Finally a date for your diary 20 October 2000, our Annual Dinner, not to be missed. See you all in the year 2000, the start of a new centuary!!

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**

56 DIVISION (CITY OF LONDONSIGNALS) OCA BRANCH

On 3 September the Branch President, **Roy Hughes**, was joined by six members, (including two Vice-Presidents, one Chairman, one Vice-Chairman and the Secretary) and Eastbourne member **Harry Cooper** at All Saints in Eastbourne to present **Ken Biggleston** with his 50 Year Badge. **Ken** has been a staunch supporter of the Branch since he finished active service in 1961 due to multiple sclerosis.

Sam Elliott and Harry Cooper look on as Roy Hughes and Ken read Ken's congratulatory letter

The Branch held it's Annual Dinner at the Union Jack Club, Waterloo, on 15 October at which the Guest of Honour was **Brig Cedric Burton**, SOinC (A). As well as entertaining members with amusing stories and an update of the Corps, the Brigadier took the opportunity to present Branch President, **Roy Hughes**, with his 50 Year Badge.

REUNIONS

DID YOU ONCE SERVE WITH 228 SIGNAL SQUADRON AT SHAPE?

Maurice Parsons is trying to set up a Branch in the UK for all those who served in 228 Sig Sqn at SHAPE. If you are interested, please contact **Maurice** at: 45 Steven Crescent, Chapletown, SHEFFIELD, S35 1XL

254 OBA CLUB REUNION

Our Tenth Reunion took place from Friday to Sunday 29 to 31 October 1999 at the Tillington Hall Hotel, Stafford. This year the event coincided with the time change and we were able to enjoy that extra hour in bed on the Sunday morning after the exertions of the previous evening. A total of 88 ex 254s, 58 wives and three widows attended the full weekend with a further pair of 254s attending only the Saturday dinner.

Friday, the arrival day, saw everyone filtering in from all over the globe. **Terry Beare** all the way from Australia again (he must have a goldmine in the back yard). **Tony** and **Eva Taylor** from Germany, **John** and **Anna Dove** from Spain. Not forgetting the Scottish contingent **Bill Cecil** from Buckie Aberdeenshire and **Colin** 'Jim' and **Nan Stear** from the Kingdom of Fife. **Don** 'Taffy' **Finighan** who came all the way from his adopted country New Zealand and navigated all the way by using a 1932 AA Road Book. The weather was kinder this year, NO FLOODS as in 1998 and there were a lot fewer motorway hold-ups.

Don Herring has produced with a lot of help from **Brenda** an excellent booklet called 'JIMMY's APPRENTICES' which hopefully will soon be on sale in the Museum Shop. He did a roaring trade both on Friday and Saturday evenings. He is to be congratulated on all the work that has been undertaken to achieve such an excellent document.

Saturday dawned bright and clear and we were free until the entertainment began after lunch. Most people took the opportunity to visit Stafford or one or two places further afield. The entertainment turned out to be an excellent Barber Shop Quartet who performed two half hour programmes with a half hour interval, most enjoyable. Next on the programme was the semi-formal dinner so everyone made the most of the time to get well spruced up for the occasion. **George Severs** in the chair, began by welcoming our three widows **Val Forster, Jean Johnson** and **Norma Timpson** and all the first time attendees to our function. He then called upon the **Reverend Jim Ireland** to say grace and get the proceedings underway. After the meal **George** made his customary speech covering a few points bringing members up to date. He thanked **Alan Alfred, Noel Clark, Ernie Izod** and **Bob Jarrett** for organising **Dick Burt**'s cremation and funeral. **Dick** had no family to do the job so the local 254's rallied round. The ladies from the local Camp Centre Cafe where **Dick** had lots of his meals laid on and donated the reception for funeral attendees.

Derek Cropper our Cadre member and his wife **Joan** joined us again. They are getting to be regular visitors. **Pat** and **Maureen Soward** were thanked for their efforts in producing and selling the 254 Sweatshirts to members. A big thank you to **Pat** and **Ann Fox-Roberts** for once again organising the whole weekend including the raffle - truly a labour of love, very well done. Numbers are increasing with 270 now on the roll and **George** promised a new nominal roll for the Millennium which will include an up to date Roll of Honour of departed comrades. **George** then called on **Peter McNaughton** to propose the toast to our departed comrades. A total of nine names were remembered **Dick Burt, Eric Goodings, Mal Johnson, Paddy Stringer. Gordon Howie, George Mercer, Henry** 'Dusty' **Miller** (in Australia), **Jim Ivison, John Emery**. This brings the total on the Roll of Honour to Ninety Three. It was then time for the Band to strike up and get the evenings entertainment under way. **George** remarked that the ladies looked exceptionally well groomed and lovely and couldn't imagine what they thought to the changes in their husbands from the dashing young boys in the photos in JIMMY's APPRENTICES to the elderly, balding and somewhat portly chaps that they now were. This did not stop them jiving and twisting the night away and for most bed time came too soon.

Sunday arrived all too soon and after a hearty breakfast, everyone went their separate ways until, God willing the last weekend in October 2000 when its hoped they will return again for re-union number eleven. In addition to those mentioned in the text the following also attended:

David Abercrombie	**Jack Allison**	**Wally Brown**
Dai Rees	**Reg Brewin**	**Dave Bussell**
Gerry Brewer	**Eddie Brewer**	**Mike Bayliss**
Jim Blake	**Dennis Burge**	**Bill Bailey**
Doug Bower	**Ken Brown**	**Jim Braid**
Geoff 'Deadly' **Baker**	**John Cotton**	**Pip Clarke**
'Titch' **Curtis**	**Alan Crabtree**	'Dukie' **Cairns**
Jim Crow	**Stuart Dunlop**	**Colin Day**
Brian Huxley-Duggan	**Jim Esson**	**Ray Evans**
Ken Francis	**Frank Farrow**	**Brian Fisher**
Ron Fairbairn	**Bill Grieve**	**Bill Gibson**
Benny Goodman	**Chris Gentry**	**Jim Hewson**
Dennis Harrison	**Harry Hawke**	**Keith Hopwood**
John Heard	**John Jeffreys**	**Jim Jenkins**
Roy Kelly	**Ken Lloyd**	**Bill Leech**
Sid Middleton	**Bernard Moxon**	**Tim Martin**
Brian McDonell	**John Mann**	**Lou Munday**
Nat Preece	**Geoff Pickering**	**Frank Pedley**
John Radford	**Bill Ramsey**	**Terry Reeves**
Roy Smithard	**Derry Smith**	**Toby Seymour**
Peter Sharp	**Geoff Oakley**	**Clive Thomson**
John Walke	**Peter West**	**Ernie Webb**
Ken Wood	**Stan Whitehead**	**Dennis Williams**
Cliff Wood	**Jess Weir**	

The following were too ill to attend **Doreen Ireland, Noel Clark, Dave Greenbreook, Ernie Izod, Danny Dabiels.**

260 SIGNAL SQUADRON (SAM)

RE-UNION

DORTMUND, GERMANY
12-14 MAY 2000

Partners welcome. For Hotel details, phone:
Secretary – 01227 264551

'F' BOYS COMPANY ROYAL SIGNALS 1920-1942 8TH REUNION

The 8th Reunion took place on 29 September 1999 at the Union Jack Club, Waterloo, London and 30 members out of 97 attended. Not a bad turnout as we are all well over 70 and a significant proportion of our members live overseas. From Canada we warmly welcomed **Tom Edgerton** (39/42) who was found through excellent detective work initiated by **Stan Smith** (37/40) of Vancouver, and also to **Ken Selmes** (39/42). Our president **Bruce Beattie**, addressed the assembly and especially mentioned the two new members and **Maj Gen Peter Baldwin CBE**, who is still working hard but found time to leave his office to be with us. **Bruce** also mentioned our pleasure in welcoming **Victor Martin MC**, who travelled from New Zealand for the reunion. He mentioned apologies for absence, obituaries, and the matter of an F Coy tie which was abandoned owing to the high cost. He then thanked the committee for their contribution to the success of the reunion. **Bruce** then introduced our guest speaker, a personal friend of his, **Maj Gen Rae Cornock CB OBE**, a pre war member of the London Scottish TA who served in the Indian Army, the Indian Navy, the Gordon Highlanders and the RAOC. **Gen Cornock** gave us a most interesting talk on his progression from TA soldier through his time with the Indian Army, and his exploits in Burma with the Indian Navy, ending up with his service with the RAOC which latter Corps must have given him a much quieter life than his time in Burma. I think most of us who had been 'up the sharp end', during the war in Europe, appreciate the awful conditions which he and his colleagues found in Burma. They fought not only the fanatical Japanese but the terrible climate and jungle terrain in the Burma theatre of war. His audience very much appreciated his kindness in attending and giving us such an interesting talk.

The following members attended:- **P. Baldwin** (Hon member), **S. Band** (PRO), **B. Beattie** (Presdt), **R. Brown, Bill Callegari, P. Clowson, H. Cooper, J. Dadswell** (Chmn), **V. Dugdale** (Sec), **A. C. Earl, T. Edgerton, D. Fairweather, E. J. Ford, H. Galloway, M. Ham, L. Knight, R. Knight, V. Martin MC, T. O'Connor, W. Offord, F. Pavey MBE, S. Pavey, A. Ridgeon, K. Selmes, D. Smith, P. Smith, R. Todd, W. Weatherly MM, R. Webb, L. Weeks. Guest, P. Craig** (ex staff). Apologies for absence were received from **F. Worth, Bob. Warren, Robin Laing**, who has severe bronchitis, 'Bunny' **Lord** (who stayed with **Vic Dugdale** on the 10 September and whom we hope will attend next year), **Don Chetwynd** our Treasurer, who was on a cruise having misjudged the dates, and last but not least, **Edgar Harrison OBE MC BEM** (29/33), whose wife rang to inform us that he was too ill to attend. We all send our best wishes to him and to **Robin Laing** and hope they will get well soon.

Finally, the following members have sadly passed away this year. **Brig George Cox** (late 201s), who died on 10 January 1999, **Edward** 'Ike' **Attrill** (28/31), **David Maxwell** formerly **Dennis Wilkes** (39/42), **G. Sheldrake** (39/42), and **Bert** 'Dodger' **Green** (35/39) aged 78, who died on 4 August whilst swimming off Guernsey where he lived.

EX-PERSONNEL OF 1 WIRELESS REGIMENT 13 &14 SIGNAL REGIMENTS AND 225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

All those who served at Langeleben near Konigslutter, Germany, between 1951/92. Please note that there is a Reunion Association and that all are welcome. For details please contact:

John Grant
37 Headland Avenue, Seaford
E. SUSSEX BN25 4PZ
Tel/Fax: 01323 893937

FORMER APPRENTICES and STAFF ARMY APPRENTICE COLLEGE HARROGATE !ATTENTION!

All former Apprentices and Staff from the Army Apprentice College Harrogate, circa 1969-1973, who were members of the newly formed College Free-Fall Parachute Club, and who attended the Sport Parachute Centre, Grindale near Bridlington as part of their hobby, may be interested to know that the Grindale Centre is to hold a Grand 30th Anniversary Reunion in early 2000, and that the presence of anybody who attended from the college is eagerly sought. The Centre, which many of us helped to build and decorate, has undergone many changes, and any memorabilia from those days will be welcomed by the new Centre. For further details contact:
Ron Smith (70C)
1 Bayswater Avenue, MANCHESTER, M40 2RB,
Tel: 0161 684 7479, or E-mail: ronald@alansmith26.freeserve.co.uk

LOST COMMS

Eileen Hobsin, an ex WO2 (WRAC) and until receiving a medical discharge in 1983 was a Data Telegraphist and Cipher Operator. The person she is trying to trace is **Steve Wetherall** (spelling of surname could be incorrect). **Steve** was a Lance Corporal when I knew him and we were both serving with 4 Sqn, 16 Sig Regt (Bielefeld) in the period 1972-1975.

DONATIONS

RSA East Kent	£ 150.00
RSA Salisbury	£ 30.00
RSA Cornwall	£ 375.00
RSA South London	£ 50.00
RSA Huddersfield	£ 50.00
RSA Liverpool	£ 75.00
RSA Loughborough	£ 100.00
42 Sig Regt Officers' Club	£ 120.00
North Africa & Italy L of C Officers' Reunion	£ 64.50
Mrs M. H. Lea	£ 10.00
Mr G. S. Scott	£ 4.00
E. L. Nation	£ 10.00
Mr A. R. Ayres	£ 5.00
Maj (Retd) Bob Aitken	£ 5.00
Mr G. T. Jennings	£ 100.00
Rev & Mrs John L. McKellar	£ 50.00
Lt Col (Retd) Geoffrey Davis	£ 5.00
Maj (Retd) R. H. Blizard	£ 155.00
Maj (Retd) Dai Rees	£ 5.00
Mr Keith Fenwick Beadle	£ 5.00
Mr L. H. Devine-Jones	£ 10.00
Mr M. F. Bailey	£ 3.00
Mrs Joan Greenstreet	£ 25.00
Mr Patrick Drummond	£ 5.00
Mr Ken Grange	£ 13.00
Mr R. E. Burbidge	£ 11.00
Mr D. G. E. Hopkins	£ 40.00
Mr J. F. Start	£ 10.00
Indian Signals Association of Great Britain	£ 100.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£ 310.00
John Oglesby in memory of Lt Col M. A. Petheram	£ 10.00
Mr A. H. Thomas in memory of Tony Whiles	£ 10.00
Lt Col (Retd) R. C. Brodie in memory of Brig F. Clarkson	£ 25.00
Capt (Retd) V. Dugdale in memory of Col (Retd) J. Francis	£ 10.00
Maj (Retd) K. Hadfield in memory of WO1 (RSM) DeClancy and Capt (Retd) Ken Bunston	£ 30.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of Capt Ken Bunston	£ 10.00
Brian Overland in memory of Capt Ken Bunston	£ 20.00
North Africa & Italy L of C Officers' Reunion Club in memory of Col G. Metson MC	£ 46.00

LAST POST

Backhouse - Sgt H. A. F. Backhouse	Served 1938/74	Died 01/01/00
Biggleston - Capt K. A. Biggleston	Served 1944/61	Died 27/10/99
Bunston - Capt K. Bunston	Served 1950/75	Died 22/11/99
Butler - Cpl M. J. Butler	Served 1953/71	Died 27/11/99
Caird - G. L. Caird	Served	Died Dec 99
Cone - WO2 E. S. Cone	Served 1951/68	Died 01/11/99
Del Pinto - SSgt F. Del Pinto	Served 1947/82	Died Dec 99
Forbes - Cpl J. Forbes	Served 1975/84	Died 10/12/99
Gledhill - Sig E. Gledhill	Served 1939/46	Died 16/10/99
Goldney - Col P. Goldney	Served 1953/90	Died 17/12/99
Green - RQMS B. A. Green	Served 1935/47	Died 29/07/99
Halliday - WO2 J. Halliday	Served 1948/70	Died 04/09/99
Hinge - Cpl R. Hinge	Served 1928/44	Died 23/11/99
Hobday - Sgt B. Hobday	Served 1956/78	Died 24/11/99
Izod - WO2 E. D. Izodb	Served 1945/70	Died 23/11/99
Keating - WO2 T. P. Keating	Served 1952/76	Died 01/12/99
Knight - LCpl S. J. Knight	Served 1942/46	Died 24/11/99
Krikorian - W. A. B. F. Krikorian	Served 1940/46	Died 06/11/99
Lloyd - Sgt M. J. Lloyd	Served 1965/81	Died 06/11/99
Petheram - Lt Col M. A. Petheram	Served 1945/83	Died 10/11/99
Ruffels - R. H. Ruffels	Served 1948/62	Died 28/12/99
Robinson - Sgt J. F. Robinson	Served 1946/48	Died July 99
Whiles - LCpl A. Whiles	Served 1951/53	Died 21/12/99
White - Maj R. White	Served 1938/61	Died 16/12/99
Wood - Sig E. H. F. Wood MBE	Served 1943/47	Died 31/10/99
Woodburn - sig J. Woodburn	Served 1948/50	Died 03/12/99

Thompson – Col Peter Thompson OBE TD DL. Peter was born in Esher in 1936. He was educated at Epsom College where he was a member of the Combined Cadet Force. It was here that his association with the Army began in 1956. He was commissioned in the East Surrey Regiment. On leaving the Regular Army he was commissioned into the Territorial Army and rose to the rank of Colonel and to command of the 31st Regiment, Royal Signals. In 1983 he was awarded the OBE and at the end of his command, he was awarded a Territorial Decoration with

two bars for long service. **Peter** worked for Barclays Bank for 38 years and was a Regional Director in Windsor and in Newcastle. He rose to be Chairman of the Subsidiary Company and over-saw the re-building of Barclays Head Office. **Peter** was a man of wide interests, he was National Treasurer of Relate (Marriage Guidance) Organisation, Vice Chairman of Marshalls Charity which exists for the benefit of Churches and Vicarages in the old Archdeaconry of Surrey, including the present Archdeaconry of Surrey and parts of Southampton and Winchester Diocese. **Peter** was Vice-Chairman of the London Territorial Army Voluntary Reserve Association (TAVRA). **Peter** was also a non-Executive Director of the Royal Surrey County hospital from 1996-1998. The family connection with the medical profession made it particularly appropriate that he should serve in this capacity. He was also a member of the Glazier's Livery Company from the late 80's and was Master's Steward this year. In common with many other military people, **Peter** was a Deputy Lieutenant of London, he was also a member of the Parochial Church Council. At home **Peter** enjoyed his garden, staying at his cottage in Norfolk and the company of *Jock*, his West Highland Terrier. In 1966 **Peter** married **Joan**, and it is to her, to their children, **Damion** and **Catherine**, to **Peter's** mother and to his brother **Richard** that we extend our deepest sympathy. **Peter** was a man of faith and in the Royal Surrey County Hospital he received his communion and was anointed. He was buried at Shalford (Surrey) cemetery on 29 October. Many members and ex-members of 31 Signal Regiment were in attendance.

Biggleston - Capt Kenneth 'Ken' **Biggleston** died in Eastbourne on 27 October. **Ken** joined the Royal Signals OCTU in January 1945 and in December was commissioned Second Lieutenant. From January 1946 to December 1947 he served in Egypt with the Signals section of 33 Field Regiment RA. He was de-mobbed in January 1948 and in February 1948 Joined 56 (London) Armd Div Signal Regiment TA. In 1961 he left the TA due to multiple sclerosis and joined the OCA. He leaves a wife, **Jean**, his two sons, **Nicholas** and **Martin,** his daughter **Katherine** and three grandchildren, to whom the Branch sends its sincerest condolences.

Krikorian– Warren Alfred Bulkely Fielding Krikorian passed away on 6 November 1999, after a short illness. **Warren** served in the Royal Signals during World War 2 as a Signalman from 1940 to 1946. He became a prisoner of war in North Africa in 1941 whilst serving with the 1st Armoured Division. We extend our condolences to his son.

Stokes - WO2 Raymond John Colin Stokes was born in Marylebone, London on 19 June 1938 and enlisted into the Corps at Acton on 22 February 1957. On completion of his training in Catterick he was posted to the Far East in March 1958. In Febuary 1961 he returned home until April 1961 when he was sent to 'BAOR' RAF Laarbruch from April 1961 to September 1964. He returned home until February 1965 and was then sent on a tour of Aden until 1967. He had now reached the rank of Corporal and been awarded the GSM with clasp (Malaya) and GSM 1962 with clasp (South Arabia). Between 1967 and 1973 he had tours in 'BAOR' and 'Home' and gained the rank of Sergeant and passed his city and guilds in Elementary Telecommunications and Line Plant Practice. Posted to Cyprus in January 1973 and returned home in 1975. His last posting was Blandford Camp and he had now reached. the rank of WO2 and received his Long Service and Good Conduct medal. **WO2 R. J. C. Stokes**. was discharged on 16 March 1979 after completing 22 years 23 days service. **Raymond Stokes** died after a short illness on 19 September 1999 (aged 61). He leaves a widow, two children and six grandchildren, to whom we extend our sympathy.

Green – RQMS B. A. Green. The death of 'Dodger' **Green** saw the passing of another stalwart of 'F' Coy. He was born at Lahore in 1921 and at the age of five joined his four brothers at the Lawrence Military College in Sahawar, which with sister collleges at Ghora Gali, Mount Abu and Lovedale, regularly provided first class soldiers for the army in geneal and the Corps in particular. He enlisted as an Apprentice Tradesman and sailed to join 'F' Coy in 1935 together with **Fred Pavey**. They both stood 4ft 11ins in their stocking feet and weighed, soaking wet, under 100lbs. A first class sportsman and athlete, particularly at hockey and boxing, he trained as an OWL. During the war he spent two periods in the desert and one in India. This latter posting saw him involved in the construction and equipping of a brand new Signal Centre at Lahore.

Unsure of a positive career in the post-war army he took his discharge at the end of his engagement and eventually settled in Guernsey as an Inspector of Fisheries, and a very active member of the British Legion. It was his custom to start the day with a swim in the ocean and it was at the start of this that he collapsed and died. His widow, **Doreen**, expresses her happiness that it was whilst doing something he loved that he should have died. To her and her daughter **Ann** and his grandson and two great grandchildren we offer our sincere condolences.

Petheram - Lt Col Michael Archer Petheram – an appreciation by his brother **Sqn Ldr (Retd) Christopher Petheram. Lt Col Michael Archer Petheram** died peacefully on 10 November 1999 after a valiant battle against cancer. **Michael** was born on 13 April 1926 in Mickleover, Derbyshire and was educated at Wellington College, and later at the Mons Officer Training School at Aldershot. He was commissioned into the Corps and spent many of his early years with the British Army of the Rhine in Germany. Having reached the rank of Captain, he was specially selected to become Aide de Camp to the Governor of Bermuda, a job he did very well and which he thoroughly enjoyed. Tours of duty in Germany were interspersed by duty as Adjutant to the Territorial Regiment in Middlesborough in the 1950s and as Adjutant to the School of Signals at Blandford in the late 1960s. In the mid 1970s he served at SHAPE in Belgium, a tour which gave him every opportunity to indulge an interest in First World War history, Mons, Ypres and the Somme battlefields being almost on his doorstep.

He returned to UK in 1976 and was involved in Defence Sales and then after he retired in 1983. He had a RO's job for ten years, in communications, based at Shawbury in Shropshire, where he bought the family home at Bridge Farm near Wenn. Music was always important to him He took part in competitions for solo voice while at Wellington and later in Germany played leading roles in amateur performances of Gilbert and Sullivan operas. It was here that he met his wife **Ann**, who was then teaching with BFES. While at SHAPE he ran the Church choir. He had a remarkable degree of determination in every thing he did, whether it was at work or leisure. He had a great sense of fun and had a lot of time for youngsters, with whom he would converse and play, as if he were still in his own childhood.

Mike was a man of complete loyalty and integrity, and was one of those people whom you would hope to have standing at your back in a difficult situation. **Mike** will be sadly missed by his wife **Ann**, his twin sons, **Mark** and **Stephen** with their wives and his three grandchildren, his son **Nicholas**, his family and all his many friends.

Hobday – Sgt Bernard Hobday retired on 15 November 1978 after 22 years in the Royal Signals. He leaves his wife **Marjory** and three children, **Carol, John** and **Kim**. He died on 24 November 1999.

Williams - Lt Col S. J. Williams MBE, TD who died in 1999 was an extremely long serving Territorial Army officer and one of the few to be awarded five clasps to his Territorial Decoration. His service began in 1929 as an Officer Cadet in the University of London OTC in which he served until he was commissioned into the Royal Corps of Signals in May 1933. He was posted to 44th Divisional Signals TA and he recalled with great pride how his horse drawn cable section had beaten its Regular Army equivalent in a competition held at Aldershot. Embodied in 1939, he served with his unit until 1940 when he became a company commander in 1st Artillery Signals TNTB. His next few years were spent in West Africa and in India and at the time of partition he was the Officer Commanding the Depot Company of the STCB at Mhow. He remained in India during those troubled times and was awarded the MBE for his services. In 1948 he returned to England as OC 4 Squadron of 3 Training Regiment at Catterick.

In 1949 he joined the reconstituted 44th (Home Counties) Divisional Signal Regiment but later transferred to 16th Airborne Divisional Signal Regiment (Middlesex Yeomanry) at the Duke of York's HQ at Chelsea. Although considerably older than most members of his new unit he fast became a most enthusiastic parachutist, seeking every opportunity to engage in this new found pursuit. For several years he organised, trained and led the unit team which took part in the Nimegan marches in Holland. In 1956 the Squadron which he commanded moved to Uxbridge where the Middlesex Yeomanry had been raised in 1797. Shortly afterwards however, National Servicemen on the strength of the Squadron were relieved of their obligation to serve with the TA and the Squadron strength decreased accordingly. **Bill Williams** quickly realised the importance of making good any deficiency in numbers and by his efforts and those of the Squadron, he increased his strength to a hundred by 1960. The Squadron tended to reflect the enthusiasm of its Officer Commanding and developed a cohesion of its own which served it well. At the time of the move of the Squadron to Uxbridge it was decided to re-raise the regimental band and to base it there, where in a few years it too increased its strength and under the eye of **Maj Williams** it began to advance its reputation.

In 1961 **Bill Williams** became Second in Command of the regiment which three years later he commanded until his retirement in 1966. However, still willing to serve, he was appointed to the command of the County of Middlesex ACF Training Centre. Meanwhile, on the formation of the TAVR in 1967 the band passed to 31 Signal Regiment but in the following year TA Bands were limited in number and the services of the Middlesex Yeomanry band were no longer required. Dismayed at the fate of a band originally raised in 1843, **Col Williams** obtained permission from the Ministry of Defence for the band to continue to wear its uniform and to become the band of the Middlesex Yeomanry Association. Nor did its strength decrease and at one time it paraded eighty uniformed members and completed up to fifty engagements a year including the annual Cavalry Memorial parade in Hyde Park and the Belgian Ex-servicemen's Association on the Horse Guard's Parade. **Col Williams** would be glad to know that the band is to continue its existence under **Maj R. L. Miller**, its present Band President.

Bill Williams had an immense devotion to the volunteer army and for everything for which it stood. His long experience had taught him to pursue the 'aim' at all times and if in doing so he achieved any unpopularity in his circumvention of the red tape side of military life, it was to him so much the better for everyone concerned provided that the troops got on the road and did something useful. Those who knew him will miss him greatly.

Lloyd – Sgt Mick Lloyd, who died on 6 November 1999, aged 54, served with the Royal Corps of Signals from 22 March 1965 – 21 March 1980. During his 15 years of Regular Army service **Mick** served in Great Britain, Germany (BAOR), Norway, USA and on active service in Northern Ireland (NI). After training as a Radio Operator at Catterick he was posted to 225 Signal Squadron (Radio) Shafoldendorf, in the Hartz mountains and participated in the re-location of the unit to Langeleben on the East/West German border. Back home to 30 Sig Regt Blandford in September 1970, followed by a further BAOR tour of duty in January 1973 to 587 Rear Link Det (Queen's Own Highlanders (QOH)). During this period **Mick** deployed with the Battalion to Norway to conduct winter warfare training and went on active service to NI as an Infantry Sergeant on foot patrol on the streets of Belfast. After returning with the Battalion to BAOR, **Mick** was posted in October 1974 to 12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (later retitled 5 Fd Force HQ & Sig Sqn). In January 1977 after processing through 2 Sig Sqn 11 Sig Regt, he was posted to 233 Sig Sqn NI. **Mick** was posted back to Blandford in December 1978 to the School of Signals. It was during this period (Spring 1979) that **Mick** was deployed to Fort Hood, Texas, USA and played a significant part in the initial Clansman/US Army radio inter-operability trials. This ultimately contributed to the communications successes on subsequent NATO deployments around the world and was a forerunner to the current operation JWID. Those who remember **Mick** will not be surprised to read that his strong sense of humour and personality added to the success of the US deployment and bonded a relationship between the two Armies that remains as strong today. He married in September 1966, **Susan Leggett**, whom he met in Dover. They have two children **Michelle** and **Rachel**. We extend our deepest sympathy to his family and friends.

Clarkson – Brig Frank Leonard Clarkson who died on 1 November 1999, aged 78 years, served the Corps and the Army for over 36 years.He was a courageous, dedicated and professional officer, who was highly respected by all who knew him.

Frank was born in Dublin on 20 April, 1921. He was educated at Haileybury before entering the Royal Academy, Woolwich in early 1939. He was commissioned into Royal Signals in May 1940. He was first posted to 55 Motor Divisional Signals and then to the Guards Armoured Divisional Signals. Both units were engaged in the defence of this country from the then very real invasion scares. In February 1942 he joined 201 Guards Motor Brigade which was part of the 8th Army in Egypt. For over two years he took part in some of the fiercest battles of the desert war from Egypt to Tunisia leading on to the campaign in Italy. In 1944 he attended the Staff college in Haifa, Palestine. On graduation he joined 10th Indian Divisional Signals where he remained until late 1946 ending up as Regimental Second-in-Command.

He returned to the UK at the end of 1946 to take up a staff appointment in the War Office. After a tour as the Adjutant of the Officer Training Wing of the School of Signals in Catterick, he returned to the Far East as DAAG in the Singapore Base accompanied by his wife, **Shelagh**, whom he had recently married. He was awarded the MBE for his work during this tour. A spell as DAAG (A) at AG11 followed before taking command of a Squadron of 6th Armoured Divisional Signal Regiment in BAOR. In 1958 he joined the Joint Intelligence Staff in the Cabinet Office. He took over command of 7 Signal Regiment in 1961. He returned to the UK to join the staff of the Directorate of Military Operations. In 1968 he was promoted to Brigadier to command the Training Brigade, Royal Signals in Catterick. From 1970 to 1973 he was a Defence Attaché at the British Embassy in Bonn. He retired in 1976 from his last appointment, Chief Signal Officer United Kingdom Land Forces and, ex-officio, Chairman of the Inter-Service Joint Signal Committee (Overseas). Sadly just before he retired he lost his wife, **Shelagh**, after a long illness.

In his retirement his loyalty to the Corps was maintained by his eleven year period as President of the Plymouth Branch of the Royal Signals Association. During this period he married **Dorothy**, the widow of a long-time friend, **Maj Gardiner**, whom he had first met in Singapore in the late fifties.

PICTURES TAKEN BY DIGITAL CAMERA

Most digital cameras take pictures at a resolution of 72 dpi (dots per inch).
We scan ordinary photographs into our computer at a resolution of 800 dpi.
That is a BIG difference.

If you took a picture with your digital camera at 800 dpi,
you would be unable to send it to us as
an ordinary floppy disk would not have enough memory to store it.

Therefore, as a general rule of thumb:

IF YOU CAN STORE YOUR PICTURE ON A DISK,
THEN THE QUALITY OF THE PICTURE,
NO MATTER HOW IT MAY LOOK TO YOU,
IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR US TO USE.

PAYMENT OF SUBSCRIPTION BY DIRECT DEBIT

If you would prefer to pay your WIRE subscription by Direct Debit
please telephone RHQ Accounts for the necessary form.
Telephone: Blandford Military 2087 or 01258 482087

PUBLISH - OR BE DAMNED.....

Colonel Dennis Mills

I found it both interesting and refreshing to read 'Fings Ain't Wot They Used To Be' by Maj Jake Thackray in the October 1999 edition of *'The Wire.'* We all have our equivalent 'photocopier' stories to tell. I look back with fond memories at seeing the GOC thoroughly enjoying commanding his Division on exercise from an enhanced 'TAC HQ' which we had to use in place of 'Alternate' due to undermanning problems. The Brigade staffs also felt that they were better served from this Headquarters in comparison to when 'Main' was up and running. This begs the question of the extra value the remaining 150 staff at 'Main' brought to the party, with the commensurate implications for Royal Signals in providing information services and the flexibility of movement of the Headquarters? All of this had an impact on tempo - and this will not change in the future.

I would, however, add one qualifier to Jake's comment about not developing an 'anorak' type image for the Corps. I fully support the aspiration to avoid being blinded by technology, but would make a plea for this not to be connected to our drive to seek greater clarity about the Corps' roles and responsibilities in the wider Army. Like it or not, we need a doctrinally coherent position to inform our requirements and confirm our contribution in a Defence context. There are many outside the Corps who see themselves as increasingly well qualified to comment on issues which have a direct impact on our ability to meet commanders' needs in the future. Life is complicated enough without allowing the current fragmented approach to force modernisation pass by without comment. This is not something which should preoccupy most people in the Corps, but it is the reality of staffing for the Force Development staff. We have a long way to go to establish a common agreed line on many key issues, unlike some other Arms who spring to mind!

In this current edition of *The Wire*, Maj Nick Keen, my SO2 Force Development, has briefly outlined the major tasks being undertaken by my team in Blandford and I hope these are a bit more focused on issues which impact on the Field Army. You will see that one of our major projects is the planning for a major review of the Corps to match emerging requirements out beyond 2005. I am in no doubt that in order to do so successfully we need to draw on the good and bad lessons from how we do business today. We also need some radical thinking on the future beyond 2005 to stimulate debate throughout the Corps, if not the whole of Defence, and you are the only people who can identify the breadth and depth of the issues we should look at if we are to do this task well. In addition to Jake's welcome contribution, it was also good to see other articles which also raised some very good points which have been noted for the study. Please keep these valuable contributions flowing in!

NOTES FROM THE FUTURE

(Force Development - alive and well and living in Blandford)

by Maj N. Keen

As a fledgling SO3, very many more years ago than I now like to admit, I was told that I would have succeeded as a Staff Officer only when my name appeared in that august publication the MOD Telephone Directory. Some years on, after a year as SO2 Force Development in Headquarters Royal Signals, I thought my moment had come. I was therefore as perplexed as the more observant among you must have been to find that Royal Signals Force Development, hiding behind the title of Signals 2, had been 'promoted' into the entry for the Duke of York's Royal Military School! I thought it might be useful if I produced a short article outlining who we are, what we do and what our current major tasks are, so that you would appreciate that we hadn't 'fallen off the radar screen',

To begin with, where did we come from? Signals 2 formed in Blandford a little over four years ago, when SOinC(A)'s Directorate was ejected from Main Building. A little under one year ago, a further division saw the newly named Army CIS Services Group (formerly CIS Engineering Group) move under the wing of DCIS(A). This left SOinC(A) with just 7 Staff Officers in Signals 2, headed by a Colonel, currently Col Dennis Mills, plus the Royal Signals System Support Team (RSSST), of whom more later. Half of us sit sandwiched between PMH and the Museum, and can be thought of as 'the General Staff team' and the remainder are at the 'top end of camp' (near Engineers' Corner).

The Joint Warfare Publication defines Force Development as:

'The monitoring and analysis of a broad range of trends in order to determine and articulate future army concepts, capabilities and structures to support national political objectives, and provide guidance on their implementation'.

which translates into making it our business to ensure that the Corps takes due account of the influence of developing doctrine and initiatives but, more importantly, that Royal Signals uses its wealth of expertise in the delivery of command and control support to commanders to influence that doctrine in its early stages. The current 'growth industry' is Digitization and this initiative provides a useful illustration of how the Corps can assist Army-wide. Digitisation is not just an umbrella title for a huge force modernisation process, which will affect every Arm and Service - it is about seizing the opportunity presented by the information revolution to do things differently and thereby more effectively.

What is becoming clear is that the degree of understanding of the practical implications of Digitisation varies wildly. Equally varied is people's ability, and perhaps their willingness, to come to terms with the inevitable and indeed essential cultural change. However, in its early days the impact of Digitization Stage 1, will be comparatively limited as ATacCs and ACSAS start the process of information automation. Digitisation Stage 2 and beyond will be a completely different story as BOWMAN, Battle Management Systems and other equipment programmes come to fruition. Perhaps the piece which is least appreciated is how forces will be commanded and controlled during the transition period when current, automated and fully digitized elements will coexist. Increasingly, other Arms and Services are looking for assistance from those who understand the impact of systems - Royal Signals.

Within Force Development we also deal with near-term future equipment issues, such as scalings, concepts of use and support, aimed at ensuring that we understand how we are going to use the equipment which will be entering service in the immediate future. As a discrete area, we also deal with EW, and aspects of Information Operations.

Based at Engineers' Corner are the Concepts Staff, headed by Lt Col David Palmer. Their role is to work in close co-operation with Army CIS Services Group and other, including Industry, with a view to harnessing the military worth of technological developments. Under the recent MOD reorganisation which has resulted in the creation of the Central Customer Organisation, this will become an area of increasing importance and influence as we begin to play a full part in the Capability Working Groups which advise the Integrated Project Teams (IPTs). The Concepts Staff are closely involved in the production of user requirements and in developing Concepts of Use. Alongside them sits the Royal Signals System Support Team. This is the real engine-room of system support, in more ways than one. As well as providing invaluable support for in-service systems, Digitization Stage 1 and the all-important links to future development, they carry out trials of the wide variety of equipment destined to come into service in the future.

As you will have realised, the close relationship between the parts of Signals 2 and the resulting linkage between future equipment, doctrine, trials and system support provides enormous synergy, aimed at enabling this small team to exert influence, Army-wide where appropriate, in developing the position of the Corps. Let me just give you a flavour of the major pieces of work being undertaken at the moment to illustrate how we hope to achieve this.

It is now over 17 years since we sent the first signallers to the Falkland Islands and more than 6 since we first started operations in Bosnia. In the current climate of undermanning, the Corps cannot continue to support these commitments in the same way. In order to relieve overstretch and reduce tour intervals the Concepts Staff are working up a paper defining how commercialisation might relieve the burden once the initial deployment on an expeditionary operation has taken place and the environment can be considered benign. As far as force preparation is concerned, we need to evaluate the best way of supporting the Formation Readiness Cycle and understand the impact of initiatives such as Whole Fleet Management. We also need to take stock of our current systems and see how they can be made to provide support to operations for which they were never actually designed. The Strategic Defence Review redefined the capability requirements for the Army but without producing a single piece of new equipment for Royal Signals below the theatre level. We are

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

therefore building a matrix that will allow us to show how the Corps' current capability maps onto the requirements of SDR. This will enable us to do two things: firstly, to identify the capability gaps and the most effective way of plugging them and, secondly, to prove conclusively the point beyond which the Corps can do no more.

However, the most far reaching piece of work in which your Force Development team, indeed all the Staff in HQ R SIGNALS, is engaged is a study recently initiated by SOinC(A) entitled the 'Corps After Next', known as 'CAN'. The aim of this study is to undertake a fundamental review of the structures which provide information services to commanders, set against a doctrinally coherent view of the capability requirements demanded by the nature of future conflict. The purpose of this work will be to ensure the Corps is well placed to meet the anticipated rapid changes in technology, the operational environment, and therefore commanders' information requirements. This is going to be a 'root and branch' review with ***no*** limitations on radical thinking. Although it is unlikely that we will be allowed to exceed current manpower ceilings, CAN presents an ideal opportunity to fill known capability gaps by 'respending' manpower where it is needed. The initial work of scoping the paper is now underway and SOinC(A) has recently approved the approach. The next step will be to engage the wider Corps in the work. This is for two reasons: firstly because the small number of staff in HQ R SIGNALS simply cannot give the study the detailed attention it deserves without support. Secondly, the experience of planning for SDR proved the importance of 'owning' the plan right across the Corps.

Consequently, any time now you can expect to begin to see a variety of the papers that will combine to make up the final CAN report. In addition, it is our aim to brief each command course passing through the Royal School of Signals on this work as a means of spreading the message. In the same vein, if you are holding a study day that you think will be of use to us for CAN - or would like us to give a presentation at one, please let us know. The alternate methods of keeping the Corps in touch with and contributing to CAN will include: Corps publications; Bi-annual FD Conferences and SOinC(A)'s Conference; Young Officer essays and Regimental sponsorship of 'specialist capability areas' . We are also exploring the possibility of a web page on Army Intranet and a briefing video. The aim is to produce an over-arching paper by Feb 00, with the main study being carried out by the various consultation groups, to which you will be invited to contribute, next summer in order to be able to report by Apr 01.

We recognise that there are a huge number of very searching questions which need examining - some of which may startle the occasional horse or two - no matter, unless we do so, we will not be in a position in the era of the Unified Communications System and the information systems applications which it will support, to provide the information services which our commanders require and which our soldiers aspire to deliver. Your input to this, individual or collective will be gratefully received in whatever form and our contact numbers are below. If all else fails, offer to come to Blandford and tell us where we've been going wrong all these years and should one of the horses I've managed to startle happen to be your own hobby-horse, please find the time to contribute your thoughts. As the saying goes, 'better a volunteer than a pressed man ' and if you don't bring your piece to the party willingly, we will just have to make our questions the subjects for the compulsory new 'All Ranks Prize Essay Competition' for the next decade.

FORCE DEVELOPMENT - POINTS OF CONTACT

Col FD	Col Dennis Mills	Blandford Military 2165
SO1 FD	Lt Col David Palmer	Blandford Military 5229
SO2 FD	Maj Nick Keen	Blandford Military 2167
SO2 Concepts	Maj Martin Bever	Blandford Military 5390
SO2 Concept Development	Maj James Langley	Blandford Military 5269
SO2 Equipment Development	Maj Phil Osment	Blandford Military 2166
SO2 EW/IO	Maj (Retd) Dick Hood	Blandford Military 2168
SO2 RSSST	Maj Jim Body	Blandford Military 5324

In summary, we have undergone considerable organisational change over the last year, no doubt as many of you have done. With a new SOinC(A) who is keen to make an Army-wide contribution, life has very few chill moments! As FD Staff, we are conscious that we need to raise our profile within the Corps in addition to our external work, and be seen as the 'change agents' on behalf of those who will inherit the future. We seek to make this a collaborative approach and ask you to do your bit to contribute. Please invest in your future by getting involved in CAN.

1 TRAINING SQUADRON ROYAL SIGNALS
ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT BASSINGBOURN

WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS

The never-ending turnaround of Staff continues with numerous welcomes and farewells. Welcome to **Cpl Wayne Bramwell** and **Suzie**, **Sgt Craig** 'After Shock' **Purdon**, as well as **Capt Karl Jeeves** and **Lt Alex Clixby**, from 1 Div and 2 Sigs respectively. Farewells go to **Capt Ivan** 'Nimda' **Bates, Lt Andy** 'The Flayster' **Flay** (who having failed Signals selection is returning to his native Infantry! – Thanks anyway Andy!) and **Cpl Adrian** 'Fadz' **Fadzillah**. Au Revoir to the numerous Staff who are posted internally to the Engineers and Infantry, see you in six months! In addition, congratulations must go to **Cpls Scott McKenzie, Gaz** 'HAPPY' **Stoker** and **Gaz** 'PIES' **West** on their selection for promotion to Sergeant and imminent/recent postings. With these happy additions and another in the pipeline the Squadron has achieved a phenomenal nine promotions from Corporal to Sergeant in the year 1999/2000, out of 29 Corporals.

THE VISIT OF HER ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE PRINCESS ROYAL - 29 OCTOBER 1999

On 29 October 1999, Bassingbourn was extremely proud to welcome **Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal**. Although it was a visit to the entire Regiment, it was in Her Royal Highness' capacity as Colonel-in-Chief of the Corps, which made the event particularly poignant for the Permanent Staff of 1 Squadron. A busy programme was constructed with a view to giving **Her Royal Highness** a full overview of life at the ATR, emphasising the success of this all-arms environment.

HRH The Princess Royal is greeted by the Parade Commander Maj Rick Licence and Parade Sgt Maj Taff Jolly at the Passing Off Parade, ATR Bassingbourn 29 October 1999

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

After months of planning, the only thing that could go wrong did! The visit had to be delayed for an hour due to the Royal Helicopter Flight being grounded by bad weather. After numerous adjustments to the plan, **Her Royal Highness** arrived by helicopter to be greeted by the Master of Signals - **Maj Gen I. O. J. Sprackling OBE**, the Commanding Officer - **Lt Col I. A. J. Condie** and Aide De Camp - **Capt Alun Crapper** at the Officers' Mess. Despite the late arrival, **Her Royal Highness** carried on without missing a beat and the visit was eventually completely back on track. This did cause the proverbial fag packet to be torn up a few times, but due to the efforts of all involved things progressed smoothly. After a short Regimental brief from **Maj Duncan Gregory** R. ANGLIAN, **Her Royal Highness** proceeded to the most public part of her visit, the Passing Off Parade. The parade consisted of the three Troops and Platoons who had completed their recruit training with the Minden Band giving formal accompaniment. The parade was commanded by **Maj Rick Licence**, who has done this sort of thing before apparently, and **WO2 SSM** 'Taff' **Jolly**, both Corps members. Pride of place went to Bravo Troop, as the only Signallers on parade! The whole thing was watched by 700 friends family and permanent staff, giving that particular parade a special atmosphere. Under the watchful gaze of **Capt Craig** 'Bottle of Port' **Thomson-Smith** and **Sgt Paula** 'At least I got it right' **Matheson**, the Parade went perfectly for Bravo Troop, as did the Inspection.

HRH The Princess Royal, escorted by Capt Craig Thomson-Smith inspects Sig Bottoms, Bravo Troop, 1 Training Squadron Royal Signals on her visit to ATR Bassingbourn 29 Oct 1999

Plenty of swagger and no fainting later, the prize winners were presented and the parade marched off to the proud applause of many an adoring parent. Congratulations to **Sig Fox**, for earning the coveted 'Best Recruit' award.

HRH the Princess Royal presents the prize for Best Recruit to Signaller Fox, Bravo Troop, 1 Training Squadron Royal Signals on her visit to ATR Bassingbourn 29 October 1999

Sig Ellis for 'Best at PT', **Sig Maxwell** for 'Best Shot' and last but by no means least **Sig Pavitt** for 'Best Endeavour'. All four looked suitably terrified as the RSM's eyes bore into them warning them not to get their personal drill wrong in front of **Her Royal Highness**. Congratulations also to **Cpl Jim** 'Skeletor' **Berry** on the presentation of his hard earned Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

HRH The Princess Royal presents the LS&GC medal to Cpl Jim Berry, 1 Training Squadron Royal Signals on her visit to ATR Bassingbourn 29 October 1999

Following the parade **Her Royal Highness** moved to the Sergeant's Mess and was invited to a buffet lunch where a number of the Permanent Staff and their families were presented. A good cross section of the Regiment was there and despite the hectic timetable it was clear that all had thoroughly enjoyed meeting **Her Royal Highness**. The lunch had been preceded by a photograph with the members of the Mess and after lunch the visit changed pace and **Her Royal Highness** was conducted on a tour of training.

First on the agenda was a visit to the Small Arms Trainer. The initial brief was given by **Capt** 'Jock and Tanned' **Boyle** and this was followed by a demonstration of the usefulness of the SAT for recruit Skill At Arms training. The Troop on display was led by **Capt Liz** 'Jock and Not Tanned' **Allan**, ably assisted by **Sgt Dave** 'Er .... Jock and Not Tanned' **Honeyman** and the sharpshooters of Charlie Tp. The presentation covered various aspects of the SAT, including the numerous features that make the SAT especially good for Phase 1 training. Despite all of **Capt Mick Boyle**'s efforts **Her Royal Highness** seemed interested throughout and clearly enjoyed meeting the recruits. The visit continued with **Her Royal Highness** visiting the Gymnasium to see displays by 28 Squadron Royal Engineers and C (Queens' Division) Company. 28 Squadron ran a PT display and highlighted the work of the Remedial staff in keeping wastage rates to a minimum. C (QD) Coy regularly run an open day for parents to come and see what recruits get up to at ATR Bassingbourn. Part of this is a light-hearted 'Clothes Show' style catwalk, where recruits display the uniform and equipment they get issued. The 'Clothes Show' was used as the basis for the C Company stand and **Her Royal Highness** actually WAS amused. Again, the **Colonel in Chief** met a mixture of permanent staff. Before leaving, **Her Royal Highness** visited the Regimental Church and spoke to representatives from the WRVS, Hive and of course the Padres! OC HQ Coy, **Maj Graham Strettle MBE** headed up the stand, pulling together the diverse range of welfare and support elements available to assist training. **Her Royal Highness** was extremely enthusiastic about recruit training and all it's key elements. All that met **The Princess Royal** were impressed by her broad knowledge and searching questions. This was the first Royal visit to Bassingbourn in 20 years and ran smoothly, in the main (!), thanks to the huge efforts of the organisers, **Maj John Norris** and **WO2 (SSM) Tony** 'Camera Shy' **Slaney.** A long, yet very successful day was excellently rounded off by a huge All Ranks party, organised by **Maj Rick** 'It's my party etc' **Licence** and **WO2 SSM** 'Taff' **Jolly**, who apparently did not have enough to do with heading up the parade! The entertainment was varied, with a Disco, live band and food for a thousand, but the star turn seemed to end up being provided by **Capt Ivan** 'Ivana' **Bates** and **Maj John** 'Joan' **Norris**.

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

1 SQUADRON ACHIEVEMENTS

Hockey - Despite the rigours of Phase 1 training, members of the Permanent Staff have had the opportunity to spread their wings even further, particularly in the field of sport. **Capt Craig Thomson Smith** and **WO2 (SSM) Tony Slaney** were amongst the Regimental team for the Divisional Hockey Championships. Only 30 minutes after thrashing 101 Regt RA by twelve goals to two in the Semi-Final, they beat AAC Harrogate 8-1 to retain the Divisional Cup. Well Done as well to **Cpl Anne-Marie Ambury** for her continued selection for the Corps Team.

Triathlon - Members of the Squadron took part in the Saffron Walden Triathlon, one of the last of the season. Amongst the notable achievements were **Lt Kate** 'Oh Well, Nothing Else To Do' **Simmonds** – First in her age group, as were **Sgt Paula Matheson** and **Mrs Dawn Kidd**. **Capt Craig Thomson Smith** was Third Male overall in the Sprint event, despite being a novice and **Capt Mick Boyle** was Third in the OAP age group!

Orienteering - In the early autumn, the Squadron entered the Regimental Orienteering Competition as reigning champions. With **Capt Mick** 'IronFist' **Boyle**, **SSM Tony** 'Just Follow Mick' **Slaney, Capt Craig Thomspoon Sythe** and **Capt Alun** 'Just Great' **Crapper** coming First, Second, Third and Fourth respectively, success in the team event was something of an inevitability. **Capt Alun Crapper, Capt Mick Boyle** and **Lt Andy Flay** came a credible fourth in the Army Night Orienteering competition, held at Bramley, near Reading. A team 'Harris Relay' event turned a simple event into a complex organisational exercise. All this on top of the whitewash in the Regimental Competition suggests great things for the future.

Charity Fundraising - Bravo Troop recently completed a gruelling Wheelchair Basketball competition raising over £1100 for The Great Britain Wheelchair Basketball Association. The money will be used to buy a specialist wheelchair for one of various teams supported by the charity.

71 (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col C. H. Turner**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) M. Godwin**

REGIMENTAL NEWS

December sees the long awaited arrival of the new Adjutant **Capt Matt Graham** who takes over the appointment on 17 December 1999. Welcome, we hope you enjoy your stay with the Regiment. The Regiment owes a big thank you to **Major Kathy Howard** who has put in many long hours keeping the in trays empty.

HEADQUARTERS (KLCY) SQUADRON – BEXLEYHEATH
Sqn Comd **Maj P. B. Corfield**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) M. J. B. Mustoe**

68 (IC&CY) SIG SQN – LINCOLN'S INN AND WHIPPS CROSS
SqnComd **Maj E. J. H. Marshall TD**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) L. D. Evans**

70 (EY) SIGNAL SQUADRON - CHELMSFORD AND HARLOW
Sqn Comd **Maj S. P. Palmer TD**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) P. Humphreys**

OPERATION AGRICOLA

The Squadron wish a safe and interesting tour on Op Agricola with 209 Sig Sqn to **LCpl Kelly Cloughton** and **Sig Ross Nugent**. We look forward to hearing from them during their tour and the 'War Stories' on return.

REMEMBRANCE PARADE

The Squadron participated and assisted in organising the Chelmsford Remembrance Parade. The Parade was commanded by the Squadron Commander.

Sgt John Taylor, SSgt Jim Swain, Sgt Tony Perry lead the Squadron on the Remembrance Parade March Pass at Chelmsford, The Sqn Comd is leading the TA Contingent

ESSEX YEOMANRY 'SOLDIER OF THE YEAR'

The Squadron congratulates **Sig Sean Vanson** on being awarded the Essex Yeomanry Soldier of the Year trophy. It was presented by the Honorary Colonel, **Col David Casstles TD DL**. The award is presented annually to the individual who 'in the opinion of the Squadron Commander', has improved in both Military and Trade Skills throughout the training year.

The Honary Colonel presents Sig Sean Vanson with his award (L-R): Sig Sean Vanson, Col David Casstles TD DL, Maj David Swann looking on

EXERCISE ROADMASTER 1999

Ex Roadmaster 1999 is the Army's annual driving championship run by BAMA (British Army Motoring Association). This year it was held at Dalton Barracks in Abingdon Oxfordshire on 5-7 of November and attracted 89 crews. 70 (EY) Sig Sqn (V) entered two crews, **Sgt Terry Hackett** (navigator) with **LCpl Tim Marsh** (driver) and **Sgt Daz Lane** (navigator) with **LCpl Jo Smith** (driver). Both crews did very well over the five phases of the competition with little or no preparation and after a full day at work. The crews just managed to arrive and enter as the final briefings were taking place – this put them at a disadvantage as none had done anything like this before. The first nights' navigation was literally in the dark with one aim – and that was to finish the whole event. The main setback suffered by both crews was navigational, but that comes with practice. Main incidents that are worthy of note are the slight disagreement that **Tim** had between his landrover and a tree-this meant a few minor modifications to the headlight and the wing before they could continue on the second night navigation! – and **Daz**'s knack for not quite knowing where they were when it mattered most! Meanwhile, **Terry** ensured his team was flat out, shining his torch on **Tim**'s foot – was it truly 'pedal to the metal'? **Jo** had a refusal at the last when she got stuck sideways on a slope that took a bit of coaxing to get out of. The whole weekend was very

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

well organised and loads of fun. Hopefully we'll be at it again in the near future and we will have a difference target to aim for, beating our results of 30th by Terry and Tim and 58th by **Daz** and **Jo**.

Participants
LCpl Richard Marsh , Sgt Terry Hackett, LCpl Jo Smith,
Sgt Darren Raymond Lane

FIRE WALKING

Mrs Jennifer Lane Walking on Fire for Charity

'Is our mum mad? Asked posters around the village. Here I am, **Jennifer Lane** married to a soldier **Sgt Daz Lane** PSI/T (yes! I must be mad!!), mother to **Alexander**, 8 and **Kathryn** 6, about to walk over 20ft of red hot embers for charity. The idea was to raise money for a local Hospice for the shortest sponsored walk in memory. Who could refuse to sponsor me? Certainly not the members of 70 (EY) Sig Sqn the members of RHQ and any other Army personnel my husband came into contact with. With my efforts for backing around the village where we live and the generous TA, I raised £600 for the most breathtaking few moments of my life. Yes, I walked-quite slowly really-over 20 foot of red hot charcoal embers one dark evening in October without any hesitation or prodding with a big stick. I just would like to say thank you for all their support. Maybe I can convince someone from the TA to join me when I walk over 2000 broken bottles next year!!

EXERCISE PHOENIX COCKNEY II
23 AUGUST TO 3 SEPTEMBER 1999
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE COAST TO COAST WITH ALTITUDE
by Sgt Mike Weeks

My first taste of what was to come was when the QM, **Maj Aspinall** volunteered me to take photographs on the walk, and to do this I would have to walk the whole route, not my favoured way of getting the job done.

Day One was fairly flat, the weather was good and we made swift progress with no real idea of what was to come.

Day Two saw us walking up Red Pike, we could see the sea behind us, although we had already covered about 25 miles.

The Walkers Sunning Themselves

Day Three saw a dramatic change in the weather, it became cold, very wet and visibility was very limited. According to rumour we made the top of Hellvellyn and then descended down Striding Edge. Luckily the fog was down and we could not see where we were going. The usefulness of GPS was becoming apparent. At the end of the day we realised that the QM had slightly modified the route to take in any extra features and high points that he could find.

Day Four was like Day Three, wet cold and high places to walk to, and at this point the expression 'Ground Hog Day' was starting to be heard. We walked up to and then along 'High Street', GPS and maps were not the most accurate and the path down was difficult to find. When we came down we had a long walk along side Haweswater reservoir. Thank you for the interesting route **John**, still the beer tasted good at the end.

Day Five was a lot gentler on the feet and we managed to follow a disused railway track for most of the day.

Day Six was different again, the ground was soft and when we descended from the Nine Standards it became like a marsh, and this was the diversionary route because of erosion!. The second half of the day we passed many old mining sites, ending the day in Reeth, our longest day of walking.

Day Seven a Rest day, Hurrah!!

Day Eight the route passed through Richmond and finished at Catterick Bridge, well known ground for most of us.

Day Nine we meet two Septuagenarians who are not doing this for the first time. One of the things about this walk is the amount of people doing it. Some do it over two years, a week at a time, but most try to do it in two weeks.

Day Ten we join up with the Cleveland way and it feels like we are on The 4 Peaks challenge, where did all those big hills come from ? The day ends nicely in the grounds of the Red Lion Inn, our camping site.

Day Eleven we take another of our deviations to walk into Goathland, the village where Heartbeat is set, adding a bit of distance. We then took the train to Grosmont for the next morning start, bringing us back onto the route.

Day Twelve the final day, Robin Hoods Bay here we come. We sighted the sea at 14.11 hrs, but it was another 90 minutes before we could dip our feet in. A real sense of achievement was felt by all as the end.

The walkers, **Lt Col Turner, Maj Aspinall, WO2 (RQMS) John Paterson, SSgt John Sadler, SSgt Jase Barsley, SSgt Tommy Burns. Sgt Phil Green, Sgt Mike Weeks** and **Cpl Al Hyland** are all grateful for the support that was given from the members of 212 Field Ambulance, **SSgt Neil Fawcett, Kaz Houghton, Roz Tinker** and our own Chef, **Barnsey**, without whose help the walk would have been much more difficult.

The Walkers High Spirits

12 MECHANIZED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

Sqn Comd **Maj S. R. Workman**
RSM **WO1 S. G. Jackson**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

Time has flown past since the presentation of our new Colours by the SOinC. Much staff work has been done by SHQ, along with the odd presentation or two by the Ops team, **Capt Roddy** 'To be sure, to be sure' **Wilson, WO2 FofS** 'Crow' **Marshall** and **WO2 (YofS)** 'What have I done for all this abuse?' **Arthurs**. Congratulations to the FofS, YofS and to **Cpl** 'Richie' **Syme** (AGC) who have displayed marvellous E&E skills over 15 or more years, having never been caught. For this display **Brig Shaw** awarded them their LS & GCs after the Squadrons' Kosovo medal parade. Meanwhile the 2IC, **Capt** 'Dr Evil' **Hendricks** has been locked in discussion (battle) with the understanding and helpful G6 Land, who are ably assisting the formation of the new unit by providing an inexhaustible supply of manpower and kit. The AO, **Capt** 'Where's my crippled fat dog?' **Richards,** as OC rear party is also the manager of the Wives Home Info Pack (WHIP), 228 day care centre, Xmas party arranger and in between breaths is also in meeting with contractors who are to build new garages, etc (maybe by the next millennium perhaps? Wait out…).

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt** 'I like leather catsuits' **Day**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Dicky Dirk Diggler' **Dyer**

The last few months have been a busy and turbulent time for the Troop, with the lads working hard converting from Airborne Role to the somewhat different role of Mechanised warfare, plus the added bonus of an operational tour of Bosnia in December! The aforementioned hierarchy with the assistance of **Sgts Sid** 'I built sangers and dug' **James** and 'Cuddly Craig' **Dudley**, have adapted well to the changes and are leading the Troop into the next millennium.

New arrivals to the Troop include, fresh from the factory **Sigs Ricky** 'Living La Vida Loca' **Martin, Phil** 'NPT' **Williams** and **Chris** 'McGobb' **McGeorge**. Also welcome to **Cpl** 'Gaseous Clay' **Austin** from Radex Tp in Blandford, and a couple of infiltrators moving across from Bongo Tp, namely **LCpl Rick Turner** and **Sig Chris Kelly – Rutherford**, both of whom have much to teach us. Sadly the Troop have lost a few good men in the form of **LCpls Simon** 'Tapeworm' **Archibald, Dan** 'OZ' **Pearson** and the surrealist **Sig Ken** 'You'll never take me alive' **Dodd**, all of whom are now pursuing new lives in Civvy Street.

Even with the workload within the Troop, we have still managed to put out an outstanding performance into the Super Tom competition, securing five out of the top six positions within the Squadron. The top position going to **Sig Brett** 'Heed' **Appleyard**. Surprise promotions followed the prizegiving by the new Brigade Commander, **Brigadier Cooper**. Those lucky winners who received their first tape were **Sigs Andy** 'Gurung' **Allen, Brett** 'Heed' **Appleyard**, 'Dangerous' **Armstrong** and last but not least **Keith** 'Apples and Pears' **Williams**. The Troop now looks forward to the impending tour of Bosnia and the opportunity to excel on operations again. Albeit under the guise of 228 Sig Sqn.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt** 'I'm off jumping' **Wong**
Tp SSgt **Sgt** 'Do you like my bike' **Wilcox**

Still recovering after the turbulence induced by several factors, namely the re-roling, the fire, the decorating, and the up and coming tour (not forgetting pre-tour leave) Bravo Tp is preparing to be split to the four winds, for several months anyway! Into the fray we welcome **Cpl** 'Jo' **Biddle** from 16 Sigs, **Cpl** 'Griff' **Griffiths** from 35 Sigs and **Sig** 'Geordie' **Wharton** from 7 Sigs. We say farewell to **Sig** (now LCpl) **'Jay Dine Bar' Dine** who has gone back to 'skool' to re-trade to technician. He seems to think that techs earn more by looking at boxes (most do just that – so the FofS says).

It has been a whirlwind of UNTAT trg combined with numerous courses for members of the Troop that are required for the upcoming deployment. Some people have not been seen for months, missing persons have been informed.

The hotly contested Super Tom competition somehow went to an A Tp bod, with the second place going to **Sig Mick** 'I shall smite ye down!' **Allan**. Third place went to a former B Tp member **Sig** 'Wee Jock' **Kelly-Rutherford** (who had been coaching the winner **Sig Appleyard**). A big 'At Last' to **Sig Matt** 'Righto' **Girx** who finally picked up his first tape after the Super Tom, and congrats to **LCpl** 'Taff' **Davies** for promotion to Corporal and a double whammy to **LCpl John Attwell** for promotion to Corporal and on the birth of his son **Josh**. The Troop wishes **Nicola** and **Josh** well.

It is evident that the Christmas and the millennium celebrations are a big draw to stay at home, on the eve of deployment, **Cpl** 'It's Mine' **Langan** snapped two fingers playing football in the gym and has opted for an operation in hospital to pin them instead of Op Palatine, **Sig Yates** awaits the verdict on his twisted ankle and OpsO recently proposed, we can't understand why she said Yes, with the hope that the sympathy vote would allow him to stay behind.

238 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS
Sqn Comd **Maj Steve Hunt**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Ewan Hall**
YofS **WO2 (YofS) Neil Stewart**

It often seems like there is no peace for the wicked! After a successful Summer Camp in early September at Penhale, Cornwall the Squadron deployed down to St Martins Plain Camp near Lydd and Hythe ranges to conduct the 2 (NC) Sig Bde Regional Signal Squadron Field Firing Battle Camp. Despite the torrential rain for the first two days, things did brighten up with all personnel completing live firing at stages 1 - 5. October and November are traditionally busy months for the whole unit and this year was no exception. On the 19 October most of the Squadron deployed for the State Visit of the President of the People's Republic of China. The visit was followed by the State Opening of Parliament and the Remembrance Day Cenotaph Parade in central London. Of course, the Squadron isn't all work and no play.

The WOs' and Sgts' Mess in Chelsea closed down over three years ago and currently the SNCOs in the Squadron are affiliated to **36 Sig Regt** (V) at Ilford, East London. Commitments aside, most SNCOs hadn't been to Ilford for some time, however, that was about to end. A Regimental Dinner was held at Ilford on 6 November with **WO1 (RSM) Bob Stanton** being an excellent host (as usual). A good and memorable night was had by all from Chelsea and we look forward to returning in February for the dining out of the RSM. **Sgt** 'Chalky' **White** should be mentioned and remembered for rounding off his first mess dinner with a souvenir - namely the RSM's spurs. Despite the good intent by 'Chalky' Xmas duties have been slightly easier to fill - thanks 'Chalky'.

A special mention goes out to **LCpl Greg Burgess** (formally **Sig Burgess**) on his recent and well earned promotion. A sad, but temporary farewell, is extended to **Mr Andy Smith** the Squadron's Stores Officer, who has had his call up to the Reserves in Bosnia. **Andy**, who is not often seen to move at light speed, deployed in October with the UET - so rumour has it.

Finally, the Squadron's sporting year was rounded off at the end of November with the annual Sports Lunch. Held in our own Squadron function room, the Bruno Bar, the event proved very successful. The winners of the various awards were:

Sports Personality of the Year - **LCpl Brian Stewart**
Best Team Performance - Sqn football team
Best Sporting Individual - **Sig Ford**
Most Improved Person - **Mr Terry** 'I am thin' **Marsh**
Annual Challenge Shield Winner - Radio Tp

A special thanks to the organisers, **Cpl Paul Bone** and **LCpl Brian Stewart** for pulling together a great function.

RADIO TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Andy Carroll**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Simon Schofield**

With the imminent departure of the Tp Comd, **Sgt Si Schofield** will be taking up the reins and that could see a few field promotions, well at least until the new Tp Comd arrives in February. With all the members of the Troop moving up one place **Sig** 'I know everything' **McGregor** thinks he is a Lance Corporal. Sorry 'Mac' think again. The Troop would like to congratulate **LCpl** 'Billy Whiz' **Pond** and his wife **Sarah** on the birth of their son **Jason**. Apparently **Sig Jason** is already dug in at a depth position and will only drink compo milk. We also need to say hello to **Sig Toby** 'Wait for it' **Green** who arrived straight from the factory poor chap and goodbye and farewell to **Sig** now **Mrs Helen** 'Sid' **Keaton**, who after coming off the promotion board, would not sign back on again. Not to forget **Capt** 'Can't make my own leaving do Buckaroo' **Carroll** who are both leaving us for Civ Div. Good luck both of you. So let's see what we have been up to:

BATTLE CAMP

Yes, it was that time of year again! From 27 September until the 8 October 238 (London) Sig Sqn organised the 2 (NC) Bde Battle Camp Ex Bruno Warrior 99 at Lydd and Hythe Range complex Folkestone. No1 Dress uniform and bulled ammo boots were swapped for Combat 95 or in some cases combat 1895 and boots combat high. The Battle Camp was divided in two identical one week packages to allow the shift workers to get some fresh air and for once be soldiers. Under the watchful eye of **Sgt Si** 'There can be only one' **Schofield** and **SSgt Si** 'My Train set and I'm the driver' **Hadley** much shouting and stabbing dummies occurred. Although the blood bags were a nice touch it was a pain spending the rest of the week in red combats. A special thanks to **LCpl Bri** 'Love me love my PTI vest' **Stewart** who was in charge of remedial aggression training, he managed to get the sections down to a more manageable size.

SSgt Si Hadley impersonation of an officer, or is it Capt 'Cowboy' Andy Carroll impersonating an officer

The week then progressed onto all stages of Training the Battle Shot, we learnt that the rifle was a useful tool not just a club. After everyone passed their APWT we moved on to more interesting COIN Ranges where special mention must go to **LCpl Nick** 'Almost scared that target' **McGregor** and **Sig Toby** 'What's a target then?' **Green**, who on the pistol Ambush Range (after all the people who had been through and left the car untouched) managed to hit the rear windscreen and the sunroof. Watch out Bodie and Doyle! **Capt Andy** 'McStab' **Carroll** who managed to fire more 9mm rounds than any one else, even though he was Range Staff and after having an interesting career doing everything the Army does, reckons that they don't make smulies like they used to. Also for some reason on the night shoot not one of the trip flares he had set went off. Finally, **LCpl Bri** 'Around my bronzed body once' **Stewart** who even wore his blue PTI tracksuit top instead of a combat jacket whilst acting as Range Safety staff just in case anyone forgot which course he had just been on. At the end of the week we were treated to a barbecue in the rain and a Platoon Smoker where we were able to get our own back on the Instructors.

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

Woman and children have abandoned the sinking command tasks, whilst the men demonstrate individual rowing techniques

CEREMONIALS

The Winter Ceremonial season was with us once again with a State Visit of the President of the Peoples Republic of China, Remembrance Sunday and the State Opening of Parliament. We also carried out Car Calling for the State Visit and Diplomatic Reception. Special mention this season goes to the following: **LCpl Greg** ' Quick Brew Orders' **Burgess** who thought the coach with the Crown Jewels in was the Queen and then reported that fact on the 'net'. This caused a small flap with the senior Officers as it meant HM was ten minutes early. He then failed to report when the Queen did finally pass through, not just the State Opening but the State Visit as well. A visit to the opticians is recommended. Also **Sig Toby** 'Don't like' **Green** who does not think he needs to salute anyone while standing on the Mall as he is too important, a mistake which cost him dearly in the bar. Final mention to **Cpl Barry** 'Calling all cars' **Gibson** who managed to tear himself away from his Pan European motorcycle long enough to work the Diplomatic Reception. We were amazed he still had Blues!

MIKE TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt (TOT) Bob Nicol**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Andy Cannadine**

There have been no new arrivals to Mike Tp but we do say farewell to **Cpl** 'Geordie' **McNeillie** who is posted to Cyprus - an honest day's work awaits! The Troop wishes a speedy recovery to **Sgt Chris Jacobs** after his recent operation. Radio Sect has been kept reasonably gainfully employed covering events such as the State Visit of the President of China etc. PA Sect has been similarly employed covering the annual HCMR Summer Camp at Bodney, the Royal Artillery Remembrance Parade and also the Sandhurst Passing Out Parade. ACISG Sect - The following personnel are due congratulations for their successful completion of the PC Maintenance course at the Royal British Legion College in Tidworth - **Sgt Twizell**, **Sig Ford** and **Sigs Daw** and **McGuire**. The course has been undertaken as part of the ongoing process of cross-training Mike Tp personnel. ACISG remains extremely busy with the current Y2K Project. Congratulations to **Sig Ford** for coming off the promotion board and also to **LCpl** 'Smudge' **Smith** on successfully passing his T2.

On a sporting front, congratulations are due to **Sig Ford** on his selection for the Combined Services Cricket Team, currently on their Winter Tour of Australia and the Tp football Team who had a convincing 'Derby' victory over Radio Tp during the recent Inter Troop 5-a-Side Competition. Battle Camp - Throughout the two week period of Ex Bruno Warrior almost all of the Troop attended in some capacity or other. An enjoyable week of interesting and varied range work was capped off by some excellent APWT scores.

EXERCISE SIDLAW COCKNEY 25-29 OCTOBER 1999
by Sig Pearce

Ex Sidlaw Cockney was a trekking/mountaineering expedition held in the areas of Glen Coe, and the West Highlands of Loch Arkaig in sunny Scotland. The aim of the exercise was to place young soldiers in a challenging environment and to help develop self reliance and team spirit in the group. The expedition was organised and led by **WO2 (SSM) Ewan Hall** and the 2IC of the party **Cpl** 'Geordie' **McNeillie**. A total of eight members from the Squadron took part and included **LCpl Brian Stewart**, **LCpl Smudge Smith**, **Sig Stu Parker**, **Sig** 'I'm the Daddy' **McFaul** and **Sig** 'Mac' **McGregor**.

We started off early on Monday morning with the gruelling 12 hour drive to Scotland where we were to set up camp in a small village called Invercoe, a few miles from Glen Coe. We finally made it, after having the number plate fall off the Fiesta, and then **Cpl** 'Speedy Gonzalez' **McNeillie** getting a puncture en route. We set up the four tents where we would stay for the first couple of days before heading to Loch Arkaig. We all woke the next morning eager to start the ridge walk along Aonach Eagach Ridge, but that morning, some of the breakfast we were going to cook had somehow mysteriously vanished, or had been eaten by the haggis monster! The monster didn't bother us and we were eager to get up onto the ridge which was approximately 3000 ft high. When we got to the top or what we thought was the top, the ridge started becoming progressively harder to climb and very slippery too. At one point of the climb **Sig** 'Mac' **McGregor,** a part time climber himself, started hooking up ropes to support us on really difficult parts or the ridge. The rope didn't give **LCpl** 'Smudge' **Smith** much confidence as his cries of, 'This is ..... well dangerous,' could be heard throughout the Scottish Highlands. However, we all managed to make it across to the other side of the mountain and down to a safe level where we found the mini bus to take us back to the campsite.

Up early again the next morning, we drove to our next location for the exercise which was by Loch Arkaig some 17km NW of Fort William. We set about preparing our kit for a 48hr trek and night navigation exercise. Unfortunately the group would be hit by a number of small injuries which resulted in the trek being curtailed. Sadly, we lost one of the group, **Sig** 'Stu' **Parker** who picked up a back injury. It was decided by **WO2** 'Ewan' **Hall** that **Sig Parker** should go back to the location of the mini bus and camp it out until we arrived back two days later. Not wanting to stay alone, **Sig** 'I'm the Daddy' **McFaul** offered his services and volunteered to stay behind with **Sig Parker**, so the rest of us could carry on with the trek. The delay in returning **Sig Parker** to the mini bus put the group behind schedule and with darkness and mist falling across the Glen, the way ahead looked very ominous. How far was the bothy and could the group cross the now swollen streams? Then the rain came belting down and it became even harder to see where we were. Eventually we hit the bothy bang on target, however, **LCpl** 'Bri' **Stewart** had injured his ankle going down a rabbit hole. Things seemed to be going from bad to worse but it was a great relief to be under shelter.

Well, the next day we had planned to trek along the North side of Loch Arkaig with each of the group taking turn in group control and navigation. Soon after we left the bothy we were faced with an arduous climb which placed 'Bri' **Stewart** in even more pain. At this point the decision had to be made whether to carry on or bring an end to the exercise. After **WO2** 'Ewan' **Hall**'s sobering comments about risk and safety the decision was made to get back to lower ground and to re-join **Sigs** 'Ben' **McFaul** and 'Stu' **Parker**. That night we went back to the campsite in Glen Coe before the 12hr drive back down to London. Even though the expedition ended before it should have, everyone achieved something and found out a lot about themselves. The ridge was hard and quite challenging whilst the trek, in appalling weather, proved how important it was to work as a team.

OSCAR TROOP
Tp Comd **Maj (TFC) Dave Gilchrist**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Karen Ripley**

This has been a fairly quiet period for the workaholics of Oscar Tp. It has to be said the lads and ladies of the Troop have just got over Troop and Squadron Summer camps respectively as well as the mandatory two week jolly that is called BATTLE CAMP! It has to be agreed that Oscar Tp as well as not only having the best operators within the Squadron, also have the best soldiers. Congratulations go out to **Sgt** 'Chalky' **White,** from the Troop, for having the best section for the second successive year on Battle Camp. The old cliché leading from the front springs to mind, however 'Chalky' being 'Chalky', just threatened his section with lots of fictitious, unnecessary and mindless violence if they did not comply with his wishes.

Only a couple of new arrivals to mention, welcome aboard **Sgt** 'Lindy' **Lawrence** from SHAPE, welcome to the real world, also to **LCpl** 'Kara' **Hayhurst** from 15 Sig Regt. There has been a few internal moves on the CO4 front with **Inga Thompson** moving to the dizzy heights of DPRC, replacing **Liz Clarke,** who has moved to the very secretive world of the ADA.

The Troop came a very creditable second in the Inter Troop sports competition. It should be noted that the rather hastily arranged football tournament went a long way to deciding the outcome of the trophy, bearing in mind Oscar Tp could not field a team on the day of the competition.

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

38 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS
CO **Lt Col Nigel Harrison MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Steve Carr**

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Bill Evans TD**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Clive Howland**

CITY OF SHEFFIELD REMEMBRANCE PARADE

With a distinct lack of young officers in HQ Sqn the responsibility of leading the parade was handed over to **Capt Simon** 'Girly Trousers' **Kirkham** of 64 Sqn. With a day's training by the RSM and considerable guidance by **WO1 Kev Gater,** he remembered enough of his drill to start and stop in the right places and soon found himself being followed through the streets of Sheffield (with confidence or curiosity?) by a combination of HQ Sqn, 64 Sqn and numerous Veterans Associations and local Military Units. Whilst the Parade passed without incident, **Sgt Sally** 'I've always got my eye on the old men' **Burton** received special commendation from the CO for the prompt and thoroughly professional life-saving first-aid she administered to a Burma Star Association member, who suffered a heart attack during the lunch at Manor Top. Thanks to her actions the guest is now recovering - well done. Amid all this excitement the RAF Association's 'subtle' fly-past (in two Sierras and a Morris Minor) almost went unnoticed. However, their argument that this warranted a free lunch did not. Needless to say plans are already afoot to install Barrage Balloons and Akk Akk guns in time for their appearance next year.

46 (CITY OF DERBY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)
Sqn Comd **Maj Bob Ward**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Jim Batchelor**

SIGNALLER GOES ALL OUT FOR CHARITY IN NEW YORK

Sig Stuart George went all out to be up there with the fastest when he competed in the New York Marathon recently. He gave a very creditable performance and raised £3000 for charity. He has a number of charitable events planned for the year 2000 including getting the officers to run a half marathon for charity!! Keep up the good work Georgie Boy! The Squadron organised a surprise birthday party for **WO2 (SSM) Jim Batchelor** on 4 December. No expense was spared in producing a wonderful celebratory bash which left the OLD boy speechless. He was presented with a number of gifts including Grecian 2000 and Philosan tablets (which fortify the over forties). We've also said a sad farewell to the outgoing OC, **Maj Kevin Flanagan** who left the Squadron in January to join Sheffield UOTC, 'I've really enjoyed my time at 46, although some of the jokes that have been played have almost sent me grey.' Keep in touch, Sir.

REGIMENTAL SAAM 99 - WARCOP

It's been 16 years since 46 Sig Sqn last won the Regimental SAAM trophy, so to honour the end of the millennium the Squadron team went flat out - and succeeded, a great tribute goes to the time and effort given by all those involved. Overall the team had a mixed bag of results, but some fine performances were put in by **Sig James Wheatley** who won the Young Soldier trophy and **Lt Chris Kinvig** (congratulations on the promotion!) who won the best individual shot on the CQBR range. It is also worth mentioning **Sgt Karen Kavanagh** who unofficially won the best female shot.

64 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)
Sqn Comd **Maj Andrew Smith**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Mick Rooney**

Since Camp 99, the Squadron have been settling into some form of normality after the large influx of new faces over the summer months. Or as **Capt Les** 'Speak for yourself' **Jordan** put it, '...a small element of the Squadron has struggled to grasp the concept of training'. As well as taking the 'Best Section in Defence' Prize in the Regimental Field Firing weekend at Warcop (does a 21 year old subaltern count as a 'young soldier'?), we've been away on Squadron training and putting up the Christmas decorations at the Sheffield station with frantic enthusiasm.

Congratulations to **Lt Andy** 'Thumper' **Middleton-Powell** on his promotion - the best things come to those who wait! It is with mixed feelings that we say farewell to **2Lt Richard** 'Glutton for punishment' **Grieve**, who leaves us at Christmas to head off to RMA Sandhurst to pursue a regular career. We wish him all the best and anticipate his return as our Adjt before we know it. We also say a temporary farewell to **2Lt Tom** 'waxy smooth legs' **Howes** who is leaving us for nine months to teach in rural Uganda. With £3000 to raise to get there we'll be glad to seen the back of his sponsorship forms, but thank him in advance for his amusing sponsored leg-wax. Unfortunately this cunning plan to (temporarily) avoid his mess bill, has been spotted.

87 (CITY OF NOTTINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)
Sqn Comd **Maj David Tomlinson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Nigel Caldicott**

Since the return from Annual Camp in Cornwall the Squadron has been kept busy. On Friday 15 October we deployed on Ex Autumn Belle 1, sending detachments to York and Bicester. The exercise went extremely well, fully achieving its aims. Since then the Squadron has participated in the Regimental field firing exercise at Warcop. (SEE BELOW!!!) and has continued to train towards Bounty. Two members of the Squadron were successful on the recent TCB held at Chilwell. Congratulations to **OCdt Adrian Matthews**, who has recently returned from Namibia, and **OCdt Simon Young**. Unfortunately **Simon Young** immediately fell foul of **SSgt Stan** ' Go Away I'm the SQMS' **Ross**, but we are sure that they will both soon get over it. Finally, very many congratulations to **SSgt Roy Broughton** on his recent marriage to **Carmel**. We wish them all the very best.

REGIMENTAL FIELD FIRING WEEKEND - WARCOP

With so many of our gladiators involved in running ranges, the Squadron started the Regimental Field Firing Weekend in need of inspiration, or indeed hidden talent. The OC, **Maj David Tomlinson,** was therefore press ganged into firing, which will teach him to do the rifle APWT 'for a bit of fun' (We all know he can't hit anything with his pistol!). It was also a chance for the new Squadron members, who recently transferred from 3 WFR to strut their (infantry) stuff. The bar the previous evening rang with cries of, 'But I was the Int Sgt!', 'More in the Sigs platoon, really,' and 'Did I tell you I was in the Battalion clothing stores?'

True to type, **LCpl** 'Twinkle-Toes' **Hammett** managed to complete the entire CQB range twice, avoiding both the stream, the mud and all the puddles. When challenged for his low score, he patiently explained that whilst he shoots rifles for a living (he tests weapons at Royal Ordnance, Nottingham as his day job), they are usually clamped in a vice! As befits the OC, he made a more stately procession up the range, as he discovered that if you hit the target on its first exposure, there was no need for 'dicking around in the undergrowth'. Mild mannered tech **LCpl Pete Magas** surprised everyone with his Warface, and aggressive bayonet play! Unfortunately, most of the lithe, fit, enthusiastic young soldiers still had a bit of work to do on their marksmanship principles. Only one of the newest members of the Squadron got through. **Sig** 'FNG' **Tester**, fresh from his recruits course, with a creditable score too, well done! One or two were not quite so young or fleet of foot. First amongst equals was **SSgt (SQMS) Stan** 'I'm too old for all this' **Ross.** This meant we needed a little assistance in the admin department, and **WO2 (RQMS) Gary Cundy** kindly delivered our lunch. Thanks RQ! So, the most overpaid infantry section of all time donned Combat Body Armour (When did we start using this then?) and Kevlar helmets (not steel anymore?). **Sgt H** 'It's MY fire team' **Hallam** was nominated as 2IC, and we commenced the 300m crawl through the obligatory water filled ditch, just as it came on to rain. The live attack was exhilarating, and quite a relief when it started. Afterwards, it was decided that in a close match, the fig 11s lost 2-1 on aggregate.

The now incredibly wet, and decidedly brown coloured section then arrived at the IBSP, very tight for time. In gathering rain and failing light **LCpl Pete Magas** put up an excellent score, which not only won him the prize for best IBSR shot, but helped the Squadron to win the event. Later that evening, we caught up with the remainder of the Squadron, which thanks to the patience of the conducting officer, **Maj Rod Lingard**,

everyone passed, including our resident New Zealander, **LCpl George** 'Not the same as the Steyr' **Stephenson** It also confirmed that the Squadron 'most in need of practice' shot was **Cpl Heather** 'Six Goes' **Blair**. This immediately allowed the retirement of the older and non the wiser, who retired to soak their arthritic limbs, and make sure that there were sufficient zimmer frames for the journey back from the bar. The now rejuvenated section battled on through the Small Arms; Trainer, Night shoot and Section in Defence shoots, under the watchful eye of newly appointed team manager, **Capt Ken** 'geographically embarrassed' **Rustidge**. The nomination for the 'most gopping rifle' contest was close, but the 'Jammiest Begger' went to the OC, who gallantly offered to lend his rifle to **Sgt Helen** 'I've got to clean this!' **Mountney** for the falling plate. Thanks to the hard work of all the range staff, it was an exciting and rewarding weekend. Whilst top honours went elsewhere (congratulations 46, watch out next year), we proved by taking one event that we are capable of winning, and have a good base to build on for the future.

Lt Col N. P. Harrison MBE (CO) presents SSAFA representatives Col R. J. Elliot TD DL and Col I. G. Norton TD JP DL with a cheque for £1250, raised during Ex Big Brew. There are flanked by two of the teams who took part

87 Squadron Shooting Team, Warcop 1999

RALEIGH INTERNATIONAL EXPEDITION TO NAMIBIA
28 JUNE 1999 - 9 SEPTEMBER 1999
OCdt Adrian Matthews 38 (City of Sheffield) Signal Regiment (V)

In the spring of 1998 I was selected to take part in a Raleigh International Expedition (formerly Operation Raleigh) to Namibia. My next step was to confront the challenge of fund raising the £3000 needed to secure my place and start to plan my vaccinations and purchase my kit (thanks to the help of 87 Sig Sqn this was made much easier). Little did I know what was in store for me as I prepared to embark on my first journey to the African continent. It was to be the greatest experience of my life. I was going to Namibia; a country six times the size of England and populated by the same number of people as we have students (1.6 million). Its climate is very hot throughout the day, but can fall dramatically to minus temperatures in the evening. I was brimming with excitement, for I was not only going to visit a new country, but work within its culture; alongside fellow venturers from all backgrounds in Britain, and Namibians that live on the bread line day in day out.

At 10am on 20 June, our South African Airways Boeing 747 touched down in Cape Town. The opening of the plane door signified two things; my first footsteps in the Southern Hemisphere, and a sudden realisation that Africa is not always blisteringly hot. Within seconds I was drenched to the bone, as we were pounded by a torrential rainstorm. I then ascended the stairs to the bus where I was confronted by a crisp air-conditioned wind. The result was a shivering first memory of Africa not much different to that of a British winter. The bus journey took us up the West Coast of South Africa, to its border with Namibia where the bus stopped and we climbed off. At this point I wasn't entirely sure what I should have been doing, as I did not know any of the staff who were there to guide us. I arrived at the entry point to Namibia with the other eighty or so venturers in the same uncertain position. I followed the queue and had my passport stamped as previous. At the end of the counter there was a man who looked British, but I hadn't seen before. I stopped and he asked me to hand over my passport. I promptly kicked up a fuss and demanded to see some ID. At that point, after attracting the attention of passport control and the others in the queue, I realised I had been arguing with the expedition leader, the man who was in ultimate control of my life for the next eleven weeks. I apologised and handed over my passport.

I arrived at field base just after witnessing an African sunrise over the surrounding mountains. it was a simple place with a large storeroom, large main hall, an office, basic shower and toilet facilities. The toilets were considerably different to the Royal Doulton we all know and love from back home. They consisted of a 3m deep pit with a concrete slab placed over the top; this slab had a little circular hole to allow the passage of waste material. It became an acquired art to use the 'long drop' toilets, and on a regular basis we would see people exiting with very red and sweaty faces, having adopted a far too strenuous position. Throughout the first day, the method for using the toilet was subject to a lot of thought and discussion, the conclusion being the squat; which gave a good sense of security and balance.

After adjusting our domestic skills, we were given a full briefing on the project sites available during the expedition. Progressively, everyone found out their allocation. I was delighted when my name was called out and I had been given the 'Mpungo school project'. There were a total of eight venturers, a project manager, a medic, two Namibian builders and a driver. Who would travel half the length of Namibia to make a start on a brick built school in a secluded village just south of the Angolan border. We were all eager, but before we could get on our way, we were to spend four days at field base training for the African bush. The eight of us were then shown to the tent, that would be our home for the four training days and the 21-day phase. The training consisted of basic first aid, basic signalling, camp craft, navigation, cultural awareness and drills to avoid being bitten by snakes or scorpions. The latter of which came in very handy on my second phase. The four days culminated in a practise trek over night, through the local hills. This gave me the opportunity to truly appreciate the beauty of the Southern Cross and surrounding stars. The moon was full and the stars bright, making visibility comparable to a crisp winter day in Britain. The other comparison being the temperature, which fell dramatically to cause a glistening frost on the surrounding hillside. After warming up and savouring the burnt porridge breakfast, we returned to field base, to make our final preparations before leaving.

At 5 o'clock the next morning we were up, loading the truck that would carry our supplies and us for the next day and a half. I sat on the truck for hours staring into the wilderness and contemplating what lay ahead, for at this point I had only experienced westernised Namibia; Namibia South of the vet line. At dusk that evening, after seeing endless straight roads that appeared to carry on forever, the vehicle stopped. We had arrived at the vet line. A fence that stretches for hundreds of miles from east to west, put in place during the South African occupation, and designed to keep diseased cattle of the North, away from healthy cattle in the South. The line also signifies a change from brick white washed homes with electricity and sanitation, to traditional African homes, that consist of straw huts with no power supply and near non-existent sanitation. We passed through the military checkpoint with no problems and immediately I saw 'the real Africa'. The contrast was amazing, we had seen housing with satellite dishes and telephones on one side, and within 100yds there were families cooking on open fires and walking around bare foot. The sun went down and we arrived at a campsite that would be our home for the night. The next day I was to arrive at the school site where I would make my first contact with people of the Ruquangali tribe.

A week before arrival the foundations had been marked out, which gave us confidence to start straight away. We had been digging for around fifteen minutes when a large crowd of locals came over to the site, initially there

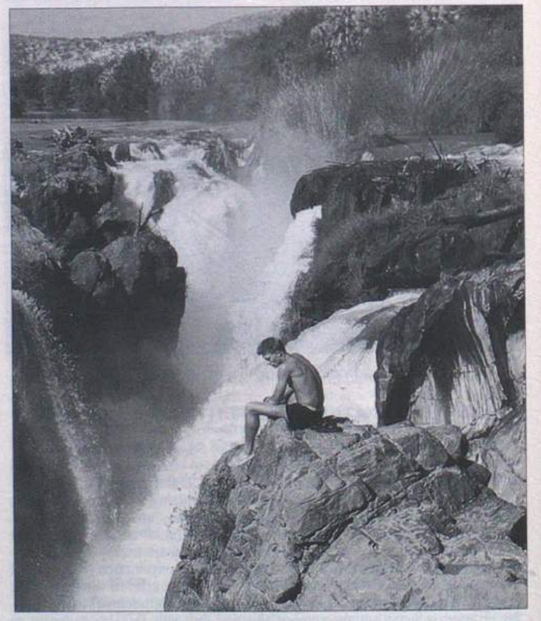
was a very strange feeling as they stood around us, but soon we realised why they were there. After taking possession of our tools, they proceeded to dig frantically in rotation with us, for the next four and a half hours, after which we completed the foundations of the school. This was the furthest ahead any school project had been after the first day, and it was mainly thanks to the community spirit of the locals. The group of us continued the building until the fifth course of bricks had been laid; it was then left for the other phases to finish off over the eleven-week period. Over all the school had progressed in leaps and bounds with us succeeding our three-week goals by far. By completing the phase ahead of schedule, we were able to mix with the community more, this came in the form of going to a local church, teaching the children who would benefit from the school and having a discussion with the village head people. The school was finally completed and opened by the British High Commissioner, after three phases and several cases of malaria, none of which occurred on my phase.

I returned to the change over point, once again on the back of the truck. Unfortunately the journey was marred by a break down that left the truck stranded for 24 hours, it also meant that we were late, and would have to leave after being back for only four hours. Before I knew it I was with a new group of people, on a new phase. I was travelling this time in Land Rovers up to the far North Western border of Namibia, to trek through the Baynes Mountains that run parallel with the Kunene river and the Angolan border. For seventeen days we would be self-sufficient in the secluded Himba region of Namibia. The initial Land Rover journey took us to a town called Epuwo, which was to be the last major stop off point before arrival in the Baynes. Our first job was to allocate food and team kit; this came as a surprise to many of the group as they had never carried substantial weight before. The complaints prompted an assessment of all personal kit, with the aim of ensuring no extra weight was to be carried. At this point my one luxury for the phase was discovered, a bottle of Aqua Di Gio, the rest of the group were shocked, but saw the error of their ways on realising the benefits of smelling fine. It became a popular ritual for the bottle to be passed around after washing. Once all the kit was allocated and packed ready, we set off for the final 6-hour leg, this involved three hours of tarmac road and then three hours of harsh terrain that even the Land Rovers struggled with. We arrived at the drop off point, unloaded our kit and watched the Land Rover return to Epuwo. At this point I felt the sudden realisation that we were in the middle of nowhere and on our own, or so I thought. I looked around and saw two Himba women standing behind me, this was my first encounter and came as quite a shock. The Women in the Himba tribe wear very little and paint their bodies with a blend of red ochre and animal fat, which gives them quite a striking appearance. The two ladies sat about 50 metres away watching us with deep inquisition as we ate our lunch. We were later informed that they were confused by the amount of kit we had, because when they walk across the hills they carry a small bundle of possessions and nothing else. We had three main goals over the trekking period. The first was to visit the hidden gorge, the second to spend an evening on top of a mountain and finally to reach Epupa falls in our allotted time.

After trekking for five days we reached the gorge, From the outside it appeared to be a relatively insignificant tall crack in the rock, but on further investigation we found a deep gorge approximately 4m wide and increasing to about 80m high. We spent a whole day exploring the rock pools within, initially being very weary of creepy crawlies but finally losing our fears and swimming straight through. We were running out of time and my friend **Rhys** and I, ran on ahead to see how far we could get, we came to a clearing where the sun broke down on hundreds of loose boulders under foot. I ran forwards and must have rocked a boulder with a snake underneath, because soon after I heard **Rhys'** cry tell me to stop. I was at the end of the clearing with no where to go and a snake weaving its way towards me, the only thing to do was walk calmly past the snake on the opposite side of the clearing. After having the fright of my life I sprinted back to where the others were, where with the help of a snake recognition book, pinpointed the 'Zebra snake' to be my enemy. We left the gorge and started our journey back along the banks of the Kunene, heading for Epupa. The trek took several days and tested the teams stamina and navigational skills, as we fell victim to maps, which seemed to portray a different set of hills to those we were walking on. Despite this we managed to fit in a night on a mountain and reach Epupa falls with time to spare. Epupa falls are Namibia's equivalent to Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe, and are created at point along the Kunene where hundreds of minor tributaries superimpose and create spectacular lush scenery, with picturesque waterfalls. We spent two days at the falls recovering from our exploits and stocking up on a much needed tan.

Inevitably the time came when we had to leave our veritable paradise and make for the next change-over. It was to be a much more relaxed affair this time with only a 12-hour delay due to the truck breaking down. Despite this I arrived at change over, amazed at how the time had flown by and how there was only three and a half weeks left to the end of expedition. There was no delay in finding out our new project groups; I was to be working with the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF). CCF is a programme set up as a non-profit, non-governmental organisation, which aims to ensure the long-term survival of the Cheetah and its ecosystem. CCF had kindly lent Raleigh the buildings used at changeover; thus the journey to our new site took only fifteen minutes. For the first week we would be involved in the completion and building of game hides started in the previous phases. The first week proved very successful, and for our hard work CCF inviting us to watch Chewbaaka, the ambassador Cheetah run, take part in a night game drive, feed the captive cheetahs and leopard and take part in their annual 24 hour game count. Part of the CCF programme is related to the biology of the Cheetah population and involves the capture of animals, which are tagged and a sample of their genes taken for further research. Our role in this involved the setting of traps and positioning of bait, unfortunately during our time there they were unsuccessful and I didn't get to experience any truly wild Cheetahs. The final week meant a move to the 'Wilderness Camp', CC17's education centre where school children are sent to learn about the Cheetah. To try and abolish a culture of indiscriminate killing of animals on farmlands, which has been a major influencing factor in the decline of their species. The Camp was situated at the base of the Waterberg plateaux, a natural game reserve containing a huge diversity of animals, from Guinea Fowl to Rhinos. Our task was to design and build a long term toilet, and to make it blend with the surrounding environment. The construction of the toilet itself was fairly easy, but the difficulties began when we started to camouflage. We were cementing large boulders to the outside of the walls; this gave a natural feel to the project, but also increased the manual labour. As a result we were unable to complete the project on time, luckily CCF is working with Raleigh on the next expedition and intend to complete it then. On the morning we were due to leave the group and I trekked to the top of the Waterberg plateau, where for the next four hours we went Rhino trekking and played baseball with Rhino poo. Unfortunately we did not see any Rhino, but did culminate the expedition with a fantastic view across the plateaux and CCF game reserve.

MY experiences with Raleigh have been second to none, if you are between 17 and 25 you too could take part as a venturer (over 25's can take pail as staff members) simply ring Raleigh International on 0171 371 8585 or e-mail: info@raleigh.org.uk. for more information.



OCdt Matthews sitting on the edge of Epupa Falls, Namibia, August 1999

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

4TH ARMOURED BRIGADE HEAQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

Sqn Comd **Maj A. H. Campbell-Black**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D. W. Craig**

PAPA TROOP - *by Sigs Fraiser Anderson and Glyn Hayes*
Tp Comd **2Lt Dave Hill**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Paul Davis**

On return from Kosovo the Troop has enjoyed (maybe too much!) four weeks leave. When we eventually got back to the garages it was clear there was a lot of work to do. As ever there are a lot of comings and goings. Firstly, we offer a warm welcome to **SSgt Paul Davis**, his wife **Tracy** and family, **Cpl Charlie Henson**, **Sig Andy Yates** and **Sig Lucy Corlette** we hope you enjoy your time in Papa Tp. Unfortunately there are some goodbyes too. Farewells to **SSgt Norm Finnegan**, his wife **Heike** and son **Jason**, **Cpl Vinnie Walsh** and **Cpl** 'Woz' **Wright** congratulations to you and your wife **Denise** on the birth of your daughter **Megan**. Best of luck to you all at your new units. The Troop has had a few promotions too, six altogether you know who you are lads a big well done. A BIG congratulations to **Cpl Henson** and his new wife **Debbie** and to **LCpl Scott Rose** and his new wife **Kelly**.

SUPPORT TROOP - *by Cpl Taylor*
Tp Comd **Capt (QM) Smith**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Paul Buckley**

Since the Squadron return from Op Agricola we have been on slow turnaround, followed by a very quick, nectic and rushed re-fit, first lines and PRE programme, and have second line and RSIT to look forward to after Christmas!! There have been a number of changes to the Troop since the last publication. The Tech workshops have welcomed **Cpl Daz Offord, Sig** 'Haggis' **Armstrong** and **Sig** 'Morph the Dwarf' **Murphy**. The QM's Dept welcome **Sig Burdon** who has wasted no time becoming a valued member of Club 31s and **Sig McStravock**. New to the MT are **LCpl** 'I'm a 'Womanising dude' **Molden, Sig** 'Butch' **Slingsby, Sig** 'Maddog' **Murdoch, Sig** 'Billy' **Conley** and **LCpl Col Twells**. Leaving the Troop are **Sigs Frank** and **Stein**, the workshops very own combat goldfish who remained in Kosovo courtesy of 1 R IRISH. We also say farewell to **Sgt Dave** 'Courses' **Covey** who will be missed not so much for his technical skill, but for his broad knowledge of rugby songs after a few quiet beverages. He's off to Naples where he still won't have to work, but at least he won't have to fake it! Also leaving are **Sig** 'Dickie' **Dyer**, no-one will miss his PT sessions, but we still wish him all the best with his Spanish lessons in Civ Div. All in all it's been a thankfully quiet few months in Osnabruck by Corps standards, only in the last few weeks have we got back to our usual state of overwork. So much for having it easy when you return from an operational tour - maybe there'll be time for a rest when we go to Bosnia in June!!

43 BERNER DISTANZMARCH–4 DECEMBER 1999
by Sig Fraiser Anderson

After last years success in the Berner March the Squadron decided to send another team of 12, with a lucky six members on a 're-show' from last year. It was clear from our arrival in Lyss that there was a lot more British interest than last year, with teams sent from 16 different units. Because of the late start to the competition the team decided to attempt a 41km route. 16 Sig Regt were competing at this distance too and proved to be tough opposition, but it was clear from the start that we were the team setting the pace. A mix of wet and windy weather, large hills and crazy Swiss drivers slowed the team a little but we still managed to finish in a respectable 5h 25min. It could have been even longer if it weren't for **Sgt** 'Spike' **Hughes'** accurate map reading, route planning and encouragement. Watch out on the Lanyard Trophy!!

1 (ROYAL BUCKINGHAMSHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS)

Sqn Comd **Maj David Raleigh**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Dave Scott**

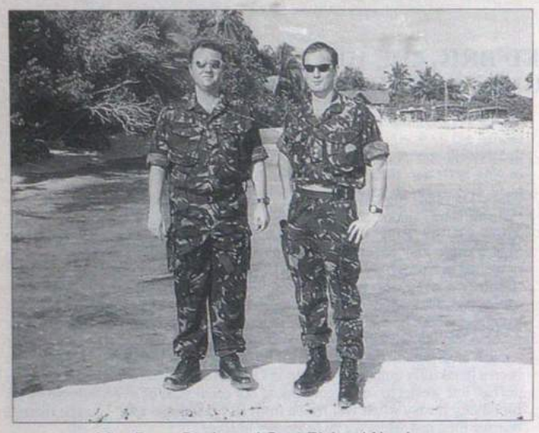
Cpl (now Sgt) Trevor Jakeman and his temperamental transmitter truck in Cyprus

The last months of the millennium were relatively settled ones for Bletchley's Special Communicators. We have bid farewell to **Cpl Jason Trimmer**, recently returned from an 18-month tour as 'Our man in Cyprus'. The Squadron also dined out **Maj Hugh Bardell**. His tour as SO2 Special Comms has seen great advances for the Squadron, and we wish him all the best for his next tour in Kathmandu, and we all look forward to visiting you, **Hugh**! Promotions have again been rife, with **LCpls** 'Scouse' **Hardy, Don Shore, Stu Penman, Simon Hodgson** and **Wayne Miller** all getting a second stripe. For the TA, congratulations go to newly promoted **Sgt Trevor Jakeman, Cpls Al Shrewsbury** and **Pete Litchfield**, and **LCpls Paul Chambers, Gite Madoodaloodal** and **Stu Adams**.

The Squadron's publicity machine was in overdrive in November, with Anglia TV running a mini-series of new slots about Ex Runnel Stone. Starring **WO2 (SSM) Dave Scott**, as Milton Keynes' 'Painter and Decorator with a Difference', it should help the TA recruiting effort and allow the Regular operators to spice up the recruiting video when they get a spare minute.

LCpls Lee Kemp and 'Smudge' **Smith** returned from Ex Saffron Sands, in Jordan, not looking very brown it has to be said. They have both since deployed on brief operational tours. Not taking life so seriously, **Capt Richard Newhouse** (OpsO), and **SSgt** 'Deano' **Poole** (Deputy Acting Asst OpsO) conducted an arduous recce of Maldives, Thailand and Singapore, for the next large overseas deployment in March. Apparently it rained a lot, but they at least returned with sun-tans!

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS



SSgt Dean Poole and Capt Richard Newhouse on a tough recce in the Maldives

GLOBAL LYNX 2 (SEPTEMBER 1999) - *by Sgt Candy Brunyee*

September saw the second camp of the year for the squadron. Global Lynx 2 was based out of Cyprus and was used to test the readiness of the Squadron to fulfil its obligations. The mobile transmit and receive cabins were already *in situ* and it made a pleasant change to fly on a 'proper Flight' as opposed to the transport flight we have learnt to know and love. When we arrived the weather was still extremely hot, particularly as we were having a cold spell in the UK and we all started downing gallons of water as we had all been warmed of the perils of heat exhaustion. Morale improved after the alcohol free flight; in an attempt to keep the seniors cool one of the hire cars was dispatched to the airport, only the OpsO locked the keys into the boot.

The Exercise started the next day and we spent all day out in the heat – which we were not used to as we were all suffering from dehydration - setting up antenna fields, putting masts up and down and resting for long periods in the shade and of course drinking gallons. Comms started the next day and schedules were run in conjunction with training as some of us had limited experience on some of the kit and lessons were given on a variety of interesting and unassociated subjects. **Sig Nick Vernon** is responsible for the snapping of the cable on the islands Foden and great fun was had from trying to drive a truck with more gears than the five we use at home. During the week some of the more daring had the opportunity to do a tandem skydive – it takes all sorts. All reported how fantastic it was and how they would love to do it again – perhaps they landed on their heads!! At the end of the week a barbecue was hosted by 259 Sig Sqn. The food was great and the party went on for hours.

R&R was spent at Waterworld and Nisi beach. **SSgt (FofS) Ted Heath** is a Diving Instructor and a try dive was arranged for those who were interested. **Nick Vernon**, a non-swimmer (OK so he can do at least five strokes) thought this was a fantastic opportunity so in he went and after a few false starts he realised you can breathe under water and he was away. A great time was had by all and the Squadron are looking forward to New Years Eve when they could be putting into practice everything learnt on Global Lynx 1 and 2; alternatively they could be due for a winter sun holiday.

BASKETBALL

ROYAL SIGNALS BASKETBALL
(24 OCTOBER – 5 NOVEMBER 1999)
INTERCORPS CHAMPIONSHIPS 1– 5 NOVEMBER 1999

Each year the Corps enters two male teams and one female team in the Inter-Corps Basketball Championships, which take place in Grantham during the first week in November. This is the Army's festival of Basketball where over 200 players from across the Army make the most of the opportunity to let off steam. As co-founders, the Royal Signals have a particularly proud association with this event. In the 70's the Royal Signals and REME took part in an annual challenge match, mainly because the bulk of the army players at that time came from these two Corps. In 1986 H. Samuels the jewellers sponsored the now eagerly contested for, H. Samuels trophy, and the number of teams contesting in this annual challenge increased with the addition of PT Corps, Army Catering Corps and the Royal Corps of Transport. As the profile of the sport expanded within the army so did the tournament. A second division was introduced in 1997 to cater for the smaller Corps and to develop the Division One players of the future. In the inaugural year it was won by Royal Signals. The Ladies Division was introduced the following year and now over 20 teams compete for the annual bragging rights as Champions of their division.

In August this year 40 plus letters were distributed to all known players. From the lack of response it became evident very early that many of our experienced players would not be available, either due to work commitments or because of pressure from her/him indoors who should be obeyed (note the PC in this day and age). At the same time as distributing letters a venue for a weeks' training prior to the tournament was being sought. Why a training week prior to the tournament? Unlike other team sports basketball requires players to be familiar with each others strengths and weaknesses, before being capable of going on to court as a cohesive unit and compete. As our Corps unlike others, do not pool their basketball players, the weeks training is an essential requirement. Each year the Corps commitments increase worldwide and this is exacerbated by the manpower shortage within units. This is not an unknown fact, but what is unknown is the quality of players the Corps has! The Corps has undoubtedly the best individual players in the army, the problem we have is that these players have yet to come together at the same time. It would be interesting, if one year we could actually see what the Corps could achieve with all its talent on display at the Intercorps tournament, I know that we could seriously ruffle some of the other Corps feathers. 1999 presented a few extra planning headaches than normal. Not only was there going to be a lack of experience turning out, but there was also a delay in confirmation of a training venue. This was overcome by dividing the training into two periods. The first period of training was held, at RSA Larkhill, by kind permission of the Commanding Officer Royal School of Artillery. The second was held in London by kind permission of the Officer Commanding 238 Sig Sqn, **Maj S. Hunt**. On behalf of all players and coaching staff many thanks.

All available players gathered at Larkhill on Sunday 24 October to commence training. 11 ladies and 15 men turned up for the first day of training these numbers soon reduced with the loss of **Sig** 'Chloe' **Cowan** to a torn knee cartilage (get well and strong see you next year). Shortly after her injury, **Cpl** 'Jonah' **Jones** was sent to hospital with an infection (the team does not want to see that weeping feature again). At the same time as losing people to injury we also lost two of the male players to training requirements at short notice. Things were starting to become very frustrating. Training carried on and we were determined to enter two male teams and one female team even if it meant placing six players in each of the male teams. But as with all optimists, the coaching staff was confident that things would be all right on the day.

Enter our guardian angel.....The Corps OIC **Col Hadfield**, Commander Royal School of Signals, took time from his extremely busy schedule to pay us a visit at Larkhill, which was most appreciated by all those present. The question from the Colonel when he arrived was, 'Is there anything I can do to help?' Having discussed our player problem, a few phone calls were made by the Colonel, and players appeared, bolstering the dwindling numbers. With the training completed at Larkhill, all players travelled to Chelsea barracks in London for the final three days of training, before moving north to Grantham like migrating geese. Grantham greeted us with its normal icy chill, nevertheless **Sgt Nick** 'Don't you phone me again for help' **Turner** done us proud with our accommodation arrangements, 'Good on ya **Nick**.' After settling into our accommodation those players who arrived late were introduced to the other players. Those players included, the corps secretary and the Div 2 teams trump card for later in the week, **Maj Grant, Sgt** 'Taff I'm only here because my brother's not' **Ceaser,** and for the ladies, **LCpl** 'Vicki' **Moran** and **Cpl Sheryl Richardson**. Sunday evening saw everyone quite subdued and obviously contemplating the week's tournament ahead.

Monday saw losses for all the teams, which gave everyone a wake up call, and the sudden realisation that you have got to have heart at this level if you want to compete and be a contender. After an enjoyable evening Tuesday morning saw all teams full of confidence. This renewed confidence was seen by the results that were achieved that day. Wednesday saw mixed fortunes, the Div 1 team lost but the ladies and Div 2 teams won their games securing places in their respective semi-finals. Div 2 team semi-final was to be played later that day and the incentive to win was, a rest day. Our semi-finalists were the Corps old adversaries, the REME. This was a hard physical game in which the REME jumped to an early lead which they held onto for the first half. But to the delight of **Cpl Steve Piper** the coach of the Div 2 team, they managed to fight and claw there way back in the second half to win the game, with some last minute heroics by all players, by five points. They were through to the final. That evening the annual corps teams meal was held at the Chicago rock café, this is held to celebrate the achievements of the past two weeks however good or bad. All present agreed that the food was excellent and of outrageous proportion, this was highlighted by the fact that **Sig Mick Hogarth** was unable to finish his bucket of hot wings, however he did manage to finish **LCpl Jules Dolan**'s pasta. The ladies had two games to play Thursday, both against the PT Corps. The first was to determine league position and to make a statement and the second was in the semi-final and scheduled for late afternoon. The ladies were expected to be tired after their game earlier that day but to the surprise of the PT Corps, they were wrong, our ladies came out strong and soon acquired a commanding lead which they never lost. The Corps second team to a final. Even though the Div 1 team did not make it through the league, it is worth commenting on the effort that all players showed, especially with the lack of numbers and injuries that were picked up early into the tournament itself.

Finals day arrived, the ladies and the Div 2 teams tipped off at the same time, which meant our Div 1 team was divided between the two courts supporting the Corps. The ladies coach **WO1 (FofS) Nev Smikle** was playing for the Div 2 team, therefore the coaching duties for the ladies fell to **Mick Hogarth**. The ladies fought hard but were unlucky and finished runners up to the RLC. The Div 2 teams opponents were the Royal Artillery who earlier that week had beaten our team by 30 points, but this was a new game with different stakes and at the final whistle the Div 2 team had beaten the RA by two points. This tournament gave our Corps mixed results, which covered all the emotional aspects of competition, from not reaching the final, to playing in the final and becoming runners up, to winning a final and being division champions. All these highs and lows were experienced by all players regardless of which division they were competing in and this Esprit de Corps, displayed by all players was the envy of all that looked on. As coach I would like to thank all players for their effort and support over the training and tournament weeks and for the team spirit that was displayed on all occasions. Keep fit over this next year and pencil in the following provisional dates, 22 October – 3 November 2000.

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

3 (UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISIONAL HEADQUARTERS & SIGNAL REGIMENT

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS
CO **Lt Col N. D. Couch**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) G. J. Stoker MBE**

RHQ heaves a huge sigh of relief on the posting on promotion of the Regimental Second in Command, **Maj Adam Ewell** - good luck at Corsham, Tanglefoot the terrier will be sorely missed. Also off on posting is the Ops Officer, **Capt Jason Gunning,** who is going to HQ LAND Command to play even more rugby and the RAO **Maj Ray Wells AGC** who is off to Innesworth.

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj R. J. Quinlan**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) J. McNaught**

Once again the time has come to reflect upon another busy year in the Squadron. There is much that can be mentioned what with busy Divisional Exercises and a whole host of overseas operational, and training, commitments. The biggest feature of the year, however, has been the safe return of a sizeable proportion of the Squadron from Operations in Bosnia and Kosovo, this has helped the Squadron gel for next year's busy Exercise season and has allowed for a raise in morale as soldiers rejoin their families for Christmas.

SHQ has seen many comings and goings this year, recently we welcome **LCpl Wendy Nicholls** as the new Sqn Clerk and **Sgt Max** 'Bros Boy' **Challis** who joins us in the technical workshops. We hope you both enjoy your time with the Squadron. The Squadron would also like to extend its best wishes to **Sig Lee Custance** on his forthcoming wedding in early January, we hope you and **Claire** both have a wonderful day. On a side note we would also request that **Capt Eric** 'Bad Taste' **Warren** refrain from wearing any pink items of clothing to future Squadron social events!

OVERLOON TROOP
Tp Comd **2LT K. J. Grice**
Tp SSgt **SSgt D . W. Oliver**

The account of Overloon Tp begins with the emphasis on the word *flexibility*. Without such a state of mind, little can be achieved, as has been noted over the past months. The Troop has seen much change, the largest of which involved Waterloo personnel moving back to that Troop, giving 202 Sqn three Troops once again. As the Divisional Armoured Main Troop, we enjoyed much attention around a Staff College Demo on Salisbury Plain, and were also fortunate to be given relative freedom on a Troop level Exercise after that. Towards the latter part of the year, a period of consolidation has been the theme for preparation for next year's busy Exercise phase.

Moving to more of a G1 theme, the Troop has seen many arrive, leave and change marital status. We welcome **SSgt Oliver** and his wife **Annette** from 14 Sig Regt. **Staff Oliver**'s two large dogs, **Dylan** and **Dan** met the Troop first and their ferocious barking ensured that the Troops met the new Troop Staff Sergeant in good working order! Other welcomes include **Cpl Fazackerley** and **LCpl Evans** who was not here long before being selected for Corporal. Welcome to **LCpl Irwin** who deserves congratulations for being selected for promotion to Corporal. **LCpl Olejnik** also deserves welcome and congratulations upon getting married to **Louise** very recently. We welcome back from Kosovo **Sig Bryant** , but bid farewell to **LCpl Watts** who moves to 16 Air Assault Brigade and **Sig Jackson** who leaves the Army. **Sig Hills** also moves on promotion and is looking forward to life in York at 2 Sig Regt. **Sig Thompson** moves to Cyprus after back to back tours in the Balkans. Further congratulations are due to **LCpl Akkulugadu** who deservedly picked up his second tape, and to **Sigs Hartell** and **Taylor** who pick up their first tape. Well Done.

Finally, to mention two further marriages that have taken place recently. **Sig Knowles** nee **Greenhalgh** and her new husband **LCpl Carl Knowles** of 222 Sig Sqn managed to juggle a wedding date around numerous other commitments, as did **LCpl** 'Sid' **Marsh** and his new wife **Sig** 'Sal' **Marsh** nee **Griffiths**. Longevity and prosperity to all concerned.

BUSSACO TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt P Simpson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt P Howson**

Greetings to **Sig Stevenson**, the Troop's first lady liney and **LCpl** 'Rocky' **Tait**, who was plucked out for the novice boxing team the second he came through the gates. Also, fresh from the factory are **LCpl Sellings** and **Sig Cottrell** – so new they don't even have nicknames yet. We have just acquired **LCpl** 'Don't call me Fruity' **Fielding** who comes to us from 30 Sigs, and is desperate to lose his epithet. No luck there then. Replacing **Sgt** 'Nice Shirt' **Cheesman**, the Tech Workshop takes on **Sgt** 'Magellan' **Challis**, whose extended 'ramblings' on the Bulford prairies have taken the heat off the squadron subalterns for a while. Rumours that he is applying for a job with Ordnance Survey are entirely groundless and untrue. Congratulations go to **Cpls** 'Bing' **Crosby**, **Clark** and **Browne**, and **LCpl Marchant** on their recent promotions.

WATERLOO TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt D. Jackson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt A. Wringe**

We start with our comings and goings which has seen quite a change to the Troop. Goodbye to **Sgt Jim Watt** who goes off to be a Yeoman of Signals without ever training to be one, and **LCpl** 'Bomber' **Lancaster** who goes off to do P Company. Good luck from the Troop, the ladies from Sticky Carpets will miss you both. Hello to **Sgt** 'Nav' **Elliot** who is

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

welcomed into the armour garages, he won't have to argue his way past any bouncers to get in here! With an average turnout of ten soldiers a day we have come a long way from last month and we only need to 'borrow' a few more pieces of equipment to get back on the road. We have just finished a four day Exercise which introduced the new members of the Troop to a 'Staff Officer'. We are sure the *Titanic* did not have as many luxuries, lets hope the Div HQ does not suffer the same fate!

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj W. E. H. Adsett**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) S. T. Archer**

MONS TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Olly Gardner**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Sean Fairfield**

After a leave period that seemed all too short, we arrived back and prepared for the next period of work. **SSgt Sean Fairfield**, started to plan functions for the Sgts' Mess, as he'd just been officially told he was to be the PEC, (**SSgt Steve Bartleet,** mentioned how he'd never managed to do the job and how he'd got away with it). So it was a great shock to **SSgt Fairfield**, when he was informed that he was selected to go to Egypt on Ex Bright Star as the 1 Recce Bde Yeoman of Signals. However, it was a far greater shock for **SSgt Steve Bartleet** to find out that he was to be the new PEC. It then seemed that all around people were picking up the pieces for absent personnel, none more so than both **Sgt John Batts** and **Sgt Mandy Korchel**. **Sgt John Batts**, took a group on Ex Topham hat, organised the Communications for the Kiwi Half Marathon and had the staff college demo and the Troop rebuild on the return from Kosovo to contend with. **Sgt Mandy Korchel** had the job of ensuring all returned safe as the leader of the Troop deployed to Kosovo. So it was with some relief when all returned to normality.

Festive wishes go to all members of the troop still deployed in Kosovo (**Sigs Draper, Harley, Hart** and **Pollard**). Fond Farewells go to **Cpl Preece** on his posting to 29 Comdo Bde on promotion to Sergeant: **Sig McLuckie** on posting to HQ NI: **Sig Kelly Maclean** on her posting to 30 Sig Regt (because she needs to do more tours). Special farewells go to **Sig** 'PC PLOD' **Price** on leaving the service to serve with the Cardiff police force and to **Sig Witchell** on his move to 'Civvy street'. Goodbye to the ship jumpers that have run over to Inkerman Tp **Sigs Kerridge** and **Wardley**. Welcomes to all those from Cambrai Tp **Cpl Davies-Morris, LCpls Ackers, Evans, Whenman, Sigs Buddle, Hodge, Kerrigan, Wood.** Welcome back to **Sig Tammy Thompson**. Welcomes to the fresh from the factory crowd **Sigs Evans, Cadman, Blackman** and **Blake**.

INKERMAN TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Irwin**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Bartleet**

The last couple of months has been a busy period for the Troop with a Troop shake out exercise, turning vehicles around returning form Kosovo, providing two-thirds of the Squadron boxing team and second lines. Early October saw the Troop deploy out onto Salisbury Plain for three days training to iron out det drills and moulding new RRB crews together. Gone are the days of RRBs sitting still for the duration of the exercise, under the watchful eyes of **Lt** 'Gunny' **Irwin, SSgt** 'Lets move them again' **Bartleet, Sgt** 'Bullet' **Elliott** and **Cpl Phil Oulton**, the Troop was tested in navigation, setting up dets , comms drills and basic military skills in the field.

The Troop is poised to set up its own body guard department following the success of the Troop members in the recent inter Squadron boxing. Well done to **Lt Gary Irwin, LCpl Jim Kemp** and **Sig Dave Durward** who all won in their weights in the finals. Those that did not make the finals or lost on the night well done for trying and better luck next time. A special mention to **Sig Laura Best** and **Sig Sam Hunt** who gave it their best in the female bouts.

Congratulations to **Sig Steph Catney, Sig Julie Cornfield, Sig Dave Marshall, Sig Stuart Stephen** and **Sig Sam Hall** on their recent selection to Lance Corporal . Farewell to **Sig Clint Brady** and **Sig Steve Keogh** who go off to pastures new in Civvy street. The Troop would also like to say Farewell to the SQMS, **SSgt Chris Lloyd** (formerly Inkerman Tp) on promotion to Warrant Officer class 2 with a posting to Bosnia for good measure. Finally, hellos to **LCpl Linzi Fielding, LCpl Tony Richardson** and **Sig Mick Davies** who all arrive on posting. Also all those that have joined the Troop (too many to mention) from other Troops within the Squadron following a reshuffle and the demise of Cambrai Tp as an Operators' Troop.

COAST TO COAST WALK 05-13 OCTOBER 1999

There was a sea mist rolling over the camp the morning that seven intrepid walkers from 206 Sig Sqn, 3 UK Div set off on the 192 mile 'Classic' coast to coast walk from St Bees head in Cumbria to Robin Hood's Bay in Yorkshire. The team consisted of **SSM Archer** otherwise known as **Uncle Archy, Cpl Woodrow** (Woodland), **Cpl Rawlyk** (Raw), **Sig Green** (Bluey), **Sig Sutton** (Big fella), **Sig Evans** (Stick) and then **Sig Molyneux** (Why) as in 'Why did we do it?'

The walk took us from the Irish Sea through Cumbria into the Yorkshire dales and then the Yorkshire Moors ending with the North Sea. It usually takes people 12-13 days to complete but we were averaging about 21 miles a day and completed it in nine days. Just one of the beautiful scenes seen on our walk was Ennerdale Water on the second day. We had a brief stop here because there is a famous rock in the shape of a chair. Other well known sites seen on the walk were Helvellyn, the abbey near Kirby Stephen, Nine Standards Rigg, Richmond Castle, the hermitage (A large hollowed out rock which is centuries old) and then Robin Hood's Bay. There are many public houses along the route and many of them have visitor books for coast to coasters. During the season walkers provide the majority of the business along the route, so pubs, cafes and campsites are all pleased to see you. Two pubs I would recommend are the White Swan in Danby Wiske and the Lion Inn just after Farndale Moor. The hardest section of the walk for me was day seven, from Catterick Bridge to Ingleby Cross. The terrain that day was not that bad, but after seven continuous days of hiking carrying our full packs the pain eventually catches up to you. Injuries were becoming harder to withstand and morale was getting low. We knew that there was less than 50 miles to go when we eventually camped that night and everyone began to cheer up. I think that from this moment onwards the team wanted more than anything to complete the rest of the walk, as fast as we could. We soon hit the coast on the ninth day and the sight of Robin Hood's Bay was breathtaking. I then remembered all those days ago when seven of us started at St Bee's Head and the sea mist covered us. Well there was certainly no mist on the last day, it was blue skies all around and the bay looked very inviting indeed. Unfortunately only five of us finished the walk and these are their names: **Stu Archer, Lee Woodrow, Phil Rawlyk, Mic Sutton**, and **Ed Green**.

At last we all had that well deserved pint in the pub in Robin Hood's Bay. We talked and laughed over the stories of the past nine days and congratulated each other on the achievement. Well done and Thankyou to all that took part in the 206 Signal Squadron Coast to Coast walk 1999.

EXERCISE GHENGIS IRON - MONGOLIA

Ex Ghengis Iron was a trekking expedition to Mongolia. The original idea was **Capt Alex Fennel**'s who is now at 30 Sig Regt. Thus, it was passed onto **Capt Rich Odling** to continue the planning and lead the expedition.

There were clear and obvious problems with travel to what is still one of the most remote countries in the world. Flights being the most obvious, Air China not necessarily being the airline of choice. Operational deployments took their toll on the Regiment and thus it was only very close to departure that the expedition nominal roll was confirmed. This in itself produced further problems in obtaining last minute visas. However, the expedition left Bulford 3 October and after a 10-hour flight to Beijing we then had a 12-hr stopover which provided an opportunity to take in Tianamen Square. It was then a quick 2-hr flight to Ulaan Bataar. After a day spent sorting out the rest of our travel plans. We left in our minibus to the Terelj National Park about 60km North of Ulaan Bataar for a 2-day acclimatisation expedition. This went well and a few teething problems with equipment were soon ironed out and we returned to Ulaan Bataar.

Poor weather in the West of the country meant the original plans had to be changed and we headed North towards the Lake Hovsgol National Park. Difficulties with Internal flights meant that we had a 3-day drive to get to our location. Fortunately our minibus came with a driver, **Miga** who for our entire trip remained confident that the minibus would start whatever the temperature and that we would find a petrol station in time despite our frequent misgivings. The drive was generally across wide open desert-like plains, Wild camels and horses were frequently along the route. The roads consisted of dirt tracks and towns came along approximately every 24 hours. Once in the town of Hovsgol we spent the night in a traditional German Camp and were fed by the German owners, several members of the team decided that it was better to eat what was left of their stocks from home. Early the following morning we set off for our base camp further up the lake.

Our trekking consisted of five day walks from the base camp into the surrounding mountains. The scenery was absolutely fantastic in all directions and it was possible to see Siberia only a few miles to the North. The weather was generally extremely cold, rarely getting above freezing particularly at night. We were lucky in that the snow never got as low as the base camp or Ulaan Bataar whilst we were there however, we encountered plenty as we went higher. In general the skies were

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

completely clear allowing us to make the most of the incredible views available. At the end of our stay in Hovsgol we were all glad of the relative luxury of a night in the German Camp, which although generally colder was more comfortable than our tents. Following the drive back we had one further night in Ulaan Bataar before our flight to Beijing and 36hrs R and R, during which most of us visited the Great Wall of China.

Ex Ghengis Iron
Cpl Corber, Capt Odling, Sig Elston, Sig Kitchen, Sig Lewis, Sig Patterson, Sig Alcock, LCpl Coates

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj R. S. Appleton**
SSM **WO2 F. Roberts**

OMAN TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Imogen Mulholland**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Andy Hayler**

Summer Block Leave now seems a very long time ago, particularly after troop level exercises, a squadron exercise and a Battlecamp (not that the Tp OC would know as most of her time was spent in Egypt!). However, the Troop has gone from strength to strength as Squadron personnel return from the four winds, eager to get back to Bulford. On the 'pat on the back' front, welcome to **Sgt** 'Blandford' **Ogg** - everyone just out of training thought they had got away from you! Congratulations to you and Jen on the birth of your daughter, and many sleepless nights! Other recent Troop Dads include **Sigs Barry, Carter** and **Mortiboys.** What is going on? This appears to be the most fertile Troop in the Corps. Back from Bosnia, **Cpl** 'Poker Face' **Knapman, Sig** 'Dagger' **Brady** and **Sig** 'Skiing' **Webster**. Back from Kosovo, **LCpl** 'Courses' **Milton, Sig** 'Morphy Richards' **Ions** and **Sig** 'Drill Demon' **Wall**. New to the Troop, **Sigs** 'Justin' **Amis,** 'back again' **Evans** and 'really new' **Greener**. Plus more inter-squadron postings too!

The Troop has fared well recently on promotions too - LCpl to Cpl, **Cpls** 'Gladiator' **Burgess**, 'Shadow' **Wilson-Cochrane, LCpl** 'Could have' **Cooper** and LCpl 'on posting' **Johnson** selected; Sigs to LCpl, **Sigs** 'Suits me' **Brady**, 'Dangerous' **Jackson,** 'Thanks' **Wilson** and 'Guardsman' **Wall.** Congratulations to you all.

After the rigours of Battlecamp, the Troop needed to recover. In order to do so, it found itself spending an afternoon appreciating the fundamental of the brewing process at Alton Brewery - a particularly high-brow affair, the blame for which falls squarely at the feet of **LCpl** 'Coops' **Cooper**. As it transpired this was time well spent in preparation for further sampling at the local hostelry in Edington the following Sunday. For the second year running, 222 Sig Sqn personnel have paraded at the Edington Parish Church alongside the Old Boys of Edington British Legion on Remembrance Sunday. Formerly an Aden task, Oman had the pleasure this year, organised by **Sgt Andy** 'Loud' **Hayler.** It is an honour to be the Modern Army focus at what is a patriotic and traditional event. New and old soldiers alike benefit from the event. This year the personnel laid a wreath to the Fallen on behalf of 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, and also presented a Squadron plaque to the Legion.

Finally, farewells. **Sgt Mick Eades** left us some time ago, **Cpl** 'Firestarter' **White, LCpl** 'Selected' **Cooper** and **Sig** 'also selected' **Wilson** due to leave in the imminent future. One the other side of Christmas, **LCpl** 'Johnno' **Johnson** is posted (on promotion), while **Sig** 'would you like to buy a copy of a video' **Lewis** and **Sig** 'no disembarkation leave for you' **Jackson** go to the White Helmets!. Good Luck to all of you - the troop will lose a lot of its characters, who will no doubt be replaced by new ones equally bad! *(and good luck to the White Helmets too - can't wait to see your new performers 'in action').*

SHARJAH TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Adrian Johnson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Baker**

On return from Battle Camp in Sennybridge, South Wales, Sharjah Tp was looking forward to going back to work in the warm and dry garages, but the following week was going to be another busy one. The week was to consist of preparing for the following weeks Comms Ex Arabian Reprise as well as Thursdays Remembrance Day Parade and Medal Presentation for our returning Kosovo personnel. The exercise itself went well with enough moves to keep Pickfords busy for a year! On the Thursday the CO and RSM visited Sharjah Tp in the field, minus the expected civilian visitor who had a runny nose. The visit was brief, which I'm sure was a relief to all at the Node. On returning from Exercise it was a quick turn around for all vehicles in preparation for the following Tuesdays CO's day. CO's day came and went with the obvious parades and inspections from the CO and all the other heads of departments, the rest of the week was fairly quiet. The final few days of November were then spent with Arabian Nights maintenance exercise. All in all a busy November in Sharjah Tp which seemed to fly by.

ADEN TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Emma Fawcett**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Littlefield**

The new reformed Aden Tp has been together since 13 September 1999 and already in its short life it has seen a Battle Camp and a couple of Exercises. The whole Troop has been rewritten from the Troop OC down to the new boys from Blandford. A lot of the experience in the Troop have just got back from a tour in Kosovo and are enjoying a long but well deserved rest on leave. There has already been a lot of promotions this year and to name just a few we have **Sig Tony** 'Rocky' **Dawson, Sig Jim** 'Short Fuse' **Chamberlain, Sig Grant** 'The Blower' **Robertson** and also not to forget **Sig Paul** 'The Plod' **Westerman,** congratulations on your promotion to Lance Corporal. Oh, I nearly forgot the new arrival from 230 Sig Sqn, congratulations **SSgt Shaun** 'THE CORP' **Littlefield** on your recent promotion (we told you that you had to buy a slab).

The White Helmets

OC RSMDT **Lt Col Jack Amberton**
Team Capt **Capt Gordon Newell**
Team SNCO **Sgt Don Brebner, SSgt Paul Boughey (des)**

TEAM OVERVIEW - *Capt G. P. Newell*

The Team now finds itself in the flurry of activity typical of the winter months. The selection of new Team members, the arrival of 30 new Triumph Tigers and the beginning of the annual training camp at RAF Sealand keep us all busy. Having been Team Captain for over a year now I have experienced all the ups and downs of a typical season. Without doubt, the highlight of a long, hard, yet rewarding show-season was the Team's outstanding performance at the 1999 Royal Tournament. To be involved in the Tournament is a privilege; to be chosen as one of the acts of the last ever Tournament is something quite special. Certainly it is

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

something members of the Corps can be proud of – arguably we proved to be the most popular act. Beyond that, county shows, international tattoos, recruiting exhibitions, military shows, truck festivals, steam fairs and charity work dominated our time from April to October – the Team worked hard – and it is fair to say the period's successes were interspersed with some minor accidents, bad weather and the odd badly-organised show. But in reflection the White Helmets successfully completed it's mission – it put the Corps firmly in the publics face (this included a number of TV and radio appearances) as well as recruiting over 1000 teenagers into the fold.

All this has been completed with some fairly hefty constraints. One of the most disappointing aspects of being a Team-member is the knowledge that very few members of the Corps have a realistic understanding and up to date view of the Team - there is a lot of confusion. On countless occasions Team-members and myself have been faced with almost blissful ignorance and listened to torrents of misconceptions when touring around units of the Corps. At the highest level of the Corps the decision to maintain the oldest and certainly the best military motorcycle display team – not just in the UK – but in the world has been made. This cannot take place if the greater mass of the Corps chooses to knowing or unknowingly abuse what is in reality one of its greatest assets. Our Team has all the pomp and ceremony, the tradition and pedigree of the likes of the Kings Troop, Royal Horse Artillery or the Household Cavalry – but it additionally has the breathtaking flare and stunning excitement that those other organisations lack. People remember the Royal Signals White Helmets. People are amazed and want to know more. People ask questions, become interested and they are recruited into the Corps. This is an important task that we do well. Put this into perspective: following operational work recruiting is one of the Army's major commitments. The Corps has one of the primary assets in leading the way – this is The White Helmets.

MODERN MISCONCEPTIONS OF THE TEAM

When the Team try to encourage serving soldiers to join it is all too evident that there is a major problem – potential riders are put off by members of their units who simply have no idea about the Team. To that end I have detailed below the common misconceptions and the reality behind them.

The Team Background - The Team is supported by the Corps in manpower and wages alone. Beyond this the White Helmets Team must generate enough capital on an annual basis to exist. This is done through the extensive show season, normally over 100 appearances, and the generous support from sponsors, such as Rover, Dunlop and Champion. In short the Team can be likened to a commercial business.

Promotion – Rumours are rife that Team-members do not get promoted. This is rubbish and couldn't be further from the truth. In the last 12 months, 11 of the 24 Team-members were selected for promotion – that's almost 50%! Soldiers are promoted on the strength of their achievement and commitment to work, as always reflected in their CR. The CR is presented to MCMDiv and they alone nominate soldiers for promotion. It seems very obvious that members of the White Helmets are treated like any other members of the Corps - the evidence is the reality.

When to join - You can join as soon as you achieve Class 2 or when it is imminent. You should apply to the Team in Blandford for information on the annual induction courses. The courses have changed since the 1980s and the emphasis is now on being constructive and exciting.

Motorcycle skills – Most soldiers arrive in the Team with no licence or motorcyling experience. This has been the case for many years and is not a problem. Team instructors are very experienced at bringing non-riders on.

Trades in the Team - Any trade from the Corps can serve in the Team, most currently do.

Gurkha and Female Corps Members – We select new Team members twice a year and are very keen to see the Team reflect the make-up of the Corps as a whole. We already do this with trades but want to see Gurkhas and female Corps members selected soon.

Team-members Trade Pay – The Team is like any other unit in the Corps, in that no soldier serving with the Team loses pay. Soldiers serve as 'display riders' and are all tasked with supervisory commitments which maintain the integrity of the individual's workload reflected in their annual CR.

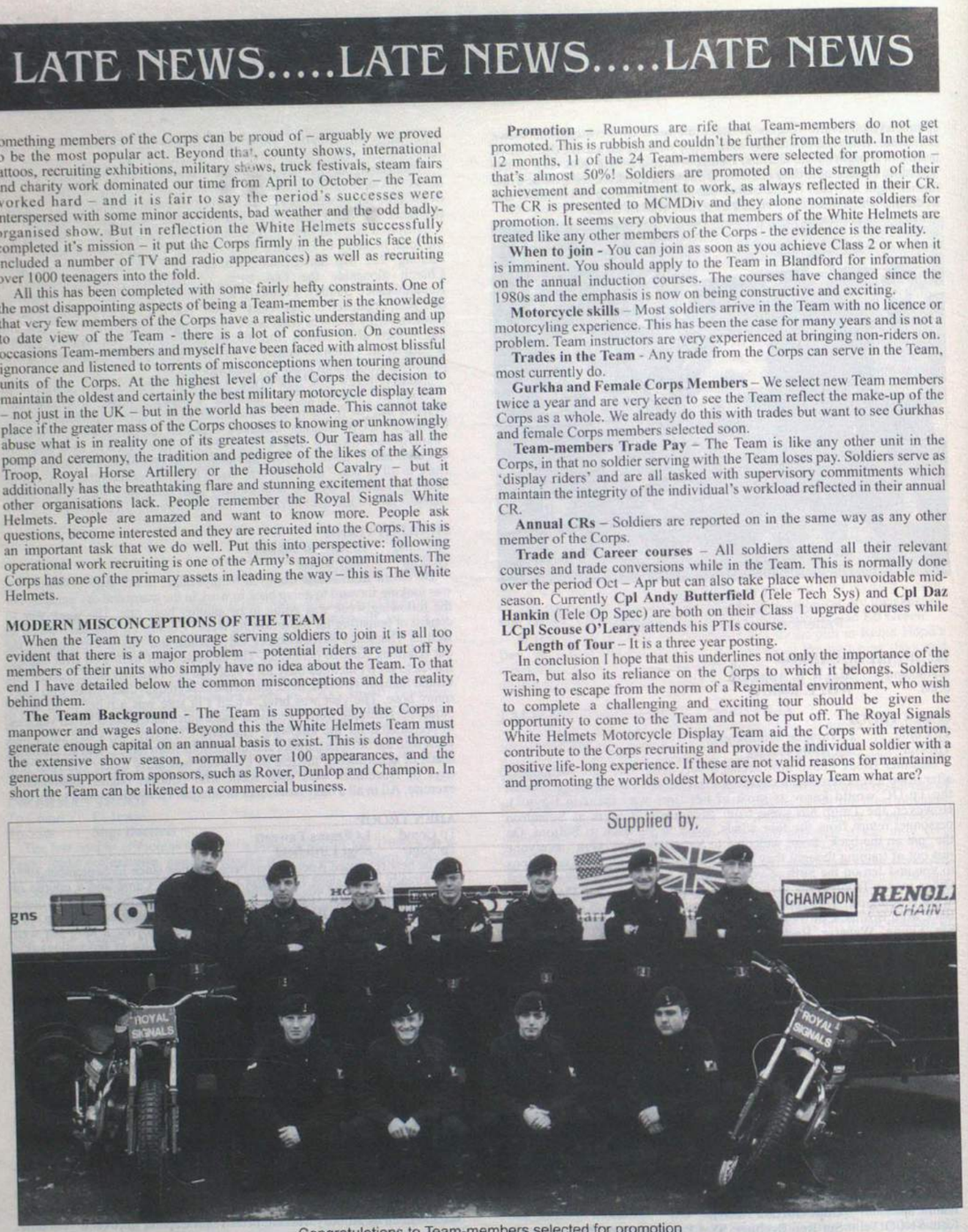
Annual CRs – Soldiers are reported on in the same way as any other member of the Corps.

Trade and Career courses – All soldiers attend all their relevant courses and trade conversions while in the Team. This is normally done over the period Oct – Apr but can also take place when unavoidable mid-season. Currently **Cpl Andy Butterfield** (Tele Tech Sys) and **Cpl Daz Hankin** (Tele Op Spec) are both on their Class 1 upgrade courses while **LCpl Scouse O'Leary** attends his PTIs course.

Length of Tour – It is a three year posting.

In conclusion I hope that this underlines not only the importance of the Team, but also its reliance on the Corps to which it belongs. Soldiers wishing to escape from the norm of a Regimental environment, who wish to complete a challenging and exciting tour should be given the opportunity to come to the Team and not be put off. The Royal Signals White Helmets Motorcycle Display Team aid the Corps with retention, contribute to the Corps recruiting and provide the individual soldier with a positive life-long experience. If these are not valid reasons for maintaining and promoting the worlds oldest Motorcycle Display Team what are?

Supplied by.



Congratulations to Team-members selected for promotion
(L-R): Back Row - Sig Keith Hodgson (Tele Op RR), LCpl Daz Hankin (Tele Op Spec), Sig Mal Cooper (Tele Op TG), Sgt Don Brebner (Tele Op R), Sig Matty Adams (Tele Op RR), LCpl Jase Hooper (Tele Op RR), Sig Scotty Eccott (DE)
(L-R): Kneeling – Sig Mossy Keatley (Dvr Lmn), Sig Gary Fisher (Tele Op RR), Sig Scouse O'Leary (Tele Op TG), Sig Scott O'Neill (Tele Op RR)

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

NEW APPOINTMENT IN REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

The Corps Committee seeks to focus and invigorate the work of the Royal Signals Institution (RSI) by the appointment of a part-time officer to act as the Professional Secretary of the RSI. Applicants must be retired ex-members of Royal Signals and must be full members of the RSI. That is:

a. Retired Royal Signals Officers who pay the retired rate of subscription to Corps Funds.
b. Retired Soldiers who pay the full annual subscription to *The Wire* and Journal.

Applicants should contact **Col A. F. Carter**, the Regimental Secretary at RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Dorset DT11 8RH - 01258 482081 by 1 March 2000. A selection board will be convened in March with the aim of the incumbent taking post on 1 May 2000.

Job Specification For Professional Secretary Royal Signals Institution:
The Royal Signals Institution (RSI) has the Charter to foster the technical and professional interests of the Royal Corps of Signals. The RSI requires a senior permanent staff member, to be known as the Professional Secretary, to administer the growing number of high profile activities carried out by the Institution. The appointment will be based at Blandford Camp, Dorset in RHQ Royal Signals. The incumbent will report day to day to the Regimental Secretary Royal Signals and will be directed by the Council of the RSI.

Type of Person Required:
Essential: The Technical Secretary will be a high-grade, intelligent and energetic retired officer of the Royal Signals with experience of and great interest in professional matters of importance to the Corps. He will have a profound understanding of Communications and Information Services and of how they improve military capability. He should be naturally curious, keen to develop his own knowledge and by doing so, improve that of the Corps. He will be IT literate. He will be a 'hands on' person who does not expect or require a large support staff. He will be tactful and politically aware.

Desirable: He should have knowledge and experience of the Defence and Information industry. He should be familiar with the Joint and Defence arena and be able to establish productive relationships with senior officers in other Arms and Services. He should be familiar with higher education and learning, able to establish productive relationships with such institutions when required.

Duties:
To manage all technical RSI affairs, the principal tasks are:

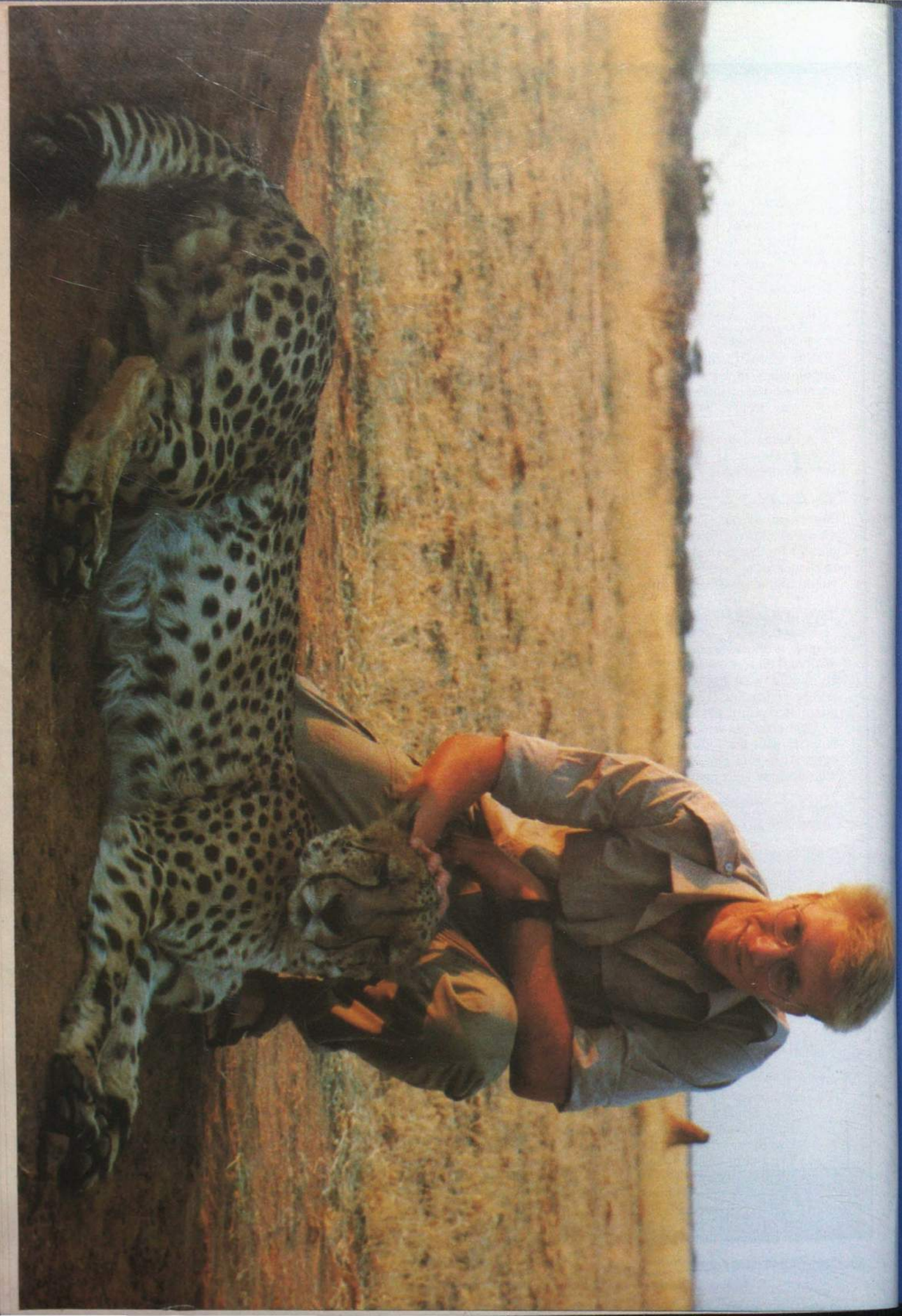
Provide and manage all professional interactions for which the RSI is responsible. This will include:
Editing the RSI Journal content and improving its quality.
Liaising with other professional bodies to share experience and Journal material (including IEE, BCS, AFCEA, WCITS, RMCS).
Maintaining liaison with other professional agencies as directed
Running the RSI website and Internet news-group.
Organising and managing seminars as required, with administrative support from RSS.
Organising and managing RSI London Lecture and Dinner evening.
Organising and managing RSI/BCS Lecture when RSI host it.
Acting as Secretary to the Executive Committee for the Promotion of the Corps.
Acting as assistant on RSI matters to the Regimental Secretary who is the General Secretary of the RSI.

Remuneration:
The appointment will normally require three days work per week. The salary will be negotiable but unpensionable.

Support:
The appointment will be supported by:

A part time secretary.
Full IT facilities including connection to the Blandford network and the Internet.
Use of the HQ Royal Signals website.
The Editor of the *Wire/Journal*, who will enable access to desktop publishing facilities.
A shared office.

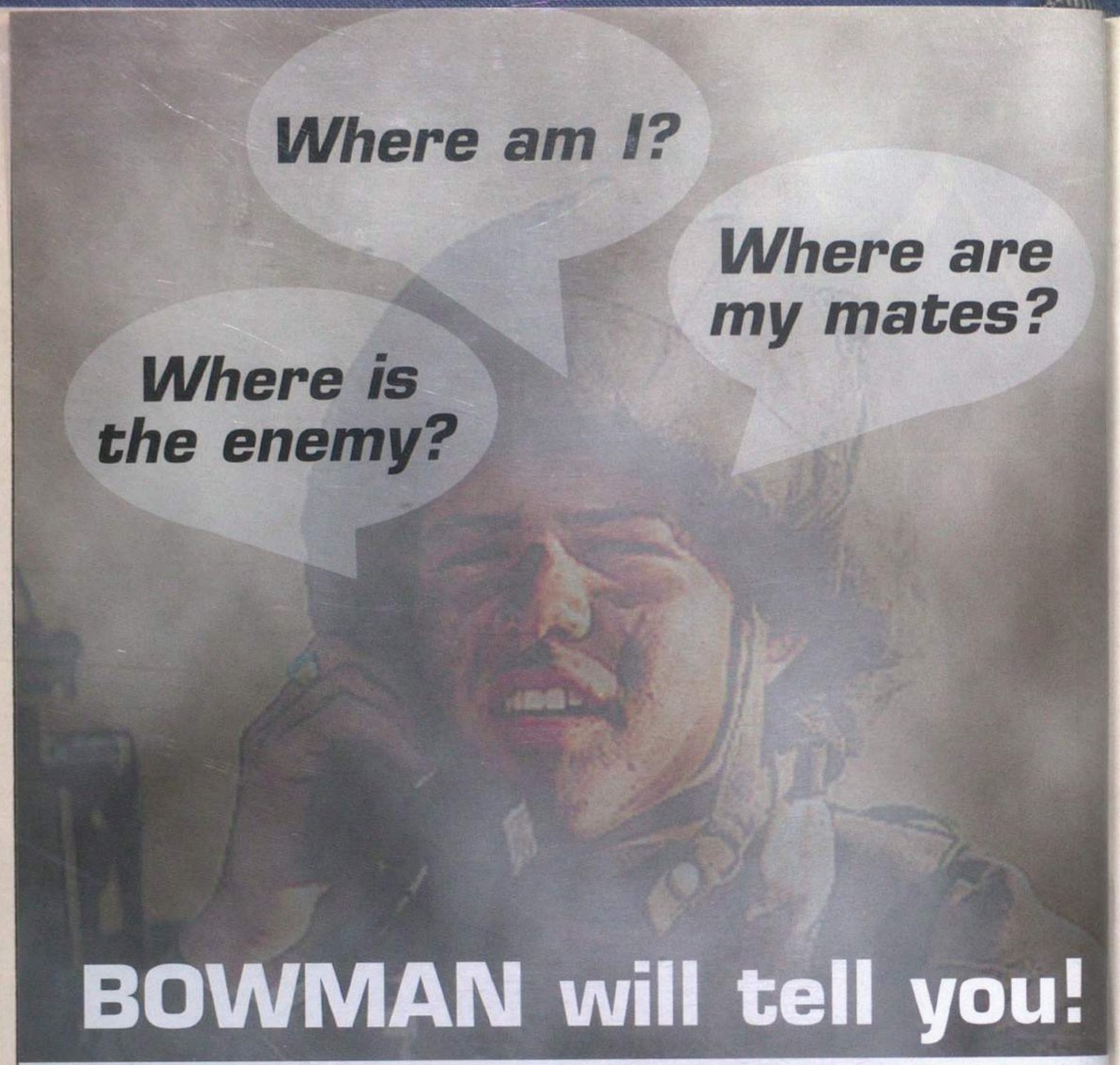
Produced by the Publishers, Regimental Headquarters Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8RH. (Telephone: Military System 737 2079 or STD 01258 48 2079)
Printed in Great Britain by Holbrooks Printers Ltd, Norway Road, Hilsea, Portsmouth, Hants PO3 5HX
For advertising rates apply to: Combined Service Publications Ltd, PO Box 4, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 7LR (Telephone 01252 515891)



THE Wire and the Journal

April 2000

The Royal Corps of Signals



BOWMAN will tell you!

Archer Communications is prime contractor and systems integrator for BOWMAN, the world's most advanced and capable military communications system, connecting all branches of land forces and their amphibious and air support units.

- Secure voice and data communications
- Battlefield situation awareness
- The backbone of battlefield digitization

ARCHER COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS LIMITED

Managed by

BAE SYSTEMS

Archer Communications Systems Limited
PO Box 118, Hedge End, Southampton,
Hampshire, SO30 2XW, United Kingdom,
Telephone: +44 (0)1489 773000, Fax: +44 (0)1489 773100

Finding a way through the fog of war

The Royal Signals Magazine

April 2000 Vol. 54 No: 2

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 STD:01258 482087

The Wire

(Incorporating the Journal of the Royal Signals Institution)

Subscription rates 1998 (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
Deputy Editor Mrs J. A. Herring

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

CONTENTS

	Page
Editors Notes	89
Movements	96
News from Headquarters	98
News of Training	100
News from the Balkans	107
News from Northern Ireland	111
News from Regiments	116
News from Squadrons	153
Sport...	167
The Royal Signals Association and News from the AO's Desk	171
Reunions	177
Lost Comms	177
Correspondence	178
Donations	179
The Last Post...	180
Late News	182
The Journal	187

A very significant article is included at page 182. It affects us all and even if you skim the rest of the magazine - READ Maj Peel's article on RETENTION. Views and comments are welcome

FRONT COVER
LCpl Pierson snowboarding. A new Corps Sport.

BACK COVER
The Royal Signals Leadership Course 114 with delusions of grandeur outside No. 10

VISIT THE MUSEUM WEB-SITE
www.royalsignals.army.org.uk/museum/

Moffats School

Boys & Girls 7 to 13

at Kinlet Hall, Kinlet, Bewdley, Worcs DY12 3AY

Small Classes • Stability • Expert help for Dyslexia/SpLD • Sports & Riding in our 110-acre grounds • Many Artistic & Cultural Activities • Hospitality & fun for those in at exeats / half-terms • Our own escorts to all UK airports • An Ethos of Discipline, Kindness & Tolerance

Tel. 01299 841230 - www.moffats.co.uk

Authors alone are responsible for the content of their articles. The opinions expressed in the articles of this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise, of the Royal Signals or the Ministry of Defence. This publication should be treated with discretion by the recipient.

© Crown Copyright

Disclaimer: No responsibility for the quality of goods or services advertised in this magazine can be accepted by the Publishers or their Agents. Advertisements are included 'in good faith'.

ANSTY MILLENNIUM CELEBRATION RAISES MONEY FOR GURKHA WELFARE

As part of their celebrations a group of old friends got together for a party at the Commanderie of Ansty Manor to bring in the new century. Because of the general shortage of helpers for such functions at this busy time, the organisers turned to the army at Blandford for help and were rewarded handsomely by the presence, at the event, of a group of volunteer Gurkha soldiers from the Queen's Gurkha Signals. In return the partygoers organised a raffle and an auction to raise money for the Gurkha Welfare Trust and raised the surprisingly large sum of £1.077.47.

Our picture shows **Brig Keith Olds** handing over the cheque to **Capt Krishnabahadur Gurung** at a short ceremony held at the Royal Signals Museum at Blandford Camp.

The Gurkha Welfare Trust assists former Gurkha soldiers, their dependants and their widows who have fallen on hard times in their native Nepal. Such events as landslide disasters, disease, crop failure and other calamities are a regular feature of life in that rugged Himalayan kingdom.

CAREER CHOICES
A TOUR AT THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

Maj M. L. F. Davison

- ***What are you doing about your next tour?***
- ***How about a job at The Royal School of Signals?***
- ***What kind of jobs are there on offer?***
- ***What are the conditions at Blandford?***
- ***Is a tour at Blandford in your best career interests?***

Once the relatively quiet location for Royal Signals command training, Blandford Camp has been transformed over recent years by a multi-million pound rebuild to create the Army's CIS Centre of Excellence. All Special-to-Arm Phase 2 and 3 communications training for the Corps is now undertaken at Blandford and with around 1400 students under training at any one time, quality teaching staff are essential. This becomes even more crucial as the School prepares to receive greater numbers of students when BOWMAN and Digitisation training starts in earnest in the near future.

Did You Know? In a three year period more than half of the serving Corps undertakes some form of training at The Royal School of Signals. You will almost certainly have been to Blandford yourself – but could you make a difference if you were on the training staff? Your own training and experience is your greatest asset. Combine this with your personality and strength of character and you have a unique combination of skills that are needed at the School to mould the best soldiers in the Army. You could make that difference. The best soldiers and tradesmen in the Army demand the best trainers – we need trade and military instructors and Regimental Duties staff.

Is it in your career interests? You already know that quality tours are fundamental to achieving your career goals. The statistics for soldiers and officers completing tours at Blandford speak for themselves; across the entire rank spectrum, quality individuals are getting promoted as a direct consequence of serving at the School. Be in no doubt: a tour at The Royal School of Signals *is* a quality tour. Just to make you think; promotions or selections for promotion took place in 1999 as follows:

- Officers:
  - Capt - Maj 3
  - Lt - Capt 3
  - Commissioned from WO1 1
- Soldiers:
  - Sig - LCpl 24
  - LCpl - Cpl 13
  - Cpl - Sgt 32
  - Sgt - SSgt 8
  - SSgt - WO2 9
  - WO2 - WO1 8

Selections for Late Entry Commissions 4
Selections for YofS training 4 (20% of the vacancies)

NB: All of these people were on the staff of The Royal School of Signals/11 Signal Regiment. The figures specifically exclude students.

What else is in it for you? Enhancing your career by refining your instructional and leadership skills is one thing, but quality of life has to be high on your list of priorities. Could you cope with a couple of years' stability in a great part of the country? Could you also cope with some of the most up to date facilities anywhere in the Army? An opportunity lies before you that is almost too good to miss; fitness, sports and recreation, a wealth of family facilities, bars and restaurants, a bowling alley, indoor and outdoor climbing walls, an all-weather floodlit sports pitch, an 18-hole golf course nearby, the list goes on. The camp also has a full-size cinema showing the very latest releases six nights a week.

If you are interested in this unique challenge, get your next tour sorted now by talking to your Adjutant if you are an officer or your Squadron OC if you are a soldier.

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS
A QUALITY TOUR IN A QUALITY CAREER
FOR QUALITY SOLDIERS

E1 ROYAL SIGNALS LONG SERVICE LIST

Last year, HQ AG gave formal approval for the establishment of a discreet R. SIGNALS element of the Long Service List (LSL). This element will be handled as an E1 (Corps tied) liability by APC Glasgow and the individuals involved will retain entitlement to the substantive rank and pay profile in effect immediately prior to transfer. LSL engagements will be authorised by DM(A), initially for five years, but extendable by up to five one-year increments, to the maximum age of 55 years.

In driving this initiative forward, HQ R. SIGNALS' aim has been to make it more attractive for suitable soldiers to extend their career beyond the 22-year point without frustrating the promotion chances of others as can occur with Career Continuance. The intention is to use the R. SIGNALS E1 LSL to fill designated, trade specific and essentially static SNCO and WO posts which will benefit from a high degree of continuity. By filling such posts from the LSL we will release younger individuals to fill other posts within the deployable Army, thereby reducing overall undermanning. The list of posts suitable for annotation as E1 LSL is growing and up to 30 such appointments should be identified in the fullness of time. At the time of going to press, the following E1 LSL posts are available at Blandford:

1 x WO1 FofS
3 x WO2 YofS
1 x WO2 RD
2 x SSgt FofS
1 x SSgt Tele Tech (Sys)/Sys Eng Tech
1 x Sgt ADP Spec/Info Sys Op
1 x Sgt Tele Tech (Sys)/Sys Eng Tech
1 x Sgt Tele Op (Tg)Radio Sys Op.

If you are interested in any of these, or the scheme in general, further information can be obtained from R. SIGNALS MCM Div.

INTERESTED IN OFFSHORE SAILING?
INTERESTED IN RACING?

Skippers and Crews are required
Army Sailing Association Regatta 23-26 June 2000
Services Offshore Regatta 27 June - 1 July 2000
NO experience needed

contact: **Maj P. G. M. Atkinson**
(9) 4331 3043
01722 433043
patkinson@yachtclub.swinternet.co.uk

MRS MARY BEAVER PRESENTS A WAR DIARY TO THE ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM

Many young Royal Signals officers who passed through the School of Signals in Catterick in the early 1960s will remember **Capt Malcolm Beaver** fondly, he resigned in 1963. As a lecturer he was deadly accurate with chalk and any lack of attention by a student would always draw fire!!

On 26 January **Mrs Mary Beaver, Malcolm**'s widow, presented one of his cherished possessions to the Royal Signals Museum. It was a 'Diary' that his father, **Maj Eric Beaver** Royal Signals, had maintained together with **RSM Feltham**, whilst they were Japanese prisoners of war. It is a complete record of all the Royal Signals personnel who were captured in Singapore and elsewhere, and who served on the Burma Railway. It records the details of over 500 Signallers who perished between February 1942 and August 1945 onwards, including the Regimental Number, rank, unit, date of death, place of burial and cause of death. The latter includes cholera, dysentry, diphtheria, cardiac failure and malaria. The burial places include Kanu, Chungkai, Takenon, Hindato, 211km Camp (all Thailand), Tambaip, Kanda, Songkwai (Burma) and Changi in Singapore.

The Japanese were aware that the 'Diary' existed and became increasingly anxious to capture it because they believed that it was a record of war-crimes. Towards the end of the war its security became difficult and searches for it were more frequent. To save the 'Diary' a mock funeral was arranged and it was buried under the name of Private Records in a temporary grave with full military honours complete with a Japanese Guard of Honour. The 'Diary' was exhumed at a later date when hostilities were over.

Mrs Mary Beaver presents the War Diary to Col (Retd) Cliff Walters, also present are her daughter and son-in-law, Rosemary and Ian Parker

Battlefield Tours
for
Regimental Associations, TA's & Serving Units

Regimental Battle Honour Tours 4 days **£149**
Ypres, Somme, Arras, Cambrai 3 days **£99**
Normandy & Arnhem 4 days **£149**
Tailor-made & Self Drive Itineraries

Galina International Battlefield Tours
40 Bridge Street Row Chester CH1 1NN
Tel: 01244 340777

Official Tour Operators to the Normandy Veterans Association

SNOWBOARDING WITHIN THE ROYAL SIGNALS

Snowboarding within the Royal Signals has come a long way over the past year. Introduced into the Signals Alpine Calendar for the first time last year, snowboarding has proved extremely popular with young enthusiastic individuals who find the sport exciting and technically challenging. Currently the sport is growing in popularity with the public, and many European resorts are recognising this by supplying more facilities to attract snowboarders. That is unless you have visited the dreaded 2km T-bar at Stubai (not so snowboard friendly). Due to the popularity of the sport, it is now being recognised by the Winter Olympic committee with competitors taking part in both Slalom and Half Pipe events.

Snowboarding was introduced into the Army one year ago at the Resort of Stubai, Austria. These championships attracted 30 competitors from all over the Army who had previous experience at the sport. The main interest came from the Royal Engineers who had been running snowboard clubs in Germany for two years before this competition. Not to be out done the Royal Signals held their own Snowboard Championships in Zell am See in December 1999. The Royal Signals Championships attracted 25 competitors with nearly 16 novices experiencing snowboarding for the first time. All individuals thought the training was excellent and the competition well run, all have expressed a wish to attend this year's championships (depending on whether or not their bosses release them from work). For the sport to grow and be recognised by the AWSA, more soldiers are required to compete at both intermediate and novice level. This will enable any future plans for funding easier, and show the development of the sport within the Corps. Currently snowboarding is only funded by the Army Sports Lottery and unit PRIs who generously fund their own soldiers to enable them to compete at competitions. The aim of **Capt Boyne** (Corps Snowboarding Secretary) and **Sgt Graham** (Team Captain) over the next few seasons is to promote the sport to a level that it receives adequate funding from the Corps.

Novices are encouraged to attend future camps, as they are the key to any future Corps success. A novice is someone who has had little or no previous snowboarding experience. Tuition at resort is always first class and novices normally pick up the basics in around four days. This figure is only a benchmark and normally depends on whether the individual has co-ordination and balance. A quick aerobics session down the gymnasium normally sorts out anyone who has two left feet. Competitions throughout the year encourage both individuals and more importantly teams to enter, with teams consisting of four or more competitors. Any future Army Snowboard Championships will be orientated around Inter Corps and unit level competitions, thus it is important for Royal Signals units to enter teams at this year's Corps Snowboard Championships to enable them to qualify for the Army Championships next season. The current Royal Signals Snowboard Team champions are 3 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Sqn. Many of their team members were novices before they competed at last year's Snowboard Championships, all have made the progression by competing at the Army Championships this season. Disciplines at this year's Army Championships were Slalom, Giant Slalom and Boarder X. For many competitors the Boarder X is a hard introduction to competitive racing with many inexperienced people finding courses very challenging. Boarder X is the only winter event that enables four people to race head to head over a course. Helmets are mandatory and if possible individuals are encouraged to wear body protection.

Next season is going to be an exciting time for Royal Signals snowboarding with the Corps Team trying to improve on their position in the Inter Corps event. This year the Team managed an outstanding result after only one year, by finishing second behind the Royal Engineers Team. If more units and individuals are interested there is no reason why the Royal Signals cannot be the leader in snowboarding within the Army. If anyone would like more information on snowboarding and future Corps snowboarding events, they should contact **Sgt** 'Dom' **Graham** on Blandford mil 2585.

ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB
YACHT CHARTER

Unit and Family Sailing
Skippered and Bare Boat

Contact: **Cpl Kendell**
02392 765668
m.kendell@yachtclub.swinternet.co.uk

ROYAL SIGNALS
AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

Have **You** heard of us?
If not why not visit:
http://www.rsars.org.uk

REMEMBER LE HAVRE 1944 BATTLEFIELD MEMORIAL - LE HAVRE

ASSOCIATION LOI 1901

It is proposed to obtain the remains of two Churchill tanks from the Saumer AFV Museum and to make up from them one tank as the centre-piece of the memorial to be placed on the roadside opposite Strongpoint No. 5 on the battlefield. The plaques produced by units involved in the battle, during September 1944, have been in storage ever since the first pilgrimage was made in 1989, as the War Graves Commission would not allow them to be placed in the St Marie Cemetery, Le Havre. It is proposed that they be mounted on either side of, or next to, the tank possibly with a brief description of the assault on Fortress Le Havre.

The President of the Conseil Generale, **Monsieur Rever**, has agreed to the proposal; he is a relative of the farmer whose farm is at Strongpoint No. 5. The Mayor of Montivilliers, in whose district the Memorial would be situated, is also agreeable to this project as are the other French authorities involved.

In due course a design plan will be produced showing the whole projected area. As to cost, Saumer quotes 100,000 francs (approx £10,000) for providing the prepared tank and for transporting to the site; the French are quite willing to contribute towards this sum. It will cost about 1,000 francs a year, for five years, to keep the tank/site in condition (the French say that they will meet this annual cost). Thereafter the cost will be renewed annually. Obviously we will need to raise our contribution to this project, hence we are trying to contact all the units involved in the assault and the battle, the Royal British Legion, the Normandy Veterans Association, the RAF Association and the Ministry of Defence. It is sad that so much time has passed since our first pilgrimage in 1989, But since then the French have tried very hard to find a suitable tank. Fontaine-a-la-malet, Octeville, Montivilliers and other villages are very supportive of our efforts. Due to its importance and special nature, the set-piece attack has featured several times in War Studies and Battlefield visits by serving personnel.

The anniversary of the the assault on Fortress Le Havre falls on Sunday 10 September 2000 and we hope to dedicate the memorial on that day. On behalf of **REMEMBER LE HAVRE 1944**, we are asking for your support of this project to commemorate those of our comrades who lost their lives during this action almost 56 years ago. Survivors are now secumbing to age and infirmity; we need to take advantage of this opportunity before it is too late. Please make cheques/postal orders, etc payable to REMEMBER LE HAVRE 1944 girobank a/c No. 29539406 and forward contributions to: **Capt I. C. Hammerton**, 65 Norfield Road, Dartford, KENT, DA2 7NY. Thank you for any help you can give.

NEW PHONE NETWORK FOR KOSOVO AND BOSNIA

A new communications system ordered for Kosovo and Bosnia will relieve hard-pressed UK Signallers, Armed Forces Minister, **John Spellar**, announced today. The £20 million contract to provide a new communications network will free 260 Royal Signals soldiers from their Balkan Commitments by the end of the year. Around 150 will return from Bosnia and Kosovo and others, who were preparing for deployment later this year, will not go. The new network will provide modern voice, data and facsimile links within the UK-led Multi National Divisions and back to the UK. The Signallers, many of whom are highly qualified and skilled technicians, are in high demand throughout the army, **Mr Spellar** said,

'Good communications are vital. We are living in an age when fast, reliable communications are more important then ever. This new communications network will use off-the-shelf technology to enhance the ways that British Forces in the Balkans can speak to each other, and call the UK. The move also reduces the pressure on our hard working Signals personnel, who will take post-deployment leave upon their return to the UK.'

The contract has been placed with BAE Systems based at Christchurch in Dorset. The equipment is expected to be in place by the autumn. The new system will maintain the UKs contribution to the NATO Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia, and Kosovo Force (KFOR) in providing vital communications for peace-keeping forces. The system will be used by British troops and UK-led troops from other NATO countries. The contract is an example of MOD and industry working together under the SMART procurement strategy.

Changed your address or being posted?

DON'T FORGET TO LET
THE WIRE KNOW

Tel: 01258 482087

SOME NOTES FROM THE EDITOR ON ARTICLES FOR *THE WIRE*

DESK TOP PUBLISHING: We are now into Desk Top Publishing (DTP) in *The WIRE* office which enables us to keep costs down and maintain a closer check on *The WIRE* proofs during the development of each issue. However - we start building the magazine from the cut off dates for submission, and late entries cause us a lot of heartache - hence the appearance of **Late News** at the back of the magazine- something that we do not like having to resort to! But if, say, a late entry appears from a HQ or an early numerical Regiment, inserting it in the appropriate position causes a complete restructuring of all subsequent articles that have already been positioned in the proof - doubling the work for the editorial team -later entries cause further restructuring and puts substantial pressure on the capacity of our computer - we have lost the last three (including this one) issues through overload during the restructuring process and had to start again from scratch! We are waiting for a replacement computer with a much more substantial capacity but in the meantime - do try to get the articles to us on time!

A FEW REMINDERS: Major Units - THREE pages of *The WIRE* including up to NINE pictures (with faces identifiable). This approximates to FIVE sheets of single line spaced A4. **Minor Units** - ONE and a HALF pages including FIVE pictures. **Articles** to be sent on disc with hard copy and saved in Rich Text or Word. Do **NOT** send photos on disk, digital photos are no good for printing as they are, on average only 73dpi. **Colour Photo Copies** are no good for printing, send original photos only. If you are likely to be late or, more importantly have possible front cover or colour spread material let us know soonest! Should you require the return of photos or disks please state this in the covering letter and we will do our best to oblige. If a photo is used for the Front or Back Cover it will not be returned as it is kept in our archives.

CUT OFF DATES: These are shown at the top of the first page in all copies of *The WIRE*. They are to be found on the top left hand side of the page.

The White Helmets

OC RSMDT — **Lt Col Jack Amberton**
Team Captain — **Capt Gordon Newell**
Team SNCO — **SSgt Paul Boughey**

TEAM UPDATE - *by Capt Newell*

The Team has arrived back from a well earned break and as always things are busy. The new fleet of 30 Triumph Tiger bikes has been built and the exciting prospect of running them in around Blandford Camp is now in hand. The Team have the wonderful task of spending the next few weeks riding 300 miles around camp – that's about 100 circuits! At the same time we're running another induction course attended by ten members of the Corps who'd like to join the Team. All the course are enjoying the cross country trial bike riding at Bovington as once again we have 15 Honda 250s on loan to add to the excitement. In two weeks we leave for a 4-week period up at RAF Sealand where we put the final touches to the show. This will then be unveiled to the public on 14 April 2000 at the SOinC(A)'s Opening Show. A very busy year of recruiting, major shows, tattoos and PR then continue. Other matters that lie ahead include a proposed White Helmets Millennium Reunion and a promotion event for Mars chocolate.

This year we say goodbye and good luck to **Cpl Andy Butterfield** (Tele Tech (Sys)) away to do his T1, **LCpl Paul Cooper** (Tele Op (TG)) on promotion to RSS, **Cpl Daz Hankin** (Tele Op (Spec)) on promotion to EOD duties, **LCpl Andy Keatley, LCpl Ricky Ross**, and **LCpl Gaz Ryder** to 11 Sig Regt, **Sig Marcus Fiddes** to 21 Sig Regt and **Sig Mark Owen** on discharge. We also congratulate **LCpl Andy Keatley** and his wife **Georgina** who were recently married. Leading the new arrivals is **SSgt Paul Boughey** taking over the reins from **Sgt Don Brebner** who leaves for the recruiting world later this year. New Team members learning the ropes are **Cpl Chris Hunt** (Dvr Lmn) previously the SOinC (A')s driver, **LCpl Lewis** (Dvr Lmn) from 11 Sig Regt, **LCpl Sutcliffe** (Tele Op (TG)), and **LCpls Jackson** (Tele Op (RR)), **Lewis** (Tele Op (RR)), and **Scott** (Tele Op (RR)) from 3 Div and Sig Regt, and 'Wolly' **Woolnough** (Tele Op (RR)). The results of the current (February 2000) selection course are unclear at the time of print – more word on new Team members next time.

WHITE HELMETS SELECTION COURSE FEBRUARY 2000
This is LCpl Murray Sutcliffe's (2 Sig Sqn) TA) account of The White Helmets' Selection Course

It started when I happened across a photo of some mad man leaping through a ball of fire on a big shiney bike! It was in fact a flyer offering places on a White Helmets' Selection Course. So I put a bid in, got a place and within a week was on a train making my way down to Blandford Forum. I was apprehensive and knew I was in for a hard two weeks but little did I know that at the end of selection the mad man on the shiney bike would be me!

PHASE ONE (INTRODUCTION TO BIKES AND OFF-ROADING)

On arrival at Blandford we were all given an initial brief by the OC, Team Captain and Sergeant and we were introduced to the Team's instructors. We were also told what would be expected of us over the duration of the course. The main points that I extracted from this brief were as follows. We had to show that we had bags of aggression, the ability to operate effectively under pressure and most importantly ..... they wanted to see that you had a big pair of swingers.....? I tried to explain that the room was very cold and anyway I'd rather show them in private.....I got no reply!

The daily routine started at 0700hrs with PT followed by all day on the moors (Bovington Tank Training area) then back for a quick dinner followed by cleaning the bikes and of course there is nothing quite like bike maintenance into the wee small hours of the morning! The bikes we used were Honda 250 enduro bikes which were lent to the Selection Course by the Display Team 'The Honda Imps'. As the week progressed so did our riding skills and it would have been hard to believe that all but one of us were non-riders at the beginning of the week. Another thing that improved as the week went on was the quality of the crashes! Affectionately known as 'S*!carting'. If you didn't 'S*!cart' at least ten times a day you weren't trying hard enough! One of my more memorable 'S*!carts' took place as myself and **Cpl Chris Hunt**, (on the back of my bike) followed our instructor, **Cpl** 'Fish' **Fisher** and another lad in our group, **LCpl** 'Rooster' **Lewis**. As **Chris** and myself came flying (balls out) round the corner we were faced with 'Fish' and 'Rooster' who, (unfortunately) had decided to stop right in front of us, (fortunately) leaving a bike-sized space between their two bikes!! Unfortunately they had stopped right infront of a tank-wash!!!! For the few of you who don't know what a tank-wash is think big, deep, muddy, cold, get the jist? Well all I remember is **Chris** trying to jump off the back of the bike, 'Rooster' shouting something like, 'Oh fuuuuuuuuuh?!' 'Fish' rolling about in stitches and then us two and the bike launching ourselves through the gap between the bikes to land right in the middle of the wash!!!!! This was one of the many (more humorous) accidents - some, however, were not as fortunate. The problem being that metal frames, soft pink bodies, speed and crashing are four things that don't go well together! One of the exercises was the escape and evasion type scenario which took place near the end of the first week. We were split into two groups, given our 'o' group and given three hours to complete our objectives which were to recover a bike from one location and then find the tools to fix the bike! All this whilst trying to avoid the enemy's (bike mounted) patrols. Unfortunately we did not complete our final objective but managed to get back to the admin area within the time constraint. The fact that there was a brew kit back at the admin area had absolutely nothing to do the last point!

The end of the first stage was marked by Race day using all of the skills we had learnt over the last week. We all had the handicap of having to carry two raw eggs with us on the way round. Broken eggs at the finish meant time penalties! I had about five really good 'S*!carts' but still I managed to keep my eggs intact, much to the astonishment of the instructors. Well guys do you want to know how? Pine-Needles make for excellent padding!

MY SELECTION COURSE - *by Cpl Chris Hunt*

A year ago I drove the inspecting officer, the SOinC (A), **Brig Griffin,** on to the parade square at Blandford Camp for the Royal Signals White Helmets Opening Show. This made up my mind that it would be the year that I should go for it and try for Selection for the White Helmets Team. Already living in quarters here at Blandford made getting to the course much easier than most who came from units around the country.

The 2-week course began with settling into our glamorous accommodation in Anson Block before we went out to get to the bikes. Only three out of the 14 of us had ever ridden a bike before. Myself, all be it twelve years ago, **LCpl** 'Rooster' **Lewis** (11 Sig Regt) and **LCpl** 'Muz' **Sutcliffe** (2 Sig Sqn Dundee). The three of us were put in to a group and **Sig Fisher** was our instructor for the moors training element of the course. For the next five days we were based at Bovington. This was a very difficult place to ride a bike, deep sand, lots of mud and of course lots of water. **LCpl** 'Muz' **Sutcliffe** managed to find the biggest puddle on the first day! A tank dip! I was unfortunate enough to be riding pillion at the

time and we both went for a swim! Unlucky for him **LCpl** 'Rooster' **Lewis** came off worst in the little mishap and ended up visiting the Bovington medical centre for a few stitches in his left knee.

For the next five days we travelled to Bovington each morning, following PT and a kit inspection, with the bikes in the back of Bedfords. Each day everybody's confidence grew and it wasn't long before we were jumping small ramps and jumping over knife edges on the bikes. At the end of each day on the moors it was back to Blandford being extra careful when loading the bikes as a long day on the moors was very tiring.

The Hanging Ladder- Sgt Don Brebner and LCpl Lewis

Once back in camp it was straight to the wash point with the bikes (mud everywhere!) and when the bikes were clean we had to maintain them. Task's done to each and every bike which included making sure any damage was repaired (there was quite a lot). Both wheels were taken off to check spokes and brake pads, cleaning air filters of sand and mud, a lot of work. The first week ended with Race Day. All the different circuits that we had been going around on the moors was combined for a race. This was won by **Sig Keith Hodgson** who had already been with the Team for the 1999 season.

On the Sunday morning after a little get together down the Georgian town of Blandford the night before we had a little lie in and no PT. It was then time to get the Triumphs out. These bikes were fifteen years old Triumph Tiger 750cc, big engines! We went to Bovington again but this time to the Tank Museum Area where there was a grassed area where we got used to the bikes. After learning how to unload the Triumphs from the back of the Team trailer properly and learning the procedure for starting the bikes, it was time to ride them for the first time. An instructor led and we all followed: sitting side saddle, standing on the seat and all kinds of things that you wouldn't normally do on a motorbike, especially considering that most hadn't ridden a bike until the week before! Throughout the rest of the week we were all taught different tricks leading up to a show for the OC RSMDT, **Lt Col Amberton**. Tricks including the Double Jimmy, the Tableau, the Angel, the Throne, the Swallow and we all did the Fire Jump.

I began by learning the Throne with excellent instruction from **Cpl Adam Malin**, I didn't fall off too many times. Next I was taught the Angel which I didn't manage to get right until the morning of the show. I found out the hard way just how easy the Team make these tricks look when you see them in the arena. They are not easy, they take lots of practice,

Learning the Tableau

Standing (L-R): Capt Gordon Newell (Team Captain),
Cpl 'Gypo' Hooper (Tele Op RR),
LCpl Lewis (Dvr Lmn,11Sig Regt),
Sig Jackson (Tele Op RR, 3UK DSR),
Cpl Hunt (Dvr Lmn, HQ R Sigs), Sig Scott (Tele Op R, 3UK DSR),
LCpl Scott Eccott (DE), Sgt Don Brebner (Tele Op R)
Kneeling (L-R): Cpl Adam Malin (Tele Op SPEC),
Sig Lewis (Tele Op RR, 3UK DSR),
Sig Young (SAT, 11th Sig Regt),
LCpl Suttcliffe (Tele Op TG, 2 Sig Sqn TA),
Sig Gaz Fisher (Tele Op RR)

strength, guts and the ability to work through pain. The highlight of the show was the Fire Jump! After lots of practising jumping without fire it was time to pour 20ltrs of petrol on to the straw and light it. We all successfully jumped throughout the flames with only a few faces and uniforms burnt.

Throughout the course we were interviewed by local TV and we were interviewed once in a studio. It will be interesting to have a look at these tapes in the future. In all I found the course physically demanding and managed to get lots of cuts and bruises. However, I would recommend everybody, whether they have any previous experience with bikes or not, to give selection for the White Helmets a go - you will not be disappointed!!

School of Automotive and Industrial Engineering

Have you considered a second career in

CONSTRUCTION?

You can with a craft NVQ.

- CONSTRUCTION OPERATIONS
- DRYLINING
- WOOD OCCUPATIONS
- PLASTERING
- BRICKLAYING
- GAS FITTING
- PAINTING AND DECORATING
- PLUMBING
- ELECTRICAL

ALDERSHOT BUILDING CENTRE
CONTACT MICHAEL ALLEN
TELEPHONE 01252 324841
FACSIMILE 01252 348522
MILITARY 3522
ALDERSHOT BUILDING CENTRE, GALLWEY ROAD,
ALDERSHOT, HAMPSHIRE, GU11 2DG

Farnborough College of Technology

Information Centre
01252 407040

Boundary Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 6SB

The College exists to provide excellence in Education

SONIC COMMUNICATIONS

SKILLED ELECTRONICS TECHNICIANS LEAVING THE FORCES – PLEASE COME AND TALK TO US!

We have immediate vacancies for hands-on bench technicians familiar with handportable and mobile radio accessories, video, microwave, telemetry, black boxes, prototype projects, and vehicle fits that can provide a high level of job satisfaction.

Please send brief letter with C.V. to:-

David J. Bryan – Managing Director
SONIC COMMUNICATIONS (INT) LTD
Birmingham International Park
Starley Way
Bickenhill
Birmingham
B37 7HB
ENGLAND

CHANGE OF ADDRESS? POSTED? MOVING?

Don't forget to let us know, so we don't send your copy of *The WIRE* to the wrong address.

OLD WELBEXIAN ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT'S DINNER

24 JUNE 2000

The next President's Dinner will be held at Welbeck College on Saturday 24 June, 2000. The Annual General Meeting will take place on the following Sunday morning.

Dress is Mess Kit for serving officers and Black Ties for retired officers.
The cost will be £20. Timings are 1930hrs for 2000hrs.
Limited basic accommodation will be available on request.

Application, including a contact address and telephone number, should arrive at least three weeks prior to the dinner, sent to:
Capt G. W. Thompson Royal Engineers
Adjutant Welbeck College
Worksop
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
S80 3LN
Tel: 01909 476326
Fax: 01909 530447

ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM EVENTS 2000

Royal Signals Festival of Music and Dance
Supporting the Royal Signals Education Project and Joseph Weld Hospice
Saturday 6 May Poole Arts Centre
Massed Bands, Pipes & Drums and Ethnic Dancing. A unique programme of Music and Dance, Gurkha Dancing and River Dancing.

Military Wings and Wheels
Supporting the Royal Signals Education Project and the Royal Star and Garter Home
Sunday 11 June
Compton Abbas Airfield, A3501 A30 Nr Shaftesbury
Military Aircraft flying and static displays of Military vehicles, with trade stalls and fun-rides.

Bright Sparks
Friday/Saturday 7-8 July Blandford Camp
Interactive Science and Technology Fair. Hands-on Exhibits and Prize Winning Quizzes and Fun Trails.

Model Railway Engineering Expo
Supporting the Royal Signals Education Project
Saturday/Sunday 12-13 August
Semaphore Arms, Blandford Camp
20,000sqft of exhibits, 'hands-on' displays and trade stands. The largest displays of model engines and model railways in the Southwest. With examples of all gauges and national layouts, representing the USA, Swiss, German and British.

Dorset Air Day
Supporting the Royal Signals Education Project and the Royal Star and Garter Home
Sunday 20 August
Compton Abbas Airfield, A3501 A30 Nr Shaftesbury
Top aerobatic displays, over 40 Vintage, Classic Civil and Military Aircraft. Refreshments, trade stands, entertainments, rides and vehicle displays.

Southwest Motorcycle Expo
Supporting the Royal Signals Education Project
Sunday 10 September
Old Motor Cycle Race Track, Blandford Camp
All day, top motorcycle stunt action. Refreshments, trade stands, rides, entertainment and static displays.

Contact:
Adam Forty
Event Organiser & Business Development Manager
Tel: 01258 482258 (Mil: 737 2248) Fax: 01258 482084
E-mail: royalsignalsmuseum@mail.army.mod.uk

THE ROYAL SIGNALS BAND

It's time to ring the changes at the Corps Band as **Maj David Wall,** the Director of Music, handed over his conductor's baton to **Capt Paul Murrell.** Friday 14 January was the day that, after nearly 13 years with the Royal Signals Band, **Maj Wall** retired from Directing the Band. There cannot be many people in the Corps who would not recognise those silvery-grey locks. For the Band personnel it also seems strange not to see them looking out of the picture window that is our view of the Director of Music's office. However, time stands still for no man, and we now welcome **Capt Paul Murrell**, his wife **Jan** and son **Peter**, (who is at boarding school) to Blandford Camp. We wish them happy times here and await the changes that will occur, with great enthusiasm.

As a former Gunner, **Capt Murrell** enlisted in 1971 as a junior musician. He then joined the Royal Artillery Mounted Band as solo clarinetist. In 1984 he started a three-year Student Bandmasters course at the Royal Military School of Music (RMSM), Kneller Hall and upon completion, was posted to the Worcestershire and Sherwood Forester's Regiment as their Bandmaster. After six years with his band it was time to return to Kneller Hall and with the formation of the Corps of Army Music, he was part of the Training and Development Team, and then became the School Bandmaster. After commissioning, and yet more time at RMSM Kneller Hall, it was time to take charge of one of the new amalgamations, The Band of the Prince of Wales' Division (Lucknow), then after less than two years with them, he took charge of the Corps Band. His reputation goes before him and we are sure that we have an exciting time ahead.

Shortly after the arrival of **Capt Murrell** we welcomed our second lady into the Band. Musician **Esther Freeborn** has just completed Phase Two training at RMSM Kneller Hall, this after studying at Wolverhampton University for her music degree. We again have the luxury of two flautists.

There has been little activity outside of the Band Block during the last few months. The carol concert in the Corn Exchange on 16 December 1999 was a sell out as it was **Maj Wall**'s final public appearance with the Band. A handful of dinner nights, a play-off for the cruise liners out of Southampton for P&O Cruises and a Parade for the Air Training Corps Anniversary through Blandford have given us a break from digging deep into our music library in preparation for the year ahead. The New Millennium is shaping up to be an unusually busy time for the Band. Everyone wants to employ the Band's services to add an extra dimension to their celebrations so it will appear that it will be late into 2000 before the Band will have time to stop and breathe!

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS
FEBRUARY 2000

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Brig R. Baxter	DPOL (ICS)
Col M. C. Wilkinson	DOPS (ICS)
Lt Col I. Cameron-Mowat	2 Signal Regiment
Lt Col T. P. Rimmell	MOD Centre Block
Lt Col D. M. Steele	AD OR (TC&M)
Lt Col M. A. Stevenson	HQ 2 (NC) Signal Brigade
Maj G. W. Fletcher	HQ DCSA
Maj F. J. Freely	Y List MCM Div
Maj D. J. Lumb	R. SIGNALS/Int Div
Maj G. R. Mason	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Maj I. W. R. Seraph	HQ Scotland
Capt A. J. Smith	39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (213)
Capt J. S. T. Sykes	36 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Capt M. J. Wong	Flying Wing SAAVN
Lt N. H. A. Francis-McGann	16 Signal Regiment
Lt A. M. Hono	Royal School of Signals

OFFICERS
MARCH 2000

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col A. R. Gale	Dept of AG
Lt Col C. Wakerley	ACOS J6 PJHQ (UK)
Maj T. A. Dean	21 Signal Regiment (Air Support)
Maj J. A. B. Floyd	HQ R. SIGNALS
Maj J. H. Fraser	259 Signal Squadron
Maj B. W. Jenkins	RMAS
Maj T. W. Pender-Johns	37 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Maj S. J. Richardson	R. SIGNALS/Int Div
Maj G. Thomas	Comms Projects Div CIS Eng Gp
Maj M. P. Wise	HQ LAND
A/Maj A. P. Ferris	63 (SAS) Signal Squadron (V)
Capt E. S. Allan	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Capt G. R. Burrows	HQ DFTS
Capt B. J. Fitch	20 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (200)
Capt McElwee	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (204)
Capt G. L. Richards	12 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (228)
Capt P. J. Stoddart	264 Signal Squadron (SAS)
Lt R. L. Francis	7 Signal Regiment
Lt D. A. Jackson	21 Signal Regiment (Air Support)
Lt I. Lowther	8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (218)
Lt J. C. Stewart	HQ R. SIGNALS

WOs and SNCOs
FEBRUARY 2000

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
WO1 (FofS) C. P. Gill	249 Signal Squadron (AMF(L))
Sgt P. A. Reed	21 Signal Regiment (Air Support)
Sgt P. N. Render	21 Signal Regiment (Air Support)

WOs and SNCOs
MARCH 2000

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
SSgt M. P. E. Angrove	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
SSgt L. North	AAC Arborfield
A/SSgt A. M. Maylett	1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Sgt A. S. McDonald	16 Signal Regiment

www.jprecruit.com

CAREERS IN COMMUNICATIONS

My clients are world leaders in the design, manufacture and operation of advanced radio, data and telecoms equipment and networks. Opportunities exist in:-

* System Design
* Network Planning
* Project Management
* Test Engineering
* Installation / Commissioning
* Technical Support
* Training

Contact John Darby, quoting ref: 42 on 01727 818704 or email to johnd@jprecruit.com

JOHN PRODGER PLC
The Courtyard, Alban Park, Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL4 0LA
TEL 01727 841101 FAX 01727 838272

JOHN PRODGER

THE ARMY TAUGHT YOU NEVER TO GIVE UP, SO DON'T

So there you are in civvy street doing the same old thing day in, day out. But...why?...If it's the Army you're missing, then how about joining the TA? It's a vital part of the British Army.

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 cap badge and become a member of either an Independent Unit as above, or a TA Specialist Unit. In either, you can maintain and develop 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 2 weekends and a 15 day annual camp. In return, you will earn Army rates of pay and an annual tax-free bonus of up to £1050.

For an information brochure call **0845 603 32 32** quoting ref **WI010**, or send the coupon to: Freepost, The TA, CV37 9BR.

SURNAME _____ MR/MS
BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE CIRCLE

FIRST NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

_____

POSTCODE _____

TEL (STD) _____

DATE OF BIRTH ____ / ____ / ____

The TA is committed to Equal Opportunities.

TERRITORIAL ARMY

BE THE BEST

http://www.army.mod.uk

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

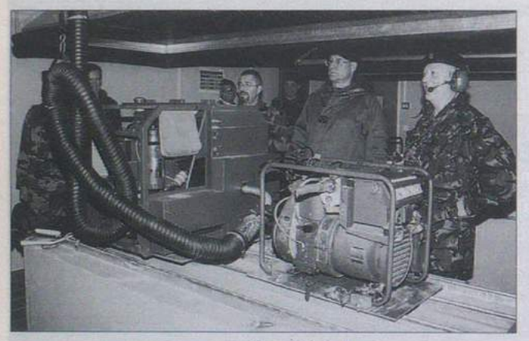
HEADQUARTERS ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS

THE VISIT BY THE SIGNAL OFFICER-IN-CHIEF, BRIG C. J. BURTON OBE ADC, TO THE FRENCH SIGNALS CORPS 9 - 12 JANUARY 2000

The Signal Officer-in-Chief, **Brig Cedric Burton OBE ADC**, recently visited the French Signal Corps accompanied by his COS, **Col John Ewbank**, and the French LO at Blandford, **Lt Col Alain Malnuit**. The party were met at the Eurostar station in Paris by **Lt Col Stephen Croft**, the British LO at the French School of Signals.

On the first day of the visit **Brig Burton** met his French opposite number, **Lt Gen Patrick Henry**, who acted as guide and host throughout a packed schedule over the following three days. After inspecting the guard of honour, the SOinC was given a brief on the French Signal Corps, which was founded in June 1942. The British party was impressed by how quickly such a relatively young Corps has adapted itself to be at the very forefront of communications change.

After lunch we were briefed on the French equivalent of the DCSA, set up by **Gen de Gaulle** to give the military exclusive use of its own fixed telecoms network. This network is the most sophisticated and extensive in Europe, but the French government is now considering privatising it. The rest of the afternoon was spent at Thomson CSF, seeing the RITA 2000 system and the new HQ CIS configuration. The SOinC remained impassive throughout to any 'hard sell' by this French communications contractor, which works hand-in-glove with the French Signal Corps. We were then wined and dined in a very smart Parisian restaurant, run by a world champion wine taster, and the British party nearly guessed one of the wines correctly (they said it was red and dry).



'.....sorry Mon Général
but I am getting no answer from this generator!'

In a cavalcade of official cars, with occasionally the blue lights flashing to move aside mere mortals, the visitors were swept off to Laval, two hours west of Paris, to see RITA 2000 at its testing and experimentation unit. The Brigadier was able to test the equipment and spoke to a surprised French Colonel on duty in Kosovo - this was after widespread panic caused by **Lt Gen Henry** asking the duty officer if he spoke English, to which he replied 'No, sir, I do not, but I know a man who can!'

After another magnificent lunch we arrived at the French School of Signals in Rennes, Brittany, where **Brig Burton** met the school commandant, **Maj Gen Kuntz**, and inspected the guard-of-honour. A presentation followed on the school, which trains all ranks on signals equipment, with the exception of the signaller, who carries out initial training in the regiment. The SOinC then toured the school and met both instructors and students. After dinner with **Gen & Mrs Kuntz**, the Brigadier was shown to his suite at the school, appropriately named 'The Blandford Suite', reserved for visiting generals from around the world.

SOinC (A) and Lt Gen Henry
being briefed at the French Army Signal School at Rennes

The following morning the party flew to the French equivalent of HQ LAND, at Lille, where the SOinC met the GOC, **Gen Forterre**, and was then briefed on the French CIS management system. The briefing was followed by a tour of the shelters used by a divisional HQ in the field - the Brigadier was most impressed and asked if he could take one home! The evening was spent wining and dining **Lt Gen Henry**, who had accompanied the SOinC throughout his visit. The two Generals (for in France everyone from Brigadier upwards is addressed as 'Mon Général') had hit it off, further strengthening the growing ties between the two Corps. The return gastronomic match is awaited with much anticipation!

HEADQUARTERS 2ND (NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS) SIGNAL BRIGADE & COTSWOLD GARRISON

Comd **Brig S. G. Hughes CBE**

THE COMMANDER VISITS HIS SCOTTISH 'ESTATE'

Brig Hughes has undertaken what will be his final 'Grand Tour' of his [NB: at this point, the author asks readers of this article to picture in their minds, shortbread box-lid scenes of Bens, Glens and Bagpipers] Scottish 'estate', visiting some of the most far-flung outposts within the 2 (NC) Sig Bde empire. In the space of a mere four days, The Comd visited 2 Sig Sqn (V) in Dundee, R Signals MCM Div and 32 Sig Regt (V) in Glasgow, 52 Sig Sqn (V) in East Kilbride, Comd 52 (L) Bde in Edinburgh and both 242 Sig Sqn and GOC Scotland in Craigiehall. He raised and resolved a great number of concerns and issues and was successful at further raising the already exceptionally high profile of the Brigade north of the border. He was delighted to meet a great number of both TA and Regular soldiers and officers of the Brigade, many of whom took the opportunity to fully express to him their own individual concerns and aspirations! **Brig Hughes** will soon be moving on to become Comd BMATT in Sierra Leone.

HQ STAFF CONQUER THE MALVERN HILLS

by SSgt Dek Painter

The idea started off as, 'Wouldn't it be nice to go for a ramble,' and ended up being a nine mile yomp across all the Malvern Hills! Both military and civilians had volunteered to go; now it was a case of damage limitation. **WO2 (YofS) Jimmy James** and **SSgt Dek Painter** decided that a recce should be done, as Malvern looks quite flat on the map. So of they toddled to run – no, walk – no, amble the chosen route, to find all the watering holes along the way and to ensure that there were enough places for a mini-bus to park should one of their 20 or so fellow ramblers become injured, exhausted or, er, develop altitude sickness on the day. Three options were identified: the first being up to the top then along the ridge (hard); the second being up to the top then following a line just below the ridge (easy); the third being 'stay in the bus and we'll see you at the end!' The map was put on the notice board with the easy route highlighted in luminous green and the hard route marked very faintly with an HB pencil.

We all met at 7 am - still dark and the middle of the night for some. The bus dropped us all off at the most northern car park, which was next to a sheer rock face. At this point, a jolly japester who shall remain nameless said, 'Right everyone, we need to get up that rock face - it should only take a couple of hours, then it'll be all down hill from there.' The replies were too abusive to publish here. Then we were off with the COS, **Maj Paul** 'I've jumped over bigger hills than this' **Kelly,** leading from the front – as we would have expected of course. It was lucky that he possessed the most yellowish yellow jacket in the entire world and was therefore not that hard to find in the mist. A few of our lady ramblers hadn't realised quite how steep the first bit would be, but they persevered admirably and were rewarded at the highest point (Worcestershire Beacon) with sleet, rain, snow and a Force 8 wind. The rest of the walk was a doddle - though some might say otherwise.

The happy ramblers of Corsham conquer
Worcestershire Beacon

We stopped for lunch at a hostelry for ale drinkers and by sheer coincidence the England v Fiji World Cup match was on! Once back on the bus most people simply crashed out, exhausted after a day of fresh air and exercise, a very successful day indeed.

FAREWELL THEN COLONEL TONY

The HQ bids a very sad farewell to **Lt Col (Retd) Tony Hill**, who retires – properly this time - after more than 11 years here as SO2 G1/G4/MS. We'll greatly miss his unique sense of humour. In fact, it could be said that **Col Tony** resembles East Ham Tube Station – in that he's one stop short of Barking! Seriously, however, it can also be said that **Col Tony** could have been the very model for which was written the following statement extracted from the Royal School of Signals Troop Commander's Guide:

'An officer's personal conduct must be beyond reproach. Integrity is essential to leadership, in that it implies honesty, sincerity, reliability, unselfishness, moral courage and consistency of approach..'

In his time here, **Col Tony** has provided successive Brigade Commanders, members of the Staff and the remainder of the Brigade and Cotswold Garrison with an abundance of honest, sincere advice. He'll be very sorely missed. His successor will be **Lt Col Mike Stevenson**, who is, of course, no stranger to the ways of MS himself. The HQ looks forward to his arrival in the New Year.

CONGRATULATIONS

Sincerest congratulations to **Capt Andy Fletcher** of the ACISG, who has married his resident-of-Paris-loved-one, **Paula**. She that must now be obeyed works for Mobil and lives in an exclusive quarter of the French capital - which must seem like a million miles away from dear old Corsham. The HQ wishes them every happiness for the future and hopes that the fact that they happen to live and work in different countries at the moment will not detract too much from the joys of married life!

THE BALD EAGLE BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY

**JUST ABOUT TO LEAVE ROYAL SIGNALS?
DO YOU HOLD A TEM, BSC or other relevent qualification (such as PRINCE 2)?**

**Do you seek a fair reward for your talents?
Are you independent and confident of your abilities?
Are travel and variety still of interest?
Then why not consider**

THE BALD EAGLE CONSULTANCY Ltd

For more details send your CV to me, Chris Harper at Thebaldeagle9@hotmail.com

'EAGLES SOAR'

NAAFI

Every penny Naafi makes is reinvested into its shops and clubs to improve the quality of facilities and services or returned in the form of a dividend.

Serving the Services and their families Worldwide.

XI

HEADQUARTERS 11 SIGNAL BRIGADE

The rigors of Christmas and the New Year behind us, we entered a period of calm and consolidation – I think not. With half the Headquarters dispersed and using the airlines the way the rest of us use taxis, the Headquarters seems almost peaceful at times. However, the planning for the build up exercises towards Ex Arrcade Fusion and for the exercise itself continues enthusiastically – 'You had how many planning it last year?' seems the staple cry from the newer members of the Headquarters. The planning and implementation of the commercialisation of communications as part of the Commander's pan-Balkans CIS Strategy continues apace. The team **Maj Jim Foulkes, Captain John Hiorns** and **Flt Lt Farid Khan** seem to oscillate between Theatre, Abbey Wood, Christchurch and Donnington with monotonous regularity. They seem to have that air of men who have got withdrawal symptoms from the lack of golf, are suffering total bewilderment at the magnitude of the task in hand or are suffering horrendous jet lag! The Commander has continued to show that he really can be in two places at the same time; but we knew that already!

HAIL AND FAREWELL

It seems to be a habit of starting this section with the comment another period of heavy changes. Having just said farewell to **Majs Jean Payne** (V) (no relationship to Cynthia) and **Jim Sykes** over the Christmas period, we continue the motion in the New Year. However, as an aside, avid readers will remember it was reported in the last edition that **Capt Jim Sykes** was warned of a posting to Germany and was much disappointed at not being posted as Training Major to a TA unit. Well wheels do turn and his posting was changed to - Training Major of a TA unit. Well there goes one exceptionally contented soldier! Congratulations on the promotion **Maj Sykes** and we know you are delighted to be getting every Monday off?

On the 22 January, over a working week, we bid farewell to a number of stalwarts of the Headquarters. Over a fine lunch the Commander, **Brig Jonathan Cook**, let flow in prose his words of farewell, to the outgoing Deputy Commander, **Col Douglas McLay, Flt Lt Farid Khan** and **SSgt Bas Roberts**. **Col McLay** departs to be Colonel TA at HQ R. SIGNALS, while **Flt Lt Khan**, our RAF exchange officer moves to TCW with the intention of turning them into real soldiers. This will be his first posting to a RAF unit! To both we offer our thanks for their efforts and friendship during their tours and wish them the best in their future careers. **SSgt Bas Roberts** leaves not only us, but the Regular Corps and the Army to join the TA proper, as Staff Sergeant NRPS in 31 Sig Regt – fine Regiment (and **Adam** (of Eve) tells me it was even better when it was part of this Brigade!) We wish him and **Brenda** all the best in their new environment knowing that they will enjoy both London and the new unit. We just hope that having had the time to get his handicap down to single figures in Shropshire, that the cost of golf and the anticipated work load in London does not push it back up.

With all sadness there has to be some gladness (this is the Commander's prose getting to me!) and he continued in verse to welcome some new arrivals. Our new Deputy Commander, **Col Roger Davenport** arrived fresh and eager, from 2 (NC) Sig Bde, to join a real field Headquarters! Believe us he has already made his presence felt! To him and **Elaine** we offer a warm welcome and a successful tour. Our new SO3 Ops **Capt Alan Garrett** arrived willing and able, and now commutes to and from Kosovo with the ease of a Whitehall warrior between Main Building and the Keep. The last to be part of the Commander's bardic tribute was **Maj Mark Smith** who arrived from the rigors of Squadron Command in 36 Sig Regt to the delights of Shropshire and the Headquarters. We also have subsequently welcomed our new EO Finance to the Headquarters, **Miss Davina Carter** – new face and new post. We are sure that she will have a prosperous and enjoyable tour.

POST SCRIPT

It is apparent that some members of the Corps are still working from old Staff and Distribution lists. It might therefore be prudent to remind them that HQ 11 Sig Bde moved from Deysbrook Barracks, Liverpool to Venning Barracks Donnington, Shropshire in April 1996. For those who seldom travel north of the Black Pudding line, Shropshire is a rather large County between God's Country and the M6, some 30 miles North West of Birmingham.

NEWS OF TRAINING

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

EXERCISE SHARP INITIATIVE 18-21 JANUARY - *by Cpl Barker*

Unknown to the rest of the Troop, **Cpl Ramsey** and **Cpl Barker** had been putting together an Exercise that would test the iniative and resourcefulness of the Junior NCOs in the Soldier Training Section. We were under the impression that an Inter-Section Competition, Exercise Champ or Chomp, had been organised at HMS *Dolphin* in Gosport. During the initial briefing, our mobile phones and wallets were taken from us. Then **SSgt Heaton**, our Troop OC took great pleasure in telling us that Ex Champ or Chomp didn't exist but that Exercise Sharp Initiative did. Over the next few days our initiative would be tested to the extreme. We were to survive without any money and attempt to complete various tasks, ranging from selling women's underwear to appearing on a television programme. After being given only three minutes to pack a day sack, we were divided into pairs, loaded on to two minibuses and dropped off all over the south of England.

Most of the groups set off towards London where they hoped to visit the Dome, Planet Hollywood and get their names on the Euston destination board. **Cpls Passfield** and **MacDonald** were the first to score points by appearing at Chelsea football ground with **George Weah**. After travelling to London **Cpls Shaw** and **Hitchmough** decided that it was about time they pulled a pint. **Cpl Ganga** and **LCpl Raine** headed to Soho to try and get an interview with a stripper, but after being offered various illegal substances they decided to give it a miss. Now in Bournemouth **Cpl Lockwood** and myself, **Cpl Barker**, successfully arrangeed to stay in the Royal Bath, a five star hotel. Then we interviewed **David Essex** at the Pavillion Theatre. After selling women's underwear in London, **Cpls Hewitt** and **Parkinson** began their long search for accommodation. Winchester FM were happy to help **Cpl Ginson** and **LCpl Gillett** in completing the task of getting onto radio. I feel that at this point I must apologise to the patients in Southampton General where they dressed up as nurses and worked on the wards.

After, in some cases a good night's sleep, the NCOs of Radio Exercise Troop set off in search of breakfast and, as with most fit and healthy soldiers, Burger king was the choice. Completed tasks were being reported back to the stunned exercise controllers in Blandford at a more frequent rate. **Cpls Passfield** and **MacDonald** had managed to get into the Mirror and met **Helen Chamberlin** from Sky Sports. **Cpl Lockwood** and myself achieved the task of getting a free meal in Planet Hollywood and met **Paddy Ashdown**. **Cpls Shaw** and **Hitchmough** managed to drive a police car and get their fingerprints taken. **Cpl Gibson** and **LCpl Gillett** got into Southampton football ground. **Cpl Ganga** and **LCpl Raine** had their photo taken with **Clive Anderson** and after constantly being turned away from everywhere that they tried, **Cpls Hewitt** and **Parkinson** decided to write a poem about hospitality in our capital city. The Exercise finished

with a presentation to the Chief Instructor, **Lt Col Batho**, who was very impressed with what his NCOs had achieved. When all the points had been totalled up, first place was awarded to **Cpl Lockwood** and myself.

RADEX TROOP - *by Cpl Mark Cozens*

Finally the Exercise period is over, time to relax (or so we thought). No more exercises until February. It had been an eventful couple of months with various vehicle inspections and day to day duties in Radex Tp. We had our fifth annual golf competition, another wet day, but all in all it turned out to be a good round, with the expert, **Cpl Andy Lane**, doing a lot of coaching. Congratulations to the winning team, who were **Sgt Pete Emsen** (surprise), **Cpl Andy Lane** (surprise), **LCpl Jason Kent** and **Sig Stu Gould**. We also had our Christmas party in Bournemouth, organised by **Cpl Graham** 'AFA (Abs from Aberdeen)' **Gibson**. Thanks for a brilliant night, which was enjoyed by all. Radex Tp has had quite a few promotions in the last few months. Who says it doesn't pay to be in a training unit.

Congratulations to **Cpl Ted** 'Tangent' **Heath** on promotion to Sergeant and for selection to go on his YofS. Also **LCpls Mark Cozens** and 'Parky' **Parkinson** on promotion to Corporal and **Sigs Steff Brownless, Wayne Evans, Stuart Gould** and **Kev Johnson** on being selected for Lance Corporal.

In December we had shock news of a marriage hidden from the troops, of **Cpl** 'Mac' **MacDonald** and **Simmone Walls**. Congratulations to the pair of you. Since our last entry in *The WIRE* we have had numerous people posted in. Welcome to **Cpl Tim** 'I'm not going to be here very long' **Barker, LCpl Mick** 'I can learn my trade now' **Raine** arriving from a long stint in the guardroom. **Sigs Wayne Evans, Stu Gould, Kev Johnson, LCpl Rich Eveleigh** and **LCpl Cooper**. We also now have a few budding sports personalities: **Cpl Mark Cozens, Cpl Ed** 'When I can be bothered' **Lockwood** and **LCpl Martin** 'Got all the gear' **Gillett**, who represent the Regiment and Blandford Hockey teams.

NCO LEADERSHIP WING - *A personal view by Sgt 'Si' Wigmore*

In case there is still any doubt within the Field Army over the location, name and range of courses provided for the Corps by NCO Leadership Wing, this article is mandatory reading. Under command of **Capt Steve Morgan**, the Wing is firmly established within Command Training Group, which in turn lies within the newly formed Training Operations Division at the Royal School of Signals. The following personal report by **Sgt 'Si' Wigmore** has been written after four months experience in NCO Leadership Wing.

I joined the Wing at a time of change, as the Royal Signals Detachment Commanders Course (RSDCC) became the Royal Signals Junior Commanders Course (RSJCC) and the Royal Signals Sergeants Course (RSSC) moves into a transitional phase in order to keep pace with the changes taking place within the Corps. Since moving from Colerne in 1998, it was apparent after I arrived that the ethos has not changed: all instructors dedicate themselves to getting the best out of students on every course run by NCO Leadership Wing. Like many in the Corps I had heard rumours that the courses were now attendance only. This I discovered to my relief is not the case. Whilst the content is changing to meet developing Corps requirements, the standards required for a favourable result have not. It has to be stressed that course reports still have a great influence on future progression through the ranks. As this article goes to press, the RSSC Royal Signals Training Objectives (RSTO) are being reviewed to keep up with changing needs within the Corps. The manning for the RSSC Team has changed from one Staff Sergeant (SSI) and four Sergeants (SI), to four Staff Sergeants (SSI), one of which will be Queen's Gurkha Signals. The Wing continues to be commanded by a LE Captain and there are three Warrant Officers, one of whom is the Infantry Adviser. At this point it is worth reminding readers that NCO Leadership Wing is always on the look out for high-calibre instructors as volunteers to come to Blandford. All applications must be clearly stated 'NCO Leadership Wing' to assist R Signals/Int Corps MCM Division staff.

The Royal Signals Sergeants' Course tackling the Assault Course at Blandford. Standards of fitness must be high on arrival

During my time in NCO Leadership Wing we have received many visitors from both the Regular and TA units. Commanding Officers, Squadron Commanders and even Training Wings from Regular and TA units have seen for themselves the work carried out by the Wing. There is an open door policy at NCO Leadership Wing that extends to all personnel, whether prior notice is given or not. The Group and Wing OC's both actively encourage units to visit. So what standards do you need to achieve before arriving at Blandford in order to pass a course, and pass it well? A sound knowledge and understanding of ITDs is essential. This must be balanced with a good level of physical fitness. If you struggle with the BCFT in week one on the RSSC, you are unlikely to find time to improve your fitness during the course! Reaching these standards is only the minimum standard required, as a positive attitude and an open mind will count for much during your training.

The courses offered by NCO Leadership Wing are listed below:

Regular
Royal Signals Sergeants Course (RSSC)
- 5 weeks duration, 5 per year
Royal Signals Junior Commanders Course (RSJCC)
- 4 weeks duration, 6 per year

TA
Royal Signals Staff Sergeants Course (RSSSC)
- 2 weeks duration, 2 per year
Royal Signals Corporals Course (RSCC)
- 2 weeks duration, 4 per year
Royal signals Recruit Course (RSRC)
- 2 weeks duration, 10 per year.

Like so many other areas of the Corps, NCO Leadership Wing is undergoing necessary change to meet the future requirements of the Corps. There should, however, be no doubt amongst personnel within the Corps that, although the emphasis on the courses and subject matter may change, the ethos and standards required to achieve good results have not. Prior preparation is the essential.

TROOP COMMANDERS COURSE 46
EXERCISE CRYSTAL DRAGON: 27–31 JANUARY 2000
by 2Lt E. McLellan

Whoever compiled the training directive for the Troop Commanders Course deemed it necessary to include a period of arduous adventure training as a compulsory element, (as if Radio Group, Area Systems

Group and many other 'Groups' weren't enough) – thank you. **2Lt** 'Pizza Wheel' **Morris** and **2Lt Hebblethwaite** were delighted to be delegated the responsibility of organising the exercise and worked hard to formulate something demanding, challenging and original. Following in the footsteps of our predecessors was not an option, it was time to be different. Not surprisingly, a little arm twisting was required to convince the course that a ski trip to Austria would be 'more beneficial' than hill walking in Wales. Using the generous grants available costs were kept to a minimum. **2Lt Morris** found the cheapest flights possible, or so he was led to believe, until additional members to the exercise managed to get tickets for the same flight at half the price. Consequently, after some gentle encouragement and the suggestion of a good will gesture the Course Instructor, **Capt Ade Clewlow** secured the use of the Lufthansa Business Class Lounge (i.e. unlimited supplies of free food and drink).

Thus, after much planning and preparation, it was time to put on our course tops, beautifully designed by **2Lt** 'Slim' **Hawkins** and fly to Munich, (not forgetting to visit the Business Class Lounge along the way). We arrived in the small town of Hochfilzen, 1000m above sea level, in the early hours of a Friday morning with the promise of excellent skiing conditions. Beginners, intermediate and advanced groups were formed, with instructors being provided from the local Austrian ski school. Friday was the day for discovering and re-discovering our 'ski-feet'. Naturally the Advanced group quickly ascended to the higher slopes and descended even more quickly, full of style and professionalism. This was further enhanced by **2Lt** 'Marmite King' **Smith** who had been modest enough to place himself with the intermediates. Meanwhile the Intermediate Group was not only revising basic ski skills, but putting translation skills into practice as **Florian** the instructor told us to, 'Look towards the Wally' (the Valley). At the bottom of Hochfilzens' slopes the Beginners were quickly mastering the snow plough and preparing to ascend a little higher. During the next few days, lots of progress and improvement was made by all as everyone maximised their time on the slopes, keeping après pistes visits to a minimum and making the most of the skiing opportunity. The Intermediates' spirits were slightly dampened on the Saturday when they were left minus instructor for a while, an action which got him sacked! In the end, snow holes and snow angels were artistically created instead. An early start on Sunday compensated for this and horrendous weather conditions kept the entire civilian populous away, leaving the slopes of Fieberbrunn clear for our almost exclusive use.

Cool not Cold

The aim of the exercise was for all Troop Commanders to achieve the Basic Ski Proficiency Bronze Award. The final morning was test day, with excellent weather conditions and plenty of snow. The amount achieved in just three and a half days was demonstrated by all members of TC 46 gaining their Bronze award and **2Lts Hawkins,** 'Colonial' **Lumley,** and 'Big Bird' **Pim** achieving Silver (hope the instructors course goes as well). Then, painful as it was, we had to say goodbye to the slopes and return to the reality of Blandford and exercises of a different nature. However, Ex Crystal Dragon was without a doubt a great success, particularly given the time scales for preparation and execution and considering that it is the first of its kind for a Troop Commanders Course. A big thank you to those who contributed funds to the trip and to **SSgt Fluck** and his staff on Exercise Winter Warrior for their support. Finally, a point for all units, eighteen Troop Commanders are shortly to commence their first tours and will be more than happy to take Troops skiing.

DO NOT SEND US DIGITAL PHOTOS

as they are only about 72 dpi and to be of sufficient standard for publication they need to be between 300 to 400 dpi

THE CAPITAL GROUP

Capital Group Recruiting Excellence

Recently left the Corps or due to leave soon?

We have vacancies for:

Telecommunications Technicians for RF Systems (Base Stations and Mobile Radios) used by the Emergency Services also for Transmission Systems (Fibre Optics SDH Networks)

All vacancies are based in London or the south of England

Contact David Hunt or Jim Neilson on

0208 542 8131

Send CVs to: The Capital Group, Broadway House, 112-134 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1RL
Fax: 0208 540 7385
E-mail: cts@cap-recruit.co.uk
Web Site: www.cap-recruit.co.uk

Right Turn into Civvy Street!

As a specialist IT and Telecommunications recruitment consultancy, we have a wealth of opportunities for ex R Signals personnel. We have numerous positions based throughout the UK with a wide variety of clients.

We have a continuous demand for GSM, SATCOM, RF engineers and project managers to name a few.

Should you be leaving the Corps soon we are able to assist you in finding a new position commensurate with your highly sought after skills and abilities.

Call our ex Royal Signals consultant, Stephen Upsall today or alternatively forward a comprehensive CV.

Telephone: 01892 549898 fax: 01892 549808
Email: cvmail@ispcomputing.co.uk

ISP INFORMATION SYSTEMS PERSONNEL

ISP Ltd, ISP House
98 London Road, Southborough,
Tunbridge Wells, Kent,
TN4 0PW

ISP INFORMATION SYSTEMS PERSONNEL

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col R. G. Nicholson**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. J. Stonier**

REGIMENTAL CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE
by Sig Fitton 2 Sqn

The Regimental Carol Service was held in the gymnasium complete with cross, lectern and flags a-plenty. The padre gave a lovely homily on the life of Christ and the use of mobile phones, which gave us all a lot to think about over Christmas. The bible readings from the CO, **Lt Col Nicholson,** and **Sig** 'Fitz' **Fitton** were given in legendary style, but nothing could match the singing! The soldiers' competitive nature and noisy enthusiasm raised the rafters and set new standards in tuneless chaos. It was obviously going to be a great night as the carol service was followed by the soldiers Christmas dinner and a disco.

SINGLE SOLDIERS CHRISTMAS PARTY – *by Sig Casson 2 Sqn*

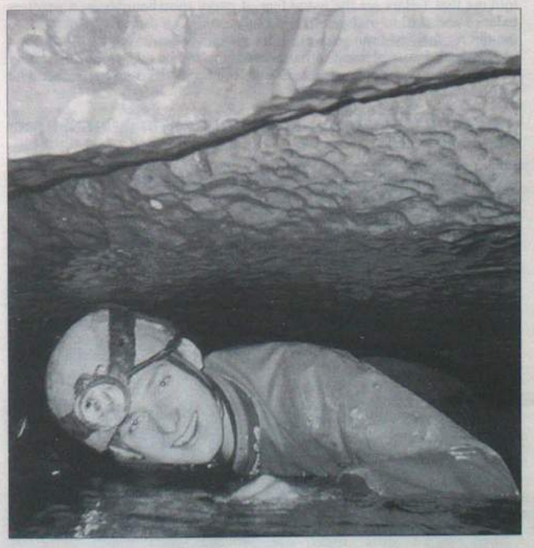
Following an 'angelic' Christmas Carol Service in the gym, 2 Sqn made a decisive move to march over to the cookhouse for our Christmas dinner. Expectations were circulated about the amount of free beer we were going to receive. I had personally been told at least four by our departing **WO2 (SSM)** 'Taff' **Thomas.** I and many others were therefore a little disappointed to find two cans of newts! Special brew on the table. Although it has to be said, it did improve as we drank. Seated, we waited with great expectation for the festive meal whilst pulling our expensive crackers. Cheers went up as the permanent staff served us, including celebratory guest **Sgt** 'Ned' **Flanders** from radio group. It's nice for the boot to be on the other foot for a change! Spirits rose as we hurriedly wolfed down the food, in an attempt to eat it before it was taken from beneath our noses. This did not prevent a certain extrovert personality from Iron Tp turning his sprouts into highly accurately ammunition, hitting **WO2 (SSM)** 'Taff' **Thomas** with what can only be described as a direct 'hit', square on the nose. His buddies, of course, grassed him up which earned him six show parades. A small amount of food may have been distributed between the tables in the finest airborne tactics, with the meal finished we retired to the bar for a few 'quiet drinks!' An excellent send off before a well needed Christmas break.

1 (OUSTON) SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj J. D. Drummond**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Andy Harriott**

EXERCISE DARK DRAGON I 23-28 JANUARY 2000

Exercise Dark Dragon I was a level 3 Caving Expedition led by **Cpl** 'Tony' **Brown** to the North Yorkshire Dales. The group departed for Yorkshire mid-morning on the Sunday, the long drive north seeming endless. Upon arrival we all quickly settled into our accommodation and unpacked the van before the first of our evening lectures.

Monday morning bright and early off for our first day caving. **Sig** 'Matt' **Judge** was given the task of map reading to the cave 'Great Douk'. With the cave entrance found we finally put on our kit and entered the darkness. The entrance series start wide and high but slowly get lower and tighter, cries of 'its bloody tight' started to un-nerve **Sgt** 'Dave' **Uttley.** Eventually daylight and for those on their first caving experience, it was a welcome sight. But no rest for the wicked, there were four more caves before the day was over.

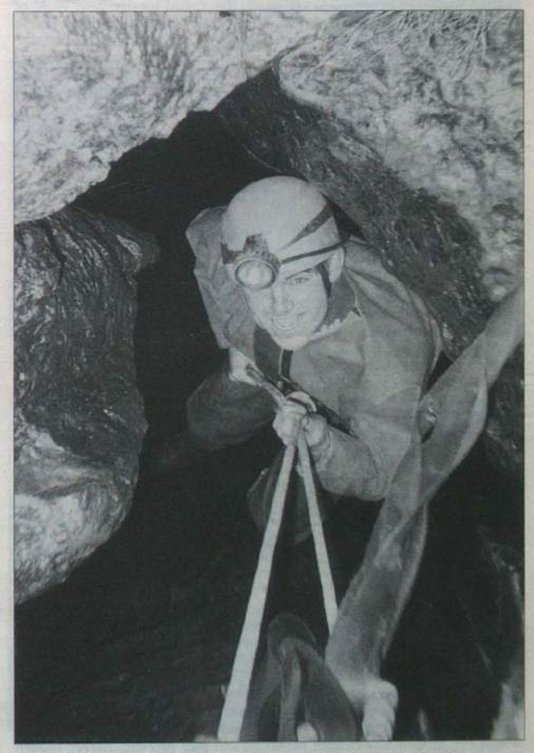


Great Douk Cave Sig Kev Beavis negotiates a low wet crawl

Tuesday's cave was 'Upper and Lower Long Churn', a cave which links into Alum Pot. The map reading was handed over to **Sig** 'Ben' **Rollins,** who navigated the group to the top entrance of 'Upper Long Churn'. The entrance was a 5m-water chute, which required roping up. Once the group were safely down we meandered our way down through the system to the notorious 'Cheese Press', a low bedding plane crawl. Comments of 'you're bloody joking' came from the group, but when **Cpl** 'Tony' **Brown** squeezed through (note; it is just after Xmas and we are all a little plumper), confidence grew and the whole team slowly but surely pushed and panted their way through.

Wednesday and we were off to Brow Gill and Calf Holes. The exit was rigged prior to entering, as this was to be a through trip. **Sgt** 'Dave' **Uttley** rigged the pitch for SRT exit for the instructors and left an electron ladder *in situ* for the group. The cave entrance 'Brow Gill' was the largest so far - a massive opening about 15 foot high and wide. As usual this was not to last. After about five minutes we were on our bellies until we arrived at an enormous waterfall. The group looked around for a way ahead, only to be told that the waterfall had to be climbed. **Cpl** 'Tony' **Brown** climbed first and placed a top rope system to safely bring the group up. Even when roped up **Sig** 'Ben' **Rollins** found the climb an ordeal. Once at the top the passage turned a corner and we were on our bellies again. The passage enlarged as daylight showed the way to the climb out at 'Calf Holes'. The exit was a 10m ladder climb which proved to be difficult for most of the group and one which **Sig** 'Stacey' **Swithenbank** entertained the group; with her original technique in ladder climbing.

Thursday arrived and the week was nearly over, Yordas Pot through to Yordas Cave and Heron through trip was the order of the day. As we approached Yordas Pot entrance (as seen on 'Don't do this at home'), the infamous fallen tree on which ropes are rigged off was looking worse for wear. It was decided that the group would abseil down with the ropes backed up on other anchors and only the leader would abseil directly off the tree to enable the pull through. The abseil was 33m to the bottom of Yordas Pot, one or two of the group had lost a bit of colour and gone pale, but took the challenge in their stride as one after the other they all descended. Once at the bottom it was all smiles and **Sig** 'Jim' **Mooney** was in his element declaring that he had definitely found a new sport. A low connecting crawl was negotiated before another abseil; this time down a waterfall; into Yordas Cave. Everyone down and we entered the massive cavern of Yordas main chamber, breathtaking in its size. There was to be no crawling here and after a short walk we exited through the remains of the old Victorian Show Cave Entrance. An excellent trip and the whole group were buzzing. Unfortunately due to water levels Heron Pot had to be given a miss.



'Yordas Pot' Sig Ben Rollins Abseils into Yordas Pot

Friday already and it was time to get on the Mini-bus for the long drive south back to Blandford. All in all it had been an excellent week with many of the group wishing to pursue caving as a sport.

2 (CATTERICK) SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj L. V. Tomkins**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Neil Fisher**

The Squadron would like to say welcome back to **SSgt Gaz Cole** after a spell in hospital, apparently all the Phase 2 soldiers missed you! The Squadron would like to say hello to **WO2 (SSM) Neil Fisher** (no relation to **WO1 Fisher MBE**) who has joined us from along the corridor from Blandford Support Squadron and a farewell to **WO2** 'Taff' **Thomas** who moves across to School of Signals and joins the DIT team.

SQUADRON CHRISTMAS PARTY

On the 9 December the 2 Sqn Christmas function had an intergalactic taste to it as it took on the theme of outer space. Welcoming the soldiers and guests was the OC, **Maj Louise Tomkins**, whose costume of Queen Amadala was so realistic, that when **Sig Allen** was asked to introduce her to his wife, the reply was, 'Ok, but who are you?' The Sqn 2IC, **Capt** 'James T' **Kenyan** turned up in his futuristic working dress after a bumpy ride in his old trusty MG land speeder. Other eye-catching costumes were worn by **SSgt** 'Darth Maul' **Graham** (turned to the dark side). **Cpl** 'Trigger' **Smith** was a NASA rocket complete with ingenious human waste disposal system. **Sig Lomas** wore tin foil (good effort) and **WO2 (SSM)** 'Taff' **Thomas** came as a Roman (only a few centuries out sir!). We weren't expecting much from the bands that had been booked, however, they performed well and entertained us with great music that got everybody on the dance-floor. Gatecrashers were expected and took the form of unknown mystery silver alien; he proceeded to study us attached to his finger, (alien anatomy). With a well put together finger buffet making a welcome break from cookhouse curry, Iron Tp and Beaufighter Tp shared all the raffle prizes. With disco fever seeing the night out, thanks must go to **SSgt** 'Darth Maul' **Graham** who organised a great night which was enjoyed by all.

3 (HARROGATE) SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj A. J. Duncan**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Peter Tasker**

EXERCISE LIGHTNING CHALLENGE - *by LCpl 'Vic' Vernon*

Ex Lightning Challenge is a one day training exercise that took place on 16 January 2000, run by Lightning Troop. The aim of the exercise is to put the troops through a variety of military orientated stands, testing them both mentally and to a degree physically. It is also designed to enhance their knowledge and experience for future promotion prospects with the use of leadership skills. In all 60 soldiers took part, which were split into six ten-man teams.

Each team had to complete six stands that lasted for one hour each, of which three were verbal discussion stands. The Phase Two trainees had to be guided through subjects to do with current civilian and military affairs. Stand 3, the discussion stand, consisted of the trainees standing up and giving a quick talk about themselves and their experiences so far. **Pte** 'Ross' **Hunters** (who is currently re-badging from the 1 Bn Royal Scots) gave a particularly enlightening talk on his life as an Infanteer in Kenya (Namedropper). Stand 4 consisted of a presentation on Leadership skills by **Capt Todd**, from the Royal Signals Leadership Wing, Stands 5 and 6 were the Command Tasks. Each stand was run by two NCOs from Lightning Tp who are currently re-trading from other forms of life to Technician, they were **Cpl Dave** ' I'm a Liney' **Atherton**, **LCpl** Jay **Dine**, **LCpl Vic** ' Ho Ho Ho Solo' **Vernon** and **LCpl Steve** ' T.A. Mate' **Mottram**. Stand 6 was the stand of **LCpls Dine** and **Vernon**, which consisted of giving some much needed aid to Mr Floppy Dopelis or Mr F to his friends. Mr F is in real life three six-foot lengths of fire hose between two end blocks filled with sand. For the exercise Mr F is a Kosovan Albanian with Angina and the troops' task was to evacuate him via a quick run through the Forrest, across a minefield to his house to get his Angina Medicine. Nothing was allowed to touch the ground in the minefield and nothing was allowed to be touched in the house as it was contaminated with a rather nasty substance. Basically you could say that Mr F 's life is not exactly a bed of roses. His life didn't improve any when the first ten trainees arrived and proceeded to throw Mr F around with the bedside manner of a enraged gorilla in hangover mode.

To add a touch of realism, towards the end of the hour the area came under mortar fire, the first round was a smoker, strategically placed to completely obscure the teams' activity as they hurried to complete the task laid out for them. As the first round blinded the team the second (a Thunderflash) deafened them. With the noise and smoke the trainees found it somewhat difficult to concentrate on the task before them and the sight of trainees falling off of ropes and things shouting 'Incoming' whilst scrambling onto Rovers was a sight to behold. All in all the day went well and the trainees seemed to enjoy the tasks set for them and a good time was had by all.

COMMAND TASKS - *by LCpl Mottram.*

D.S. **LCpl Mottram** and **Cpl Atherton**.Their aim for our command task was quite simple; retrieve the keys to start a car from a locked box situated within a minefield without you or your equipment touching the ground. The box containing the car keys was fastened by two padlocks, of which the keys were placed in two separate areas. The first was situated in a piece of plastic tubing stuck in the ground and was fastened to a cork, whilst the second was hidden inside an old pair of NBC gloves hidden inside one of the obstacles inside the minefield. The 'contenders' had to traverse over various obstacles collecting firstly a water canister; this then had to be filled up using a jug from a big water trough. This hopefully would be used to float the key out of the tube. Unfortunately several teams opted to use the jug only. But anticipating this we cut a large hole in the bottom, which several team members found out much to our amusement! **Sig**. 'Swampy' **Kiff** managed to collect most of the water in his combat trousers instead of the jug. Also **Sig** 'Mungo' **Singh** spent over ten minutes quietly staring down at the pipe before commenting ' 'ere as anyone seen that key that was at the start?' Only to remember a further five minutes later he in fact had it in his pocket. The key in the glove, caused the most problems to the teams. After some constructive prompting from **Cpl** 'I'm a liney' **Atherton**, who was now rolling around on the grass holding his sides, the teams managed to find the key, apart from **Sig** 'Cluster' **Allen** who wore the gloves for about 10 minutes without noticing a large padlock wrapped in paracord inside the little finger. Overall everyone who was not soaked enjoyed themselves, and the tasks were completed within 45 minutes, which left 15 minutes spare. Needless to say my car was pretty clean!

ROYAL SIGNALS SNOWBOARDING CHAMPIONSHIPS
ZELL AM SEE, AUSTRIA 3-11 DECEMBER 1999

OUR FIRST TIME SNOWBOARDING - *By Sig Thomas*

From an early age I always wanted to try snowboarding, I saw it on the telly and when given the opportunity by the Regiment to learn the sport at the Corps championships, I jumped at the chance. I went to Austria as a complete novice, not knowing what to expect. After my first lesson I was a little more at home and found things quite easy. My instructor helped me get over any nerves and he was constantly with us all when we first started out. Once I managed to stay on two feet I started to enjoy things more, and with this came the need for speed. By the second day I was much more confident getting faster all the time. This was a recipe for disaster because the quicker you end up going on a snowboard; the more it hurts when you crash. On a snowboard there are no quick release binding for your feet. By the race day I was managing to turn quickly and couldn't wait for the slalom race to push myself to the limit in race conditions. I found it hard at first to turn round slalom poles, as it required lots of technique. I enjoyed the competition aspect of snowboarding, but preferred the freestyle aspect with jumps better. Now I have had a taste of snowboarding I will definitely go again when the opportunity arises.

By Sig Lavin

I was pleased to be given the opportunity to learn this new and exciting sport. Funding came from the Regiment and Army Sports lottery to help keep the cost down to a minimum. We arrived in Austria to find the weather cold and icy, a lot different from Blandford weather, not!! Lessons started on the Saturday morning for the novice group. We were all nervous and were made to feel relaxed by the Instructors **Sven** and **Michael**. I was told that snowboarding is a massive amount of fun once you have mastered the basics. Who ever told me that must have been lying, as my body was physically exhausted, battered and bruised after the first days tuition. The group was introduced to the Glacier at Kaprun on the Monday where we all had our first introduction to the long world famous T-Bar. All the skiers on the slope seemed to come and watch, as we all tried in vain to make it to the top. This beast just seemed to go on forever, by halfway your legs had given up the ghost, your arms had added about two inches hanging on for grim death and as you fell off to the delight of all the skiers your pride was hurt. This didn't put us off and by the middle of the day, my entire group managed to get to the top without any problems. People have told me that T-Bars are the worst fear of every snowboarder, as it requires balance and skill to make it up without becoming a casualty. Making it to the top for the first time gave me a great sense of achievement. By the end of the week I was pleased to have learnt the basics and would definitely like to go again given the chance. Next time I will be going to a resort with a good chair lift!

5 DIVISION INTER UNIT LADIES HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIPS
by Sig Parrott 2 Sqn

Ladies Hockey Team

13 December 1999 the Ladies Inter Unit Hockey Championship was held at Blandford Camp. The first game of the day got underway, it was slightly one - sided as 11 Sig Regt beat UK land 8-0. The next game was UK land v HQ 3 (UK) Div. Land put up a good fight but unfortunately went down to 6-0. After a buffet lunch came the final, it was a hard fought game between 11 Sig Regt and 3(UK) Div, both teams worked well to try and break the deadlock. It ended 1-0 with the honours going to 3 (UK) Div, due to a fine individual goal scored by **LCpl Tracey Prowse**. **Lt Col Proctor** kindly carried out the presentation of the trophies. Thanks were given to the umpires, **WO2 (SSM) Neil Fisher** and **SSgt (SQMS)** 'Monty' **Moore** and the teams were congratulated on their high standard of play. A special thanks was also given to **Sgt Lee Swann** for organising the tournament. 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt and 11 Sig Regt will now compete in the Army Cup in March 2000.

REGIMENTAL NETBALL

The standard of players and the standard of games have never been so high as we enter a new millennium. In November 1999 a committed team comprising of mainly young bloods with a few exceptions set off to the 5th Division Inter Unit Netball Competition, winning a strong victory against many very experienced and well established teams, and earning a place in the Army Inter-Unit Finals in Aldershot.

Winning came as somewhat of a surprise for the team. We had initially struggled to train together due to trade training constraints, but with one competition win under our belts and a little bit of street cred on court the team began to gel well on court as well as off. We upped training to two nights a week, which meant that **Sig** 'I can't train enough' **Caplin** was in the gym more often than in class! The 'twins' **Sig** 'Dizzy' **McMann** and **Sig** 'Dizzier' **Greenhalgh** kept morale up, whilst **Sig** 'Rocky' **Pardoe** threatened the Army boxing team. The training weekends had somewhat of a social air to them with **Sgt** 'Sport Billy' **Hawtree** thinking she was Tiny Tim in Tescoes rather late at night, and after an exhausting days netball the good old curry came into play.

The Regiment's Netball Squad was outstanding in the Inter Units final gaining a very respectable third place, and exhausted from their efforts went on to represent the Royal Corps of Signals team the following day in the Inter Corps Championships. The Regimental girls showed true endurance and commitment to the sport and played each Corps game as though it was their last. They certainly dominated the Corps side with all but one player coming from Blandford Garrison; a mixture of Cadre and phase two trainees was no match for many of the teams. In the end the final was won yet again by the jolly green giants the RLC. **Capt** 'Mac' **McAnulty** and **Sig** 'Kerry' **Hopkinson** were made to feel like dwarfs against the RLC team, and they were our tallest players! The team finished Fourth overall on goal difference. **Sgt** 'Vicki' **Hawtree** and **Sig** 'Frog'**Lawton** impressed the Army coach and have since been selected for the Army Squad.

RUGBY

The season started off well for the rugby team with a trial against Blandford Rugby Club, which finished with a well deserved win. This gave **WO1 Sartorius** and **SSgt Meek** a good basis on which to build and establish a decent team for the forthcoming season. With the high turnover of soldiers passing through 11 Sig Regt it has been quite difficult to establish a settled team, however several young players have lived up to their potential and have been selected to represent the Corps, Army Under 21s and the Army A Side.

Sig Beart	Corps and Army Under 21's
Sig McGregor	Corps and Army Under 21's
Sig Podesta	Army Under 21,s
Sig Carlaw	Corps and Army A

Having to rely on the youth of 11 Sig Regt it has become pretty traumatic and trying to get soldiers out of lessons has been a difficult exercise, so yet again the team has been dominated by permanent staff and up-graders. Playing in the first round of the Army Cup proved what dangerous sport rugby can be when **Sig Cockerill** sustained a neck injury and had to be rushed to Salisbury hospital by air ambulance. Luckily only ligament damage was diagnosed and the young soldier is now back to full fitness. 11 Sig Regt finally played the rescheduled match in early January but were unfortunately narrowly beaten. Although this was a blow to morale it meant that the team was now into the first round of the Army Shield Competition and had to play against RMC Shrivenham. After an excellent 80 minutes the score was 10 – 10, extra time ensued with 11 Sig Regt finally running out as well deserved winners. The team now goes on to play 1 RSME in the second round. Having the Corps side based at Blandford has also given the chance for several of the older generation to be selected to play for the Corps side including:

WO2 (SSM) Manktelow	**Sgt Meek**
Cpl Lang	**LCpl Latham**

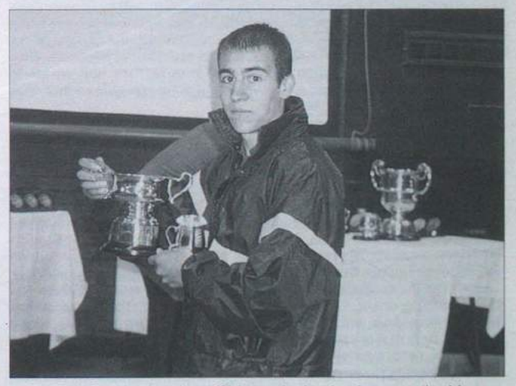
REGIMENTAL CROSS COUNTRY

The Regimental cross-country squads are enjoying their most successful season yet. Following success at the Army Relay Championships, reported in the last edition of *The Wire*, the squads have gone on to win at the Corps and Army Championships in early February. The main driving force behind the teams' success is the team coach, **WO2 (SSM)** 'Taff' **Thomas**, formerly of 2 Sqn, who has been able to capitalise on the athletic squad's success and *persuade* the juniors to train in the evenings and run in the league during the week.

In one afternoon on a gruelling course at Deepcut, the Regiment won the Mens Junior Team and Womens Team Army Cross-Country Championships. If that was not enough, **LCpl** Sophie **Morris** became the Womens Champion, **Pte** (now Sig) **Tom Grady** became the Junior Mens Champion and **Sig Lisa Wiles** became the Womens Junior Champion with **Sig Helen Caplin** as the runner up in that category. The winning womens team was complemented with gritty performances from **Sgt Whiting, Sig Greenhalgh** and **Sig Lawton**. 'Well done ladies'. The following week the Corps Championships were staged at Bulford. The Mens Senior Team, now reinforced by some of the Juniors, were narrowly beaten into second place by just 2 points by the home team, 3 (UK) Division HQ & Sig Regt, who had themselves been runners up in the Army finals the week before. This very creditable performance was bolstered by fine performances from the Corps Veteran Champion, **WO1 (YofS) Stuart Little**, the Corps Junior Mens Champion, **Sig** (yes now a **Sig**) **Grady**, not to mention **Cpl Whittacker, Sig Torode, Sgt Maughan, Sig Easterby Jackson, Sgt Clark** and **WO2 Thomas**. The 2IC Regt, **Maj Phil Brown**, also ran with his usual promise to award ROPs to anyone in the Regimental squad that failed to beat him, fortunately all were safe that day despite him coming 43rd overall.

The Womens' team continued on their success trail by storming through with three of the team that had won the Army Championships the previous week, these were **Sig Wiles, Sig Caplin** and **Sgt Whiting** and the team this time complemented by newcomer **Sig Scott. Sig Wiles** (another Junior Champion) won the race closely followed by **Sig Caplin**. Will it ever end?

LCpl Sophie Morris receiving her trophy from Lt Col Hepton APTC having become the Womens Army Cross Country Champion



Sig Tom Grady showing off his trophy having become the Mens Junior Army Cross Country Champion

The Regimental Men and Women's Cross-Country squads after the Corps Championships in February 2000

263 (HARROGATE) SIGNAL SQUADRON ARMY APPRENTICES COLLEGE, ARBORFIELD

Sqn Comd **Maj Steven France**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Mick Senior**

As the Autumn term drew to a close with the Passing Out Parade for Intake 99B on 16 December 1999, in which the Squadron was the lead sub-unit with the OC commanding the parade. We said farewell to not only the Apprentices passing-out but also to a few of our permanent staff. **Cpls Matt Thomas** and 'Tina' **Turner** leave the squadron on posting to 16 Sig Regt and 14 Sig Regt (EW) respectively. **Cpl Sy Cullen** is off to Blandford to join Whitespear Tp whilst **Cpl** 'Muz' **Murray** goes to attend his Sergeants Course at Blandford followed by the Yeoman of Signals Course in the year 2000. **Cpl Collin Brotherston**, meanwhile, leaves us to join 2 Sig Regt in York as a Sergeant, so congratulations also go to him on his well deserved promotion. **Sgt** 'Archie' **Archer** CHESHIRE is also leaving us having been Troop Sergeant of Penney Troop for the last two years, he goes to rejoin his Battalion, whilst **Capt Kelly Holloway** leaves us to rejoin the Military Studies Department (MSD). Fanally the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Krishna Gurung**, is off for some well earned Nepal leave before reporting to 31 Sig Regt (V) in February 2000 We wish them the best of luck in their new posts. With such a big turnover, the Squadron will no doubt experience some turbulence at the start of the next term, but fortunately there are enough 'old hands' remaining to ensure that this is kept to a minimum. Replacing our leavers we warmly welcome **Cpl Trafford** from 16 Sig Regt, **Cpl White** from 264 (SAS) Sig Sqn, **Cpl Carter** from 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt, **Sgt Gardiner** from 1 RGBW, **Lt Simon Collyer** AGC(ETS) from MSD and **Capt Evans** from 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt.

NEWS FROM SCOTT TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Tom Jefferies**
Tp Sgt **Sgt** 'Waggy' **Wagstaff**

By the time this is published Scott Tp, intake 99B, will have passed-out of the Army Apprentice College, Arborfield, and will be keenly awaiting their relevant trade training courses at Blandford - all, that is, except **AT Loynes** who 'jumped ship' and joined REME at the last opportunity. They have been an excellent Troop and the staff pass on their best wishes to them all for the future. Here are just a few of their escapades which took place in the last weeks of training.

CONSERVATION PROJECT
15 OCTOBER 1999 AND 13 NOVEMBER 1999

Scott Tp were tasked with clearing a section of the derelict Wey and Arun Canal, that had been abandoned for more than 100 years. Under the guidance and supervision of the local trust volunteers the ATs worked tirelessly cutting down and clearing trees, bushes and weeds in the base and up the sides of the canal. The ATs were only 'armed' with hand tools - bowsaws, pruning loppers, rakes and ropes. However, their resulting efforts were impressive and although briefed not to tackle some of the larger trees the temptation proved too great for many and soon there was the resounding cry of, 'TIMBER!' all along the canal. The cleared debris was then piled high and burnt on some spectacular sized bonfires. During their two days of work the ATs cleared over 650mtrs of the canal. With the line of the canal now cleared the Wey & Arun Canal trust can now re-water this section to provide a linear water habitat and preserve the canal with a view in the longer term of dredging and complete restoration.

EXTERNAL LEADERSHIP (EL) 2-17 AND 21 OCTOBER 1999

by ATs Donnelly, Latusek and Loynes

On 17 October 1999 Scott Tp set off for Senneybridge Camp in Wales for their secon EL. There were cries all round as we realised that we had to travel on military buses, no radio for this journey! We arrived at Senneybridge and went through the usual administration. We fought over who got the cleaner pillows so that we wouldn't catch the usual spread of impetigo!On the main sports field sat half a dozen Lynx helicopters much to the satisfaction of 'spotters' **Crowley** and **Frost**.

The second day we were split into groups for two days hill-walking. Luckily there was an instructor with each group or they would still be trying to round us up! We gathered our issued kit and set off for the hills, admiring the views, hasseling a few sheep and arriving at the campsite with sore feet. Day Two of the trek saw us navigating ourselves with varying degrees of skill but we all made it home eventually. The next activity was canoeing, it proved to be very cold out of the water and freezing in and under it! Lessons were given on correct paddling techniques, turning and rolling. Travelling down the river we found out just how cold and shallow the water was, particularly when we encountered some rapids. A few people capsized but they survived the experience and carried on. In the end we all finished, though some of us were colder and wetter than when we started. However, we all enjoyed the experience. The final day was devoted to rock-climbing. When we reached the parking area for abseiling all we could see was the huge abyss down which we were to abseil later. The instructors picked four routes to improve our present skills and learn some new ones. We all managed to successfully climb the four runs with only a touch of the disco-leg syndrome. Later we tried abseiling back down and we all eventually completed the huge drop off with a few people even daring to jump/bounce down.

EXERCISE MERCURY STAG - 19 TO 21 NOVEMBER 1999

by AT Brooksbank

This was a battlefield tour to Arnhem and for the ATs to learn about Operation Market Garden, 17-26 September 1944. However, with the journey times involved it was necessary to make this a weekend trip travelling through France and Belgium, staying at RAF Bruggen in Germany and visiting Arnhem in Holland on the Saturday. **AT Brooksbank** continues.....we set off for Arnhem at 1300hrs on Friday, catching the Dover/Calais ferry and then through Europe to RAF Bruggen. The accommodation there is about ten times better than ours - single rooms and showers that worked! Breakfast on Saturday morning was yet another eye-opener - carpet and sofas in the corner, food that was tasty and and excellent selection of cereals. We then travelled up to Arnhem for the battlefield tour. First stop was the Airborne Museum at Oosterbeek where we were briefed by a guide and shown round. Then it was a drive round the key locations, drop zones, withdrawal position over the Rhine, Oosterbeek church, St Elizabeth's Hospital and finally to the cemetery. At each point we had a brief walk round, were told what happened there and who was involved. In the cemetery there are nearly 2000 graves, many of which were unknown soldiers, and a number of Royal Signals graves mostly from the 1st Airborne Divisional Signal Regiment. As a mark of respect we conducted a ceremony of Remembrance at the Memorial and laid a wreath from all the personnel at the Army Apprentice College. The last stop of the day was in Arnhem at the Bridge itself, the key, the objective of the battle. Although most of the buildings had now changed we were able to get a feel of what had happened. The area that the Royal Signals soldiers from Brigade Signal Squadron had defended, once their radios had stopped working, was also pointed out. Following this visit we went to Arnhem town centre to have a look around and find our evening meal before returning to RAF Bruggen. Sunday was spent travelling back to the college where we arrived at 1930hrs after a long drive home.

EXERCISE JANNERS JOY - 25 TO 28 NOVEMBER 1999

by AT LCpl Frost and ATs Crowley and Johnston

After a day of stands testing our skills in NBC, First Aid, Observation, Section Attacks and Map reading we arrived back at the harbour area and carried on with our routine. At 1830hrs a warning order came round for an O Group for the following morning. The warning order said that we would be taking part in a company + attack on an enemy position we had previously recce'd. At 0330hrs the people on stag went around waking their Sections and all the kit was packed by 0400hrs. Once all the kit was packed we patrolled a short distance to some open ground and carried out rehearsals. When 0500hrs came all the Sections were sat in patrol order just in front of the model which showed the ground that we would be attacking. **Capt Jefferies** then proceeded to give us a full set orders explaining exactly what we would be doing during the attack. 1 Section would be Point Section and their Section Commander was **AT LCpl** 'Soldier 95' **Frost**. 2 Section would be the second Section in the attack and their commander was **AT** 'Moley' **Crowley**. 3 Section was the Reserve Section and their Section Commander was **AT Johnston** (233). At approximately 0530hrs the Troop headed off to the FUP (Forming Up Position) and the order of march was 1, 2 and then 3 Section. The route out was hard going because of the excessive amount of mud on the tracks and the utter coldness of Salisbury Plain at 0530hrs in the morning. We arrived at the FUP at approximately 0600hrs but were not due to cross the start line until 0630hrs. The attack was to be a silent start with no artillery fire support neutralising the enemy. Waiting at the FUP was stressful due to the coldness and the adrenaline, which was building up whilst we waited for the attack to start. At 0630hrs everybody stood up and started to advance on their axis. **Capt Jefferies** then handed command over to the Section Commanders. About 500mtrs from the enemy position parachute flares started lighting up the surrounding area. At about 400mtrs from the main enemy position **AT LCpl Frost**'s Section came under attack from the right. He then began to manoeuvre his Section towards the enemy position. 2 Section came under fire from the left and proceeded to fight through to the enemy position under the control of **AT Crowley**. 3 Section under the control of **AT Johnston** came under attack 200mtrs from the enemy. After each of the enemy positions had been secured and other pockets of the enemy had been neutralised we headed back to our harbour for tea and medals!

NEWS FROM THE BALKANS

MULTI NATIONAL DIVISION (SOUTH WEST) HEADQUARTERS & SIGNAL REGIMENT OPERATION PALATINE

CO **Lt Col David Hargreaves**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Steve Jackson**

Two months on and virtually all traces of 20 Armoured Brigade have been removed to be replaced by an amalgam of 12 Mechanized Brigade and Signal Squadron (228), 2 Signal Regiment and 34 Signal Regiment. The new members of Multi National Division (South West) Headquarters and Signal Regiment were all in place by 10 December 1999, just in time to spend Christmas and the Millennium in the Balkans. Christmas spirits aside, the Regiment now looks forward to providing communications and life support to the Headquarters in a country renowned for its poor weather and difficult terrain. The snow and the lack of a decent road network have made re-supply to the Hill Top Sites very difficult indeed. Some sites regularly go for several weeks without visitors due to the severe weather. Yet, far from being daunted by the prospect of spending weeks on end in splendid isolation, the detachments on Hill Top Sites relish the prospect of running their own show.

CGS visits the troops during his Millennium Tour, WO1 (RSM) Jackson looks on

Aside from the usual role of 'boots and haircuts', **WO1 (RSM) Steve Jackson** has been busy trying to improve the lot of the soldiers in Banja Luka Metal Factory. As well as trying to improve the facilities in the gymnasium, starting several sporting competitions that will last for the duration of the tour, he has also done a magnificent job of improving the five-a-side football pitch inside the Metal Factory. The new and improved football pitch was opened to the public by **Maj Gen R. V. Brims** on 9 February 2000. The RSM was aided in this gargantuan feat by a team of 'volunteers' who have earned the prestigious title of 'The Banja Luka Thirteen'. The Banja Luka Football League begins this month and promises to put the Premier League to shame.

SUPPORT SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj John Aspinall MBE**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Kev German**

Support Squadron consists mainly of 228 Sig Sqn personnel, ably assisted by enthusiastic volunteers from the TA and Reserve Forces. Since arriving at Banja Luka Metal Factory in early December 1999, we have been kept busy dealing with administrative problems and shoveling the copious amount of snow that currently covers Bosnia. Road traffic incidents have been kept to a minimum. The Foden has been called out to recover **LCpl Mark** 'Ned Flanders' **Warrington** from a hole behind the cookhouse. **LCpl Richie** 'GI' **Southwell** and **Pte** 'Princess Lulu' **Leelah**'s near head on collision also proved an exception to the drive defensively rule (which is flawed when everyone on the road is out to get you, no matter what).

Christmas passed quietly with the Department deservedly enjoying their two cans and trying hard to make them last all day. New Year and the Millennium passed in much the same way with not a bleary eye in sight on the CO's Millennium photo. The department have been hard at it since New Year with the exception of **SSgt Gaz** 'Doris **(Sig Steadman)** make a brew' **Greaves**, **Sgt Deano** 'Pop Quiz' **Whitworth** and **LCpl Kev** 'Don't fall in the skip' **Dade** enjoying a week back in Blighty competing in the Army Cross Country Championship. In their absence the MT department was kept running by **Sgts Paul** 'Crazy' **Tazey** and **Joss** 'I'm not stressed (much)' **Mason**.

On a sad note, the MT football team was gracefully dispatched from the initial five-a-side football competition. At least the weather here is starting to show signs of improvement, which is more than can be said of **LCpl** 'Syph Lip' **Jackson**'s football skills.

LCpl 'Ned Flanders' Warrington being 'Mine Aware' and ditching his Land Rover

SUPPORT SQUADRON SWEETY TREAT

On the 7 January 2000, the Orthodox Christmas, **WO2 (SSM) Kev German** and crew collected together DM750 and bought the EFI out of sweets for local children. They set out at approximately 0900 hours returning empty and exhausted at 1600 hours. Many needy locations in Banja Luka were visited and many small glasses of sljivovica (slip in the ditch) were drank as the local populous came out to greet them. A very rewarding day was had by all.

SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Scott Workman**
SSM **WO2 Mark Neighbour**

Special congratulations go out to **LCpl** 'Robbo' **Robinson** and his wife on the birth of their first child. With all the excitement of fatherhood, he chose to do the honourable thing and leave his wife holding the baby while he went off skiing for two weeks before returning to Bosnia. Last but by no means least, many congratulations to **SSgt Paul Gardner** on his well-deserved selection for promotion to WO2.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Tom** 'Am I really looking fitter' **Day**
SSgt **SSgt Dicky Dyer**

The excitement of a Balkans Christmas and Millennium now but a distant memory, the Troop turns its thoughts to summer weather and mid tour R&R. After some nine weeks in theatre, the sixteen sites that make up the Troop have settled into a comfortable routine. Amidst varying weather conditions, re-supply of the sites continues from the small Tp HQ in Banja Luka with the help of a selection of decrepit Rovers, and the aviation cell. **Lt** 'Doris' **Day**, **SSgt Dicky** 'Dirk Diggler' **Dyer**, **Sgt Craig Dudley** continue their quest to provide an acceptable level of service to the whims of the out detachments; ably assisted by **LCpl** 'Godzilla' **Subarna**, and **Sig Paul Denham**. However **Sgt** 'Snowy' **Snow** and **Sgt** 'Shell-Suit' **Murphy** claim actual command and control of the ship in the absence of **Lt** 'Gym Queen' **Day**, running cross country in UK, and **SSgt** 'I'm off for my education' **Dyer**, swanning on his EFP in Split. Special mention to **Slapper** the resident cat for putting up with being coloured in with lumi-pen and being locked in the desk drawer.

Cpl John 'Let's destroy the bosses career' **Hilton**, **LCpl** 'Smudge' **Smith** and **Sig Paul Lawrenson** are busy staying warm on Sjenekosvic hill top, the least visited site since our arrival in theatre; Is this down to inaccessibility or can't we be bothered? **Cpl** 'Paddy' **Briscoe**, **LCpl**

'Greeny' **Green** and **Sig Paul Kennedy** at Lisina West continue to entertain both Radcon, Tp HQ and much of Banja Luka with their excessive re-supply requests; sorry but there's no chance of us getting a gunship for site protection, Paddy! **LCpl Dave Reid, LCpl** 'Jimmy' **O'Mahony** and **Sig** 'Mac' **McGeorge**, recently won the affections of the OC Sqn after entertaining him at lunch with lobster and swans eyelids in aspic, in a bid to win the best det scoff competition. **LCpl** 'Fordy' **Ford, LCpl** 'Scotty' **Nichol** and **Sig** 'Boff' **Walker** are buckling under **Boffs** crippling daily PT timetable, coupled with a diet of salad and lentils as they train the time away at Radaljica. **LCpl** 'Gurung' **Allen, Sig** 'Yes, m'lady' **Parker, Sig Ian Hannant** and **Sig** 'Freddy' **O'Brien** hold the fort at the village of the damned, struggling to cope with the demands of operating their single radio. Special mention to **Sig Hannant** for clearing a path through an imaginary minefield to inspect a Sherman Tank that children were playing on! **Cpl** 'Coxy' **Coxon, LCpl** 'Dangerous' **Armstrong** and **LCpl Robert Edward Varley** have been living like hermits on the Vitorog. The three tormented souls that have become extremely 'close' since their arrival at the site, were spotted recently by a passing helicopter and were reported to have shaven their heads and donned monastic robes.

LCpl 'Sharpy Sharpster' **Sharp, LCpl Kelly Thompson** and **Sig Meecham** occupy a chalet at the disused ski resort of Sisava. Despite the harsh conditions that they are being subjected to they are performing admirably and have established a good relationship with the Dutch. **Cpl Adam** 'Why do they call me Dog?' **Barker, Sig** 'Mac' **McDowell** and **Sig** 'Curtains' **Adshead** win the prize for the quietest COMMCEN in the Troop, as they go into their ninth week of Czech made soup and fish-heads at Ljubija COMMCEN. **LCpl** 'Trigger' **Hunter, Sig Dan Fallows** and **Sig Williams** suffer similar dietary problems at the hands of the French Canadians in Coralici. **LCpl Ross** 'the Avenger' **Williams, Sig** 'Cat weasel' **Bailey** and **Sig Paul** 'Smasher' **Hick** are close to their lifelong dream of being the undisputed Balkans WWF wrestling champions as the 'Bushwackers' of Kupres. In a bid to put the finishing touches to their death defying routine, they have shaved their heads apart from the neck area, and can be seen patrolling Kupres camp in army thermals and boots.

Cpl Nick 'Giant Haystacks' **Ions, LCpl Rick** 'Cold as Ice' **Turner** and **Sig** 'Smudge' **Smith** have begun training at Sipovo in an attempt to topple the 'Bushwackers.' **LCpl** 'Taff' **Davies, Sig Edwards** and **Sig Mel Rudkin** have become particularly friendly with the Air Corps at Gornji Vakuf, to the extent that they now dine with and are entertained by the RSM. **LCpl** 'Robbo' **Robertson, Sig Kelly-Rutherford, Sig O'Callaghan** and **Sig** 'I know my rights!' **Zimmerman** are busy demanding further manning for their already overcrowded COMMCEN at Mrkonjic Grad on the premise that they are the busiest det. With the imminent closure of Ivovik hill top, **Cpl John** 'Doctor' **Love, LCpl** 'Geordie' **Wharton** and **Sig John Marshall** prepare to join other hill top sites to bump up manning during the R&R season. With the closure of the COMMCEN at Tomislav Grad, **Cpl** 'Boring' **Bob Littlewood** goes to Ljubija to free up Dog who's destined for Banja Luka commcen along with **Sig Tubb; Sig Mick** 'Thou shalt be struck down' **Allan** joins the resup boys at Tp HQ.

Despite being miles from home, the majority of Comms Troop are thankful beyond all comprehension that they are operating from some inaccessible knoll in the middle of nowhere, and not foraging for some grip on reality in Banja Luka metal factory...

MOBILE TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Dave Haslewood**
SSgt **Sgt** 'Where's my crown' **Wilcox**

With a tropical bird 'two can' Christmas and New Year over with, the Sisters of Mobile proved ready to take on the challenges of the first six months of a new Millennium in BLMF. When taking a break from setting the fastest lap times on Colin McRae rally, **2Lt** 'most crated Rodney in SFOR' **Haslewood** has been working hard helping **Sgt** 'Toyah' **Wilcox** overcome his caffeine addiction. Time has also been spent curbing his appetite for blatant 'jollies,' (also known as adventurous ski and watersport instructor courses - apparently the voices are in the ocean man). Fortunately this proved to be just in time to activate the Divisional Alternate Operations room when a Bergen with a suspected IED was left in the Div Ops room. Thank God we have the Sappers to come and blow somebody's underpants up for us (it's a long story laced with sex and lies).

With the high standard of professionalism set it was time to deploy the GOC's Tactical Headquarters. It was also time for **Cpl** 'gassius cassius' **Austin** to watch in awe as Mobile Troop soon earned their Diploma in tent erection. However, this was proved to be of no use when the headquarters was remoted into an old Battlegroup Operations room in Gorni Vakuf on exercise 'Frantic Fury'. An extremely apt name for the exercise with **Cpl** 'middle yukka' **Simmons** keeping the Troop OC frantic and the rest of the guys suffering from furious laughter with his antics. Fortunately the Troop fund is substantially healthier after that weekend out of BLMF. (Nice one Simmo!). Upon return the turnaround commenced with making sure our beloved tentage was in tiptop shape for the next day of tent erection.

The BLMF 5-a-side football competition set emotions flying as 'The Mob' disappointingly failed to emerge triumphant even once. The Light Infantry proved too strong, but not strong enough for the big Fijian **Sig** 'Jonny' **Kama** who proceeded to bounce the grunts all around the pitch. Special performances by **LCpl** 'Charlie's Angel' **Appleyard** in goal, **Cpl** 'Top Scorer' **Holroyd** and **Sig** 'Big Gay Al' **Alladice** were all monitored by international talent scouts but even **Sig** 'Sozza, chest and tri's' **Soraine** with his fetish for tight shorts failed to get a call up. **Sig** 'Foxy' **Fox's** 21st Birthday proved to be eventful with a 'Vietnam' night in the bar. Unfortunately not even **Sig** 'Yes I am a Stab' **Lavy** with his unique cockney slang could persuade the Americans to see the funny side. As well as work there has been a chance for some adventurous training with **Sig** 'Lego head' **Stone** and **Sig** 'Village' **Bogart** managing to breakaway to Switzerland for a couple of weeks.

So as the middle of the tour closes in, R & R dates are there to be looked forward to. That's unless you already had it **LCpl** 'Mr Burns' **Waters**! Oh yes, Lanyard Trophy training has started for the airborne ex members of 216 Para Sig Sqn. Enough said!

HEADQUARTERS TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Ross** 'Rambo' **McLeod**
Tp Sgt **SSgt Howe**

Well, the sun's come out and the temperature has finally gone above freezing, a pleasant change from the -28°C that we endured last week. With the improving weather, the FRT taskings are reducing. While the weather in BLMF is better, though, spare a thought for those on the hill top sites, many of whom are still snowed in, the Viterog being under 12ft of snow, which can be quite dangerous as **2Lt Ross** 'Connor' **McLeod** found out over Christmas when he flew up to Sjenokovic and jumped off the Chinook only to 'discover' the razor wire perimeter fence buried under 4ft of snow. The welcome absence of snow down in Banja Luka, however, is particularly welcome for the FRT teams as the roads are now considerably less dangerous. The FRT team personalities are **Cpl Matt** 'Gripper' **Evans, Cpl Rob** 'Billy' **Evans, LCpl Lee** 'Archie' **Gemmel, LCpl Dave** 'Are there any Wolves up here?' **Wesson, Cpl Jace** 'Yes, there are' **McBain, Cpl Dave** 'Scrouch' **Scurrah**, and **Cpl Pete** 'were-sloth' **Mulcahy**. In the workshops we have **Sgt Ian** 'I'm so Airborne it hurts' **Dickinson, Sgt Trev** 'Where's the beach' **McSween, Cpl Jodie** 'Alpine' **Wood, LCpl Nick** 'Jif jobs' **Constable.** Last but not least, in R&I is **LCpl Andy** 'Speed Freak' **Johnson**. The task for this team is to maintain the secure comms around MND(SW) as well as the welfare systems on some camps, i.e. BFBS systems and Sky TV. We travel all over Bosnia avoiding the mad local drivers and RMP speed traps (well, most of the time), to provide area wide Euromux and VHF coverage. We are currently approaching the period when people are going on R&R and Lanyard Trophy, both back to the UK. The words 'rats' and 'sinking ship' spring to mind.

The Line Section is led by **Cpl John** '1000yd stare' **Whitworth**. Line section is the consistently overworked crew responsible for anything to do with wiring in the BLMF. Not renowned for their gleaming personal presentation skills, this motley crew includes **Sig** 'Butch' **Richardson**, whose major feat this tour was to go AWOL for almost a day, then turn up in 'sunshine city' only to escape the clutches of the system by going on R&R 12hrs later (much to his surprise, as he hadn't been told that his dates had changed. **Sig Derek** 'Chief' **Burness** demonstrated what a switched-on consumer he is by spending lots of DM on a 'BCB Gerber' in Mrkonjic Grad before watching it disintegrate after only 10 minutes out of the box. **Sig** 'Rag Order' **Satchwell** is sadly convinced that he is 'in' with the local ladies manning the CD stalls outside the camp gates, despite the fact that some of the aforementioned ladies could model for FHM. **Sig Andy Middle** has discovered a new party trick recently - turning around an FFR and trailer by 180° with only a little help from some black ice. Finally, HQ Troop says goodbye to **Cpl Mark** 'Two-stroke' **Quinn**, who was dined-out, or rather, drunk-out in Sarajevo and spent his last night in Line section adding character to one of the bars in Sarajevo, and hello to **Cpl Martin** 'Side Parting' **Ferguson**, who will hopefully be a more stabilising (and RSM-compatible) influence than **Cpl Quinn**.

Syscon, or 'Comms Help Desk' as we have euphemistically been re-titled is the ever-smiling face of the Signal Squadron for the myriad for staff officers who need help with comms issues. The line up is headed by **SSgt Paul Gardener**, who insisted that *The WIRE* notes mention how handsome he still is (and modest..) the 2IC is **Cpl Claire** 'Gym Queen' **Rutter** who manages to spend more time in the gym than in her own Corimec. When she is not in her Corimec she is allegedly whinging to Staff, who being the kind, sensitive SNCO and SSM to be that he is, is more than happy to listen. Congratulations to **SSgt Gardner** for successfully coming off the promotions board last week, and to **Cpl Liam** 'handsome' **Froggett** - even more handsome now he has been promoted to full Corporal and has celebrated with a proper regimental haircut. **LCpl Chris** 'Ned' **Kelly** and **Sig Stacy** 'Cynthia' **Payne** make a formidable shift partnership but quite often seem unusually tired by the end of their

shift, according to unnamed sources. **LCpl Rob** 'West' **Bromwich** and **LCpl Paul** 'Justin' **Heywood** make up the last happy couple, although some have asked which of them is in the TA and which is the regular soldier? COMMCEN is home to a variety of personnel - A shift is headed-up by **LCpl** 'Joy' **Edwards** with the help of **Sig** 'Eric' **Thomas** and **Sig** 'Biff' **Jameson**. B Shift is headed by **LCpl Kev Hesketh**, or so he thinks... we know who the 'mummy is - **Sig Rachel Allen**. C[omedy] shift consists of **LCpl** 'Pingers' **Parker** and our only representative from the TA, **LCpl** 'Porn King; **Burnside**. Proving that escape from BLMF is not impossible, **Cpl** 'MiniMe' **McMullen** and **LCpl** 'Jankers' **Brooks** have managed to get back to the UK by means of a Skill At Arms course, and a 1 Sqn course, respectively. According to the Radcon crew 'Standby for groundhog day' was the cry from the last crew. With a new sheriff in town, **Sgt Sid** 'I'm a civvy soon' **James** tried to convince his new deputies and cowboys that life in Radcon wasn't actually that bad. However, he was soon to be reminded by **LCpl** 'Sammy' **Samson** who had just completed a eight month Radcon tour of South Georgia and the Falklands that six months in Radcon actually equated to 262,080 minutes of sheer frustration. **Sig Steve Andrews** continues to prove that when it comes to fitness, there is only one Airborne Warrior on Radcon and anyone who thinks they are remotely close to his standard is more than welcome to go for a session down the gym. **LCpl** 'Morale Hoover' **Thrower** and his new crewman **Sig** 'Ricky' **Martin**, are practicing hard for their entry into next year's Embassy World Darts Championships. Not to be forgotten are the two girls on the Det - **LCpl** 'What do you mean I only got 18 letters today' **Hills**, and her sidekick **Sig** 'Mollycoddled' **Whyte** who continue to impress the remainder of the crew with their ability to eat all of the night rations - a feat never before achieved in the history of the British Army. With only 17 weeks left before the end of tour, the race is on to find the pot of morale that is alleged to be lurking within Radcon. Rumour has it that the lucky winner will be struck off **LCpl** 'morale hoover' **Thrower**'s hit list! We will wait and see.

280 (UNITED KINGDOM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj S. G. Hutchinson MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) McKenna**

KFOR OPERATIONS

The Squadron has been deployed in Kosovo as AFCENT augmentees to LANDCENT for the last four months. Now the end of the tour is in sight and it is confirmed that the EUROCORPS will be replacing us. There has been some rotation of Squadron personnel throughout the 3-man Operations and Maintenance Teams which are deployed at each of the Multinational Brigade (MNB) HQs. However, 280 (UK) Sig Sqn also has a number of people based at HQ KFOR Main and HQ KFOR Rear in Pristina and Skopje respectively. This article focuses on the work of the Squadron Personnel who are based at the Main and Rear HQs and at the Air Point of Disembarkation (APOD).

HEADQUARTERS KFOR MAIN

Life at HQ KFOR Main, otherwise known as 'Film City', has improved considerably since we arrived in the last millennium! Shortly before Xmas we saw the last of the ARRC tents and now we are all comfortably accommodated in heated co-ri-mecs, although one accommodation block did lose its entire roof recently! There hasn't been a water shortage or power outage for almost two weeks. This is largely due to the work of the HQ Support Group Staff, namely our very own **Sgt Keith** ' Gooner' **Bets**, who can generally be found in the muddiest places equipped with power cables, shouting something to the effect of, 'I hate this country!' Workshifts have now almost returned to normal after the main R&R period, although **Sgt Ian** ' Cable Guy' **Wells** has still managed to achieve a few recreational trips. The ADP Ops Office is currently missing **Sgt Christopher** 'Neatness' **Porter** and **Sgt June** 'Diplomatic' **Valentine** who are on R&R. **SSgt Tom** 'Serial Number' **Davies** continues to hunt around the HQ for missing CIS equipment in his new job as the HQ Memorandum Receipt Account Holder.

'Mines bigger than yours.....'
Lt Bernie Higgs and a German Colleague compare their weapons

Morale recently took a leap upwards with the help of an extremely well organised Medieval Gathering at **Cpl** 'Sire' **Roberts'** 3-man detatchment, located at MNB-SPT (Greek Bde). Many of 280 Sig Sqn's finest gathered to greet two new additions to the Squadron: **LCpl Daz** 'Mr Keen' **Pierce** and **LCpl Timmy** 'Party Trick' **Mallet**. During the evening we became acquainted with **Lt Bernie** 'Mad Monk' **Higgs'** dance routine, performed for the 'Sire's' entertainment and **Lt Lindsey** 'Squire' **Calderheads'** excellent waitressing skills. It was democratically decided that **FofS Martin** 'Fluff' **Flather** arrived with the best costume (it's amazing what can be achieved with some cardboard and a piece of rug)!He was closely followed by **Sgt Andy** 'Mad Beard' **Hunter** with his convincing Wizard's costume, it's a good job that he brought his duvet cover out to theatre. **LCpl Phil** 'Knives for a Pro' **Clarke** won the largest and deadliest sword prize and **LCpl Claire** 'Roots' **Crothers** and **Sig Emily** 'Random thought Generator' **Watts** excelled themselves by producing two medieval dresses out of US bedsheets. It was good to see how, with some hard work and organised preparation, such an original and fun evening could be had on an operational tour.

Sadly we must say goodbye to the MCM Det which includes; **Sgt Les** 'Brown roots' **Ryall , Sig** 'Oz' **Osborne, LCpl Jez** 'Loon II' **Greenlee, Cpl Steve** 'Interesting' **Slaughter** and **Cpl Pete** ' Junior' **Sears** who leave after a four month tour in Pristina.We wish them a safe journey home and look forward to seeing them back at camp when they are 'stagging on'.

AIRPORTS OF DEPARTURES

The APOD Det has seen several commanders since the Squadron was initially deployed. Firstly **SSgt Tom Davies**, then **Sgt Keith Gilbert** and finally **Sgt Leon Teasdale** assisted by **LCpl Neil Wright**. The Team is located at Pristina Airport with the RAF in the role of support using their CRONUS system, the TACSAT communications and other small projects. Life with the Detachment has been fairly quiet and has become known as 'Sleepy Hollow' here. Recently we have become rather busy with the relocation and rebuilding of the infrastructure of the Joint Operations Centre. We are currently accommodated in tented accommodation which has a tendency to be subject to frequent flooding! However, we are fortunate enough to have gym and bar facilities on camp for morale boosts.

KFOR REAR

HQ KFOR Rear, otherwise known as 'the Slipper Palace' has seen some new faces over the last two months. Firstly, we would like to welcome **Sgt Steve Lynch** who arrived at the Squadron and was promptly posted out to Kosovo. We have also acquired the talents of **Sgt** 'Ronnie the Wrestler' **Radford** who has been exchanged with **Sgt** 'Maggie' **Hatcher**, now acting as the Det Comd at MNB-S in Pizren. It is good to see that manpower is almost back to full strength now that the main R&R period has passed and people have returned refreshed and fit to attack the second half of the tour. Anyway, during the quieter days, we are fortunate enough to have the never ending wit and humour of **WO2 (YofS) Carley** and this, together with some antics from **Sig** 'wingnut' **Machin,** is sufficient to keep us entertaineed. we now have the added bonus of skiing trips on Sundays. When time allows, this is taken full advantage of by members of the Squadron. The Skopje resort has already been lucky enough to have visits from several Squadron characters of varied ability. It would have been a more rewarding package though, if any of them had figured out how to stay on the Macedonian ski-lift long enough to get to the top of the slope! Some much appreciated entertainment skills have been shown by **LCpl** ' Mac' **McAlpine** whose 'Quiz Nights' in the British 'Borrowers Bar' have been very successful, although possibly still not hard enough for the OC's team.

The Squadron advance party
(L-R): Capt Tom, LCpl Lane and WO1 McKenna

LIFE AFTER DEPLOYMENT

On 18 October 1999 the Squadron personnel in the Gazela Shoe Factory were involved in the Macedonian flag raising ceremony with their multinational colleagues, which was organised by the RSM, **WO1 (RSM) Mick McKenna**, the Parade Commander was the OC, **Maj Simon Hutchinson** and the other British participants were **Sgt John Pollock** REME, **LCpl Grant McDougall** and **Sig** 'Ski' **Smiejkowsi. Cpl Sarah Howell** AGC was the flag bearer for the British element. The parade was attended by COMKFOR, **Gen Dr Rheinhardt Ge** and COMI(FOR Rear, **Gen Ruth** US along with various Macedonian dignitaries and invited guests. Needless to say, because the Brits were the main people involved, the parade was carried off with style and panache.

In early November the OC and RSM visited all the Multinational Brigades scattered throughout Kosovo. These dets, run by a Sergeant, consist of three personnel. The detachments are located with the French in MNB North, the Italians in MNB West, the Americans in MNB East, the Germans in MNB South, the Greek Sp Bde in Pristina, 19 Bde in MNB C and there is also a det with Comms Z South, in Thessaloniki, Greece. Each MNB has its own individual eccentricities ranging from appalling food in some cases to excellent accommodation in others, great MWR facilities, the list is endless. What is clear is that whatever the idiosyncrasies, the soldiers in these dets are improvising, foraging, scrounging and being extremely innovative in ensuring that life is as comfortable as possible with whatever they have around them. Life in theatre has been busy for most, **Sgt Keith** 'Wellies' **Betts** and **Cpl Mark** 'Tash' **Sibbald** at Main have been especially busy with a myriad of power problems presented by KFOR Main in Film City, working ridiculously long hours in atrocious weather conditions, unseen by most but their contribution to the quality of life at KFOR main cannot be underestimated. **WO2 (FofS) Martin Flather** and **WO1 (YofS) Phil Jones** from LANDCENT who work in J6 Plans commercial at Main have been flitting all over the country on the various projects for the mission, getting the air and road miles in.

For one author to mention all the good work done by the troops would be very difficult to do, so I apologise to anyone I have left out. If you want to get a mention - write some *WIRE* notes yourself.

During the month of November it was decided that the British element of KFOR Rear needed their own recreation area (bar). The task was given to **Cpl Dave Pendleton** and his crew of power-men, linemen and **LCpl Trev Hurst** REME. They toiled long and hard to produce an excellent facility for not just the British personnel but the other nationalities in Rear. The Borrowers Bar, as it is popularly known because everything in it was begged or borrowed, is extremely well used.

On 23 December the OC, RSM and **LCpl** 'Scouse' **Brennan** set out on the mammoth driving task of visiting all the MNBs to deliver their Xmas hampers. The hampers were lovingly put together by the QM Admin back in Krefeld, **Maj Bob Lockwood MBE**, and flown out to Skopje. Unfortunately the weather and road conditions were atrocious, with lots of snow on the ground. I'm sure there are plenty of people reading this who are well aware how difficult the Blace Border crossing is in good weather, never mind in winter. It took nearly seven hours to reach the first MNB, at Camp Bondsteel in Urasevac, our base for the next couple of days while we visited the troops. We were well looked after there by **Cpl Andy Wilkinson** and **LCpl** 'Jackhammer' **Cook**. With an early start on Xmas Eve we headed for MNB N in Mitrovica where we linked up with **Lt Bernie Higgs**. At MNB N was **Sgt** 'Jock' **Samuel, LCpl Sarah Drummond** and **LCpl Kerry Greenham**. MNB N is noted for its French cuisine, however, we declined the offer of lunch and left to head off for MNB W in Pec where we never declined the offer of lunch, even if it was Pasta. This det was manned at the time by **Sgt Ross Menzies**, **LCpl** 'Tommo' **Thompson** and, on leave at the time, **LCpl Kez** 'More pasta' **Brown**. From there it was off to MNB S to see **Sgt** 'Gilly' **Gilbert** and **LCpl Robbie Turner** who were celebrating Xmas the traditional German way on Xmas Eve. After another tortuous journey back to our accommodation at MNB E, and an MRE on the way, we eventually arrived. It was also on Xmas. Eve, in the unlikely setting of Camp Bondsteel, that the OC, **Maj Simon Hutchinson**, learned of his impending award of the MBE. That will be an Xmas Eve the OC will not forget.

SFOR OPERATIONS

Another set of *WIRE* Notes from the sunshine capital of Bosnia, Banja Luka for all those people who don't know what I'm talking about. Quick cast listing in order of appearance:

Sig Nick 'Scissors' **Abbott**
LCpl Craig 'Mole' **Harrison**
Sig Steve 'Del Boy' **Lloyd**
Cpl Matt 'Crazy' **Baber**
Sgt Tom 'Romanian Sugar Daddy' **Atkinson.**

THE LOST BOYS
(THE CONTINUING SAGA PART 2) - *by The Boys in Banja Luka*

Just a reminder as to where we left you, everyone was on a high due to the new bar opening (its amazing to see what a new watering hole can do) and the fact that R & R was due. Now the story continues .....

It has now become apparent that 'Scissors' **Abbott** is no longer the only member of the Lost Boys to be having strange tendencies. On return from R & R (spent in Austria skiing), accompanied by 'Del Boy' **Lloyd, Cpl** 'Crazy' **Baber** began to show signs of insanity. Ramblings about Keith Moon, Sweet Shops and a Bengal Tiger featured heavily, for what reason we do not know. The cause of this cannot be pinned down but we believe it may have something to do with spending two weeks on a mountain with 'Del Boy' **Lloyd.**

Health News - Sgt 'Sugar Daddy' **Atkinson** is on a health regime in preparation for his release to the outside world. It's now been going three weeks but as time goes on the pressure will increase especially with the arrival of Burger King. Although he has no plans set in concrete, the 'Sugar Daddy' is believed to be interested in moving to Romania, for what reason we are not sure, we can only presume this is to purchase a young wife. As **Cpl Matt** 'Crazy' **Baber**'s condition worsens, we have now had to introduce a new duty for the other members of the Lost Boys, Matt Watch. This involves one of the other members of the det being tasked with the unenviable job of watching **Cpl** 'Crazy' **Baber** for 24hr shifts, in the hope that we will be able to nurse him back to health.

Another fear among the members of the Lost Boys is that **LCpl Craig** 'Mole' **Harrison** is ageing years in just a matter of weeks and after eight months it seems to have taken its toll. For now his corimec is like an OAP's retirement home, with the TV on full volume and the heater turned to May, although the heater is not entirely his own doing as it also doubles as **Sgt** 'Sugar Daddy' **Atkinson**'s sauna as part of his weight loss programme.

As the end of tour is getting closer and no news of who is taking over from the Lost Boys has arrived, **Sig Lloyd** has gone into 'Del Boy' mode. Quick thinking that he is, realising that MND SW will become truly multinational soon and with a possible extension on the cards for himself, he has began to take action. He has already began making contacts with the multinational personnel and a few deals have been struck, a couple of which have come to light, one being his purchase of a Dutch Tank to allow ease of movement under heavy fire and the other being the purchase of a goat from the Moroccan contingent (the less said about that the better).

COMPOSITE TROOP - REAR PARTY

Tp Comd **Capt Stewart**
Tp SSgt **SSgt R. Nolan**

It has been a hectic time for Composite Tp sorting out stores, moving stores, and generally sprucing up the stores (is it just me or is there a lot of stores work going on around here). On the arrivals front we say a big hello to **Sgt McLaughlin, LCpl Ben** 'Champagne' **Pearmain, LCpl Marcus** 'Harry Hill' **Leslie.** From theatre we say welcome back to **Cpl Steve Slaughter, Cpl Pete** 'Junior' **Sears, LCpl Jez** 'Gumbar' **Greenlee** and **Sigs Les** 'Plug' **Ryall, Remi** 'Dirk Diggler' **Osborne** and **Emily Watts**. Welcome and grab yourselves a duties card. Farewells go out to **SSgt Wayne** 'Shovels Mk2' **Dunbar** off to .....**LCpl** (now Corporal) **Chris** 'Captain Cautious' **Simmonds**, saying goodbye to this NATO stuff and going back to the real world of Ptarmigan comms at 1 (UK) Div and **Sig Mark** 'You People' **Viagas** off to Civvy Street.

Certain Troop members have been in the public eye recently; **LCpl Glen** 'I was one all along' **MacDonald** piping in the haggis at JHQ NAAFI on Burns Night and **SSgt Rick** 'Virgin Soldier' **Nolan** not only being mentioned in *The Wire* but also in the national tabloids for his Army Rugby exploits. The remaining members of Composite Tp will now slog it out until the remainder of the Squadron return in April under the watchful eyes of **Cpl Andy Pursglove, LCpls Brian** 'Bottle Bully' **Hillson, Gordon** '259 days to go!' **Carle** and **Jimmy** 'Flash to Bang' **Cunningham**. Who can't wait for the Squadron's return so they get fewer duties. On a final note, to the acting RSM of the Rear Party, **SSgt Heath** 'Pob' **Baker** ... you've been mentioned in *The WIRE* get the beers in for the lads.

The RQMS, **WO2** 'Brummie' **Cox**, has been continuing to run the Garrison Karate Club and recently held a successful grading weekend where some 50 students both from Krefeld and RAF Bruggen attended. The photo shows the RQMS in full regalia with the new Squadron Baby Techs.

WO2 Cox and the Garrison Karate Club

WHY NOT VISIT THE ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM?

For opening hours ring
01258 482248

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

XV HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND & 15 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col. G. T. Rafferty**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) A. Balsdon**

NORTHERN IRELAND
INTER UNIT/INDIVIDUAL BADMINTON CHAMPIONSHIPS
1999/2000 - 2 DECEMBER 1999

Men's Team: **Capt Duggan (Team Capt)** **Capt Oliver**
WO2 Bond **SSgt (Supvr R) Jacklin**
SSgt Slade **Sgt Ball**
Cpl Lloyd **Cpl Twinning**
Sig Lister

15 Signal Regiment Badminton Team
upon winning the NI Championships

The team event was a hard-fought competition with extremely stiff opposition coming from both 4 and 5 R Irish. Due to the number of teams entering, the event was divided into two leagues. At the end of the league stage HQNI & 15 Sig Regt had finished as runners up in their league, defeating 1 Scots Guards 3-0, 2 RMP 2-1 and losing to 5 R Irish 1-2. In order to achieve a place in the Army finals. HQN1 & 15 Sig Regt needed to win their semi-final play off against 25 Engineer Regiment. This was achieved when both the First and Second Strings won their respective games. With a guaranteed Second place in the overall event, the only obstacle in the way of First place was from 4 R Irish. Once again the First and Second Strings led the way to a hard-won victory. As well as a successful day for HQN1 & 15 Sig Regt team members also entered the various individual events. There were six competitions on the day. They were Unit Championships, Men's Singles, Ladies Singles, Men's Doubles, Ladies Doubles and Mixed Doubles. There were some excellent performances as **Sgt Andy Ball** and **OCdt Alison McLean** won the Mixed Doubles, and **SSgt Sam Slade** and **Sig Lister** won the Men's Doubles Plate. It should be noted that **Capt Duggan** (the Team Captain) not knowing how successful the team would be had booked a flight out of the province less than one hour after the event was due to finish! He insisted that it was planned leave but it was strongly rumoured that he did not want to face the wrath of the CO just in case he did not bring back any silver!

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON POTENTIAL LEADERS WEEKEND
by LCpl Howard

Purple Section
Back Row (L-R): Cpl's Sharpe, Shaw and l-Cpl Howard
Front Row (L-R): Cpl's Gutteridge, Poton and Price

Day One- It was a dark icy morning when the intrepid potential leaders from Echo Tp assembled with the rest of the Squadron for the Potential Leader Weekend. The old jokes came out about crying brass monkeys and hamstrings about to go but we all left Lisburn for Kinnegar in high spirits, in fact some still sweating out the previous nights intake. Most of the Troop members were inducted into the Purple Syndicate photos (some would say the last time we smiled over the whole weekend, but don't believe the hype).

The opening challenge was the essay assignment, situated in what can only be described as a slightly chilly garage. Armed with loose leaf A4 and a biro we engaged in battle with the subjects presented. Somehow **LCpl** 'Howie' **Howard** managed to blame the Americans (in particular Oprah Winfrey) for the falling moral standards in British Society and **Cpl** 'Reg' **Gutteridge** got lost in the toilets. Next on the agenda was the stretcher race, which as we know is obligatory in any exercise involving Tele Op Specs. The least said the better about this. However, no one got hurt! So there's a bonus. Phase 3 was the Leaderless Command Tasks. The REME directing staff were treated to an exercise in how not to cantilever, with **Lt Jamie Balfour** and **WO2 (Supvr R)** 'PFG' **Gardner** looking on in utter disbelief, E Tp perfected the art of running around like headless chickens. Mind you at least the shift workers kept dry and didn't fall in the septic tank, like the supposed real workers.. eh **LCpl** 'Luggs' **Lafferty**!

The afternoon was taken up with group discussions where **LCpl** 'Billie' **Kirkwood** tried to convince his whole syndicate that Sesame Street was

225 Signal Squadron Potential Leadership Weekend

sending out sinister messages to children. **Cpl** 'Steve' **Price** spent the afternoon looking very stern and thoughtful. Phase 4 of the day was Combat Analysis. We all managed to get the hang of this previously undiscovered joy, however **Cpl** 'Lisa' **Shaw** managed to kill her injured party (don't ask ...). After our debriefings and armed with topic titles for the next days lecturettes we 'happy band' boarded our transport back to Lisburn, where we regaled the non-combatants with stories of that days failings, fallings and breakage's.

Day Two - started with Lisburn Station experiencing the collective sighs of all our happy participants whose alarm clocks sounded at a time only previously hinted at on a Sunday morning. When we reached Kinnegar we once again split into our syndicates and began our lecturettes. **Cpl** 'Al' **Sharpe** filled us all in on his wife's pregnancy and **Cpl** 'Done it all before' **Potton** explained ... well something (it was a heavy Saturday night after all). The dreaded command tasks were up next, we all took a last gulp of hot tea and headed out into the blue yonder. To be honest our showing was ... well entertaining, especially the mountain goat **Cpl** 'Reg the Cat' **Gutteridge** who must be the only man alive never to have climbed a tree as a boy and **Cpl** 'Lisa' **Shaw** climbing poles in positions last seen in under the counter publications. Command tasks safely dispatched and **Cpl** 'Stem Boy' **Price** proving that steroids really do help you climb ropes, we headed to Palace Barracks for the weekend's final event, the Assault Course. Tension was high as the coach pulled in and the adrenaline was clearly flowing as all the troops braced themselves for the upcoming gun run. Alas it was not to be! With shouts and tears of joy ringing out, it was declared that the PTI hadn't turned up.

The lads quickly destroyed the fish and chip dinner that had been laid on before retiring to the Squadron bar for a 'slap up' curry and copious amounts of beer. All in all the weekend was a success as we all enjoyed it and learned a lot, taking away if nothing else the enduring image of **Cpl Gutteridge** falling off a pole again... and again... and again.

ATTACHMENT TO COMMCEN - *by 2Lt Astley*

On arrival at Lisburn I was delighted to see the COMMCEN in touch with its creative side, with almost nightly campaigns. Congratulations go to **Sgts Anderson** and **Newman** on their engagement (courtesy of the Emmett and Green graphic design consultancy). Before having a chance to add my name to the petition I was whisked off to the legendary NIRTT course, and to 5 Regt AAC for a flight over Province. Following this I received my tasking for the 6-week attachment, including teaching on ITDs, planning a navigation exercise in the Mourne Mountains, and being detached to 9 R Irish, the RN and RM, 3 Bde and 8 Bde. I was also briefed on the various departments of the Regiment, and its role and mission, in order to understand how a unit operates. Between these were social events including a happy-clappy style theatre trip to 'The Tribute to the Blues Brothers' at the Grand Opera House Belfast, and the memorable Mess Burns' Night (apologies to those whose feet I stood on during reeling). So far I've battled with the intricacies of Service writing, mostly late at night whilst chinchilla - sitting (think large squirrel/rabbit -type rodent) for absent officers... I've trotted around the perimeter fence numerous times (oh for a memory like a goldfish)... and failed to find the exit from Sqn HQ almost as frequently. I have been made to feel really welcome, if being dragged to circuits, swimming and basketball within ten seconds of arrival counts as such! On a serious note, thank you to everyone who's looked after me and so capably fielded my endless questions about absolutely everything! All the best to those serving in Northern Ireland over the next few months.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

The Squadron continues to be the hub of the Regiment. A high proportion of the Squadron where involved in that none event that was Y2K, a fine and uplifting way to spend the New Year. Congratulations go out to **Capt Dave Duggan** and **Liz** who were engaged in Dublin on New Years day.

MOTOR TRANSPORT TROOP - *by Cpl Inghant*

The MT has been as busy as ever over the past few months. As well as the ever-hectic way of life in NI, there have been management changes resulting in the amalgamation of the Quartermaster's Department with the MT - now known as Support Tp. A warm welcome to the QM's. In no particular order let's begin with the farewells. Good luck to the following: **Cpl Andy Howe** and **LCpl Adam Huggett** who as I write are probably freezing their bits off in Norway with 249 Sig Sqn. Enjoy fellows! Also to **Sigs Ian Holmes** and **Keith Lovell** and family who I'm sure are now enjoying Gyros, Pomme Frittes mitt Mayo at 7 Armd Bde and 7 Sig Regt respectively. Now for the new arrivals to the Troop. Welcomes go out to those fortunate (or not) enough to be posted here to 15 Sig Regt: **Cpl Martin Hunt, LCpl Shawn Watson** and **Sig Steve Worthington** in from various mainland units. Also to **LCpl Charlie Lister, Sigs Danny Richardson** and 'Jock' **Fleming** who have come over from Germany. Congratulations to **Danny, Steve** and **Charlie** on their recent promotions. Well Done! Final thought. Lads, keep up the excellent service that we provide as the MT

COMMCEN TROOP

COMMCEN ANTRIM-*by LCpl Fox*

It's a busy time of year for COMMCEN Antrim. There seem to be more people coming and going than messages at the moment. (Not hard!) Goodbye to **LCpl** 'Permanent Transmit' **Vickers** who has finally left to go to the Intelligence Corps, leaving a nice cushy slot for **LCpl** 'Where's the Hoover' **Fox** to move to. **Sig** 'Whispering' **Huish** has the pleasure of taking over from **Sig** 'Disco Queen' **Green**. Then last but not least, **Sig** 'Mine's a vodka' **Gorman** will step into **Sig** 'Rodders' **Rodwell**'s place as he accepts the challenge of 1 RBY Special Comms selection course. Hopefully everything will settle down again soon, because I nearly missed Eastenders last Thursday.

COMMCEN PALACE - *by Sig Henson*

There have been recent changeovers in the COMMCEN. Let's start with the goodbyes. **Sig** 'Rodders' **Rodwell** has indeed been sent to COMMCEN Antrim soon to be joined by **LCpl Sam Skyvington** with the inspiring job of Stats, whilst **Cpl** 'Glo' **Fagan** is off to Civ Div where she can earn real money. Also not forgetting **LCpl Webb** who recently got given her tape and has re-traded to a Tech - well someone has to! So good luck and all the best. Hello to **Sig** 'Le Fox' **Shields, Sig** '$5' **Henson**, and not forgetting **Sig** 'He says it's legal' **Gorman.**

COMMCEN LISBURN

Since we moved to HQ Sqn on 1 December it's technically goodbye to 233 Sqn and **Cpls Lloyd, Phillips** and **MacDonald** in the CDA - although they're still nicking our food! Proper farewells to **LCpl Allen** and to **Claire Lydon** who've gone to civvy street. Congratulations **Claire** on your baby girl **Laura** (19 January) and to **Sgts Newman** and **Anderson** on their engagement - great news!! Also well done to **Sgt Anderson, LCpl Webb,** and **Sigs Walker** and **Green** on their recent promotions. Big hellos to **Sgt Newman, LCpl Joyce, Sigs Entmett, Green** and **Fleming**. Farewells to **Sig** 'I wanna be like Steve Anderson' **Simpson, Sig** 'Stapes' **Staples-Miles, Sig Jenny Read, Sig** 'Fanny' **Hannam** and **Sig Matt Green** - very best of luck to you all.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj J. R. Todd**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) P. M. Downie**

ECHO TROOP

Alpha Watch - A big hello to **Sgt** 'Loz' **Hill** and **Jayne**, who have just spent the last two years in sunny Italy. We hope you have bought with you your tax-free waterproofs because you'll need them over here. Welcome back to **Cpl Tommy Scanlan** and **Sarah** who return after his T1 course and by the way you're now on B Watch! **Cpl Steve** 'Courses' **Burton** has finally been accepted for one of the thousand courses he applied for this year. We hope it rains as much in Brecon as it does over here. The Station Theatre Club had yet another successful sell out 'pantomime' with **Cpl Dave** 'It's behind you' **Hill** demonstrating his diverse range of talents and skills who was not only the Producer and Front of House for 'Cinderella', he also managed a Chippendale - cameo part as well! Not wishing to take all the lime-light, he reluctantly passed the responsibilities of 'Barman and Doorman' to **SSgt (Supvr R) Steve Jacklin** and **Cpl Shane Hodgson** who even managed to make a profit for him! **Cpl Al** 'I can give up smoking' **Sharpe** is still trying to give up smoking since the start of the New Year, while **Cpl** 'Ash' **Ashley** is still trying to put weight on to stop him from getting blown over when he walks to work. Finally all the best to **LCpl** 'Babs' **Woodhouse** on your PTI course - we hope you break a leg.

Charlie Watch - Well it's that time again for all the welcomes, goodbye's and bone nicknames to be submitted. Welcome firstly to the RAF contingent **JT David** 'Davey' **Hyndman** from Digby, 'Keep your head down and your wits about you and you just might make it through'. We are also awaiting the imminent arrival of **Cpl Paul** 'Scouse' **Kennedy** and **Cpl David** 'Crusty' **Hardy** also from Digby, and last but not least, **Cpl David** 'Spanking' **Salter** from 14 Sig Regt. Charlie Watch management has also undergone a change with the arrival of **Sgt** 'Don't give me a daft nickname' **Foster** from rainy Cyprus. Now it is time for the not so tearful farewell, bye bye to **Cpl Dean** 'I'll go where I want to and you can't make me go anywhere else' **Lenton** who has purchased a new batch of tank tops and is on his way to Cheltenham. Also bye bye to **Cpl** 'Pepsi I'm off to wake myself up' **Mattacola** who has landed himself a posting to Chicksands. As for the remaining members of Charlie Watch, **LCpl** 'Baz its my weapon, signed out to me' **Keen,** has been seen volunteering for everything, if not participating! Probably getting ready for his impending skive to survive tour to 14 Sig Regt. **LCpl Jamie** 'Where's my posting' **Howard** has just attended the very successful Squadron Potential Leaders Weekend only to find out what we all knew anyway, take that how you will! **LCpl Andy** 'Where's my posting?' **Liddle** is still waiting to hear about a posting order, a big shout out to MCM Div for all your hard work. **LCpl Lisa** 'Dip and Dazzle' **Shaw** is under the surgeon's knife this month, managing to dodge the RSJCC that **LCpl Kenny** 'Why haven't I been made up yet?' **Halliday** has also managed to avoid. Not much else happening on C Watch, just a final word, **SSgt John** 'Leave and adventure training guru' **Fielder** again skiing for about a month which will probably run into some more leave. CONGRATULATIONS is also in order for the Charlie Watch 5-a-side football team, who convincingly beat both Alpha and Delta Watch. All that remains now is the formality of claiming the points against Bravo Watch and also those day shirkers within Goof Troop!

Delta Watch - After a few quiet months on Delta Watch, we say farewell to **SSgt (Supvr R) Paul Dunn** leaving us for the day working delights of the QFR and welcome to **SSgt (Supvr R) Kev Fogg** as our new shift supervisor after a brief spell at Digby. Goodbye and good luck also goes to **Sgt Dave Marrs** who is leaving us for a day job and who will soon be attempting the dreaded 'P' Company, sad blurk! Cheerio also goes out to **Cpl Jay Waites**, who cannot dodge his Junior Commanders course any longer, he's been dodging it since it was known as the Det Commanders' course, good luck **Jay**, GOTCHA! An increase in manpower requirements means that we shall shortly have the pleasure of **Cpl Carolyn Thomson** and **LCpl** 'Scouse' **Rimmer**'s company, soon to be posted in from Digby.

Congratulations to **Cpl Ian Potton** and his wife **Emma** on the birth of their baby daughter **Ffion**, both are doing well. Budding skiers **Cpl Jay Aldred. LCpl Gerard Drummond** and **LCpl J. C. Smith** will be off for a few weeks as Part of Ex Crystal Finn in March and will hopefully return without too many broken bones. All in all a great deal of change in motion for Delta Watch as we start the new millennium, we hope it will go as smoothly as the last! Finally, Congratulations go to **LCpl** 'Skin and Bones' **Wooton-Jones** who went fishing on a recent leave and bagged a biggie weighing around 10 stone with blonde hair, wearing tight jeans and high heels. Word has it that his watch Staffy and Sergeant are trying to get a few tips on how he does it, as they are both keen anglers since childhood (did you have one Staffy) and only come back from trips either minging, smelling of fish or even worse, both).

GOLF TROOP

Not a great deal has happened within the Troop since the last set of notes but certainly enough to warrant a place in *The WIRE*. The Troop OC, **Capt Hargreaves**, is off playing soldiers at the moment with the 264 Selection Course, best of luck to him. **Sgt Michelle Watkins** and **Cpl Matt Williams** just recently represented the Regiment at Basketball, the girls coming a gallant Fourth place out of four and the lads coming Second, unfortunately they lost to the RMP's. They would both like to thank everybody for their unmatched support. Since our last entry we have a few people come and go from the Troop, **Sgt Tony Cecil** has left us for sunnier climbs at 9 Sig Regt and **Sgt** 'Ginge' **Davey** has gone to work with the TA in Darlington. **Sgt Dave Kilgallon** joined us from 233 Sig Sqn, **Cpl Phil McLeish** from 264, **Cpl Stu Street** from 9 Sig Regt and **Cpl Ryan Laing** fresh from his TI. Finally the news that made the whole of the Troop's year was the birth of **Sgt Rich** and **Ruth Cleminson**'s baby boy **William Edward**, Congratulations from us all.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj R. P. Giles**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Dunseith**

Members of NCC Troop
Back Row (L-R): Sgt Thomas, Cpls Harrison, Brown, WO2 Darlington, Cp] Walsh
Front Row (L-R): W01 (YofS) Rose, Capt Benson & Murphy Dog, SSgt Tierney and Sig Hudspeth

The last few months have been an extremely busy period for the Squadron, with the trial Network Control Centre (NCC) being established from a portion of each Troop within the Squadron. The Squadron played a major role in the preparation, control and testing of equipment and systems for Y2K, to ensure that we would not encounter any problem over the Y2K dates. With many of the Squadron working on the eve of the new millennium, we were all glad that our planning and preparation paid off and events went smoothly, allowing the majority of us to at least find a party in the small hours.

Squadron Headquarters would like to say farewell to the 2IC, **Capt Jules McColl** who is on a two year sabbatical to join her husband in Brunei and also the Sqn Clerk, **Cpl Stu Brittan** who is off to the less sunny climate of Tidworth. Their replacements will not have far to travel as **Capt Bels Taylor** is set to take over the mantle of 2IC in the near future and we welcome **Cpl Steve Lucas**, both if whom are already stationed within Thiepval Barracks.

ROMEO TROOP RANGE DAY

Once again the time had arrived for the Troop to conduct another range day, so the Troop headed off to the not too sunny Ballykinler. Arriving at the ranges slightly later than expected, due to the Northern Ireland Tractor Factor, the Troop soon started to check zero their weapons under the watchful eye of the Troop OC, **Capt Colin Kell**. For the first time since anyone can remember, a member of the Troop actually managed to complete their zeroing the first lime round, so well done to **Cpl** 'Rapid Fire' **Richardson** of the Op's Section. Once we had all completed our zeroing, it was time to move onto the more interesting part of the day - using our support weapons, which usually separates the men from the boys. Once again, the Op's section proved to be the sharp shots of the Troop, putting the rest of us to shame. After a number of hours, the air at Ballvkinler was filling with Cordite and everyone had shown some improvement. Whilst picking up the brass at the end of the day, the compulsory ridicule was issued out to the poorer shots, especially from the jubilant Op's Section who never tire from giving the Technicians a hard time whenever possible. The Troop would like to say farewell to **SSgt Rob Allen** as he moves on to work with the TA in Liverpool, and hello to new arrivals **SSgt Steve Bartlett** and his family, arriving from 3 (UK) Div and **LCpl Nick** 'Ladies man?' **Jenkins** from 249 Sig Sqn. On a final note, the Troop congratulates **WO2 (YofS)** 'Tac' **Bartlett** for his selection for promotion to WO1 - well done 'Tac'!

MCKELVIE CUP POTTED SPORTS COMPETITION

With Inter-Troop rivalry at a high after the Christmas and New Year break, it was time to hold the next event in the Inter-Troop competition, the McKelvie Cup. TM Troop were tasked to organise a potted sports competition which was to take place on 14 January 2000 and **LCpls** 'Mad Mike' **Partridge** and **Dot Perkins** were put on the case. The aim of the potted sports competition was to test each individuals sporting abilities to the limit, playing football, hockey, volleyball and hockey. The secondary aim was to build up a thirst for the games night to be held that evening. The first event to take place was the football, with young and old alike showing much enthusiasm, if not talent, although a few potential future stars were revealed. By the end of the first match, it was clear that TM Tp's semi-professional team were going to destroy all opposition. The hockey proved to be a much closer competition, with India Tp and TM Tp fighting for a hard pitched draw. NCC Tp, despite a courageous effort, could only manage third place. As the day was progressing, the support from the sidelines became more vocal and soon played a major part in motivating the competitors. TM Tp soon swept their way through the volleyball competition, despite fierce pressure from NCC Tp, leaving India Tp requiring a clean sweep in the final competition. After a sweeping victory over NCC Tp, the pressure was then returned to TM Tp. The TNI v NCC match was a high-pressure event, with tempers mostly being kept under control. Eventually, TM Tp were victorious making them the 233 Sig Sqn Potted Sports Champions.

8TH INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

Sqn Comd	**Maj Jake Thackray**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Paul Fleming**

RQMS DEPARTMENT

by Cpl Pete May, Cpl Ollie North and Pte PatrickMorris

RQMS	**WO2 (RQMS) Kev Tunstall**
SQMS	**SSgt Garth Hood**

We begin this month by saying farewell to **CSgt Ned Kelly** (the original Scottish Highwayman) who is off to Osnabruck, and **LCpl Dave** 'Mr Happy' **Wardle** and his family who are off to Cyprus (God help Cyprus). Finally 'Y I Man' to **SSgt Garth Hood** who is a fanatical Newcastle fan and has slipped into the roll of SQMS well by being on leave already. We said a sad farewell to **LCpl Dave Wardle** on a wet Friday night in January, well we would have done if he had turned up on time. By the time he had turned up the food had almost gone and his excuse was that his wife would not let him out to play. **Sgt Karl** 'Noah' **Duncan** and **Pte Patrick Morris** have spent their time pestering the RQ wanting to join **LCpl Dave Wardle** in sunny Cyprus. **Sgt Eddie** 'Billy Joel' **Porter** has just had a week off to do a CQMS course, where it was a case of pull up a sandbag and listen to the instructors' war stories. He passed with flying colours. **Cpl** 'Wash and Went' **North** has been invited by the OC to grow what little hair he has remaining and is now after a wig like Crusty the Clown's. **Cpl Pete** 'Ginger Ninja' **May** has reappeared in the Troop after being abducted by ginger aliens and experimented on at Headley Court. **LCpl Kev** 'I don't believe it' **Rattray** continues to circumnavigate the province acquiring whatever stores are required for the Aladdin's Cave RQMS Department.

NEWSFLASH

A final farewell to **Sig Lee Fowler** who has been downgraded to a driver at Arthur Dayley's MT. Also a farewell to **Pte Steve** 'I've got to have the last word' **Wilson** who yet again has returned to the Training Wing.

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS - *by Pte Carrie Cumming*

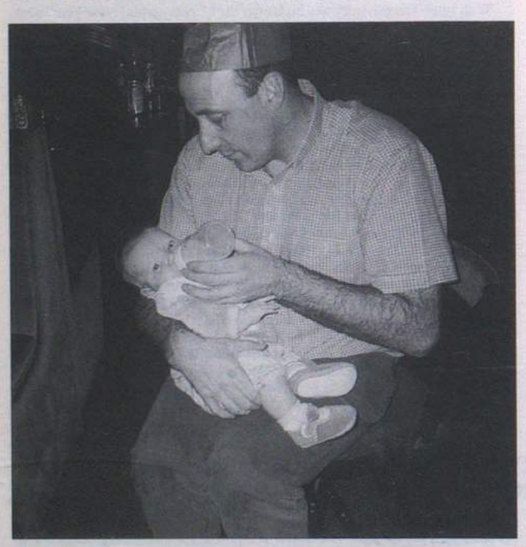
Chief Clerk	**SSgt John Hughes**

Christmas had finally arrived at SHQ but whilst the rest of the Squadron were relaxing and partying we were as busy as ever. **Cpl Lee** 'UNICOM is great' **Goldsmith** attended and passed his Range Management course. What's more dangerous than a clerk with a pistol? A clerk with a Range Management Qualification (and they said we were pen pushers)! Whilst everyone was working hard in the office, I was chuffed about being given the easy duty of Squadron barmaid, ('This is

the life,' I thought as I opened the bar that first night). By the time Santa had arrived I was like Scrooge, as everyone was yelling 'Merry Christmas' in their drunken slur, I was yelling back, 'Yeah right!

Cpl Gaz Moore, Cpl Stefan Sabuda, Cpl Glen Ruscoe having good clean fun on Christmas day!

After Christmas came the New Year and the New Millennium. We now have a clerk with a Range Management Qualification, so **LCpl Karen** 'Page 3' **Page** and myself thought we would give you Signallers a run for your money and climb a mast. So off we went and after a short flight in a Wessex we arrived at our site. Whilst **LCpl Karen Page**, a slightly greener one, was thanking God for arriving safely, I was thanking God for being back in my homeland. **Cpl Paul** 'Climbing God' **Hounsell,** after he had finished making sly comments about the need to adjust his perfect harness due to having the two bustiest girls in the Squadron, personally I don't think so, let us loose on the mast. We both sped up the giant mast which the so-called expert claims is about 26m, I still claim it was about 120m. I don't know what all the fuss is about with this climbing lark.



The RSM with the youngest member of the Squadron

Finally we would like to welcome back the Chief Clerk, SSgt John 'Karoke King' Hughes who has returned from his EFP 2 Course which he zoomed through. Also LCpl Roy 'I've got another pen-pal' Banyard who has returned from his JQC.

MOTOR TRANSPORT TROOP - *by LCpl Stu Palmer*

Tp Comil **WO2 (MTWO) Tom Hair** RLC
Tp Sgt **Sgt Gareth Stanley** RLC

MT Tp has been very busy recently with details, people on courses, everyone leaving and Comms Tp crashing our vehicles. I would like to say 'goodbye' to **Sig Craig Buckingham** who's off to Comms Tp, **LCpl Andy Green** and **Sig Ray Harrison** who are off to 2 Sig Regt in York. I would equally like to say, 'Hello and welcome,' to **Cpl Ian Jones** who arrived from HQ ARRC Sp Bn, **Pte** 'Taff' **Corbidge** and **Pte Ryan Creed** form 27 Transport Regt, **Sig Lee Fowler** from the QM's for a few months placement and finally **Sig Danny Smith** from Comms Tp. All of the MT congratulate **LCpl Andy Green, Pte Ross Milkins, Pte Ronnie Barker, Sig Ian Billings** and **Sig Ray Harrison** on their recent promotions. Finally I would like to wish **Cpl Dave Rabbage** goodluck on his motorcycle instructors course, AGAIN!

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP - *by Sig Phil Bloxham*

Tp Comd **Lt Jo Stewart**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Tony Taylor**

As usual Engineering Section has been very busy over the last couple of months. Firstly, welcome to **Sig Carl Brown** who has arrived from 14 Sig Regt and **Sig Idris Davies** from sunny Cyprus. Also the long awaited arrival of **Sig Craig** 'Lurch' **Buckingham** who has made the long trip from the MT. Sadly it was goodbye to **Sgt Dan Coles** who has left to teach at Blandford and **LCpl Dave** 'Donkey' **Healey**, who I'm sure will be appreciated by the girls in Cyprus. Congratulations to **Cpl Eddie Stojanovic** on passing P Company and **LCpl Andy Richards** on passing his Class 1. Congratulations also to **Sig Lee** 'Geordie' **Fearon** who after a well documented 601 grades and war in 'Macedonia like', finally received his first tape. Also a very well deserved first tape to **Sig Carl Stephenson** who along with **Sig Rob Passey** is on a short tour of Kosovo.

UNTAT TRAINING - *by Sig Steve Baxter*

'You lot have to go to Sennelager to do five days training and we've given you nine days to do it in.' This was the best news we had heard in a long time. Getting to Germany did, however, prove to he a little more tricky than first thought. Mainly due to the extra luggage we had no paperwork for, namely four rifles, DOH! That problem was overcome and we continued our journey. UNTAT training we were told was not unlike the NERTT course that we had all been through on arrival in the province. All that was required was plenty of coffee to see us through the endless presentations. Whoever said this had quite obviously been a compulsive liar as all the training was held outside. Anyone who has, been to STC will tell you that in January it isn't cold it's absolutely Baltic. The five days training consisted of a days theory (slides, coffee, nodding dog, nudging each other) and a general overview of the Kosovo situation. None of us have been to the Balkans before and therefore were privy to a world of untold tales, information and grizzly photos! The rest of the training covered many areas including; mine recognition, mass casualities, use of interpreters, basic Albanian, and basic Serbian to name a few. Our tour length is only 6 - 8 weeks and although short, it will give us a much needed chance to practice our trade, as here in province Tele Mechs are employed as Riggers. **LCpl Carl Stephenson** and **Sig Rob Passey** deployed on the 26 January while myself and **Sig Craig Buckingham** deploy in April. We look forward to our tour and you will no doubt hear about it in six months.

FRT HAND OVER FROM 15 SIGNAL REGIMENT TO 218 SIGNAL SQUADRON - *by Cpl Stef Sabuda*

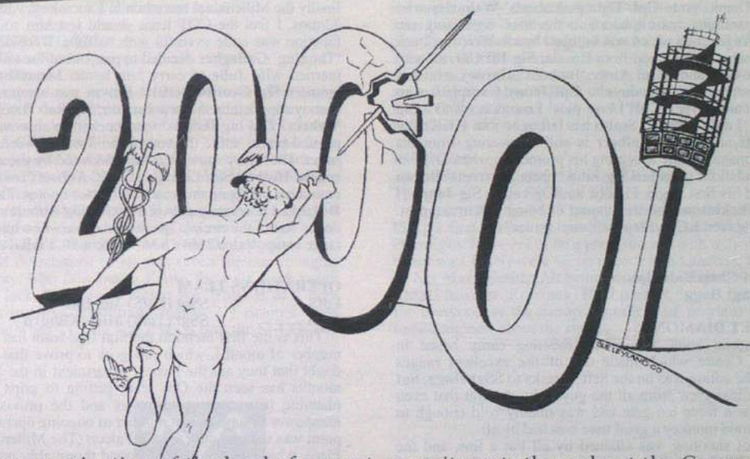
Throughout 1999 there had been talk of the 15 Sig Regt FRT detachment in Londonderry being placed under total command of 218 Sig Sqn, as this would be beneficial for the soldiers and increase efficiency at work. A final decision was made in early Nov that our time with 15 Sig Regt was to come to an end and we would be formally handed over to 218 Sig Sqn on 1 December. From then on the wheels were set in motion for the actual hand over. This included transferring all records between units and establishing a new chain of command and admin network. Initially, the hand over seemed straight forward, then a few teething problems arose but with the perseverance of **Sgt Marty** 'I love the Spice Girls so much I saw them in concert - twice' **Bowkett** all problems were dealt with quickly. So on the 1 December, **Sgt Marty Bowkett, Cpl Ontar** 'Roxette' **Walshe, Cpl Stef** 'I'm now a dad' **Sabuda** and **LCpl Mike** 'I still haven't got my Class 2 yet' **Garry** came under the command of 218 Sig Sqn. The only exception being **Cpl Spike** 'Claude Greengrass' **Milligan**, who still under the command of 15 Sig Regt, has been put on loan to the Squadron till the end of April 2000. The first few weeks have gone nice and smoothly for the now renamed SRT, but who knows what's around the corner!

ARE YOU READING YOUR OWN COPY OF THE WIRE?

IF NOT, MAKE THE YEAR 2000 THE YEAR THAT YOU START

TO SUBSCRIBE, TEL: 01258 482085/482087

The Corps MILLENNIUM CELEBRATIONS at Blandford



Following a re-examination of the level of current commitments throughout the Corps, it has been decided to focus the Corps Millennium Celebrations on the Morrison Cup and the associated all ranks party. The effect of this will be to allow units to concentrate their efforts on maximising their involvement in the Morrison Cup Competition making it a memorable event and celebrating in style on 19 May.

The SOinC understands that the decision will disappoint many sportsmen and women across the Corps but feels that making changes to the programme at this stage is preferable to adding to the sustained heavy burden of commitments faced by units of the Corps. The programme for the week is therefore:

17/18 May – SOinC(A)'s Annual Conference. Letters of invitation to those eligible to attend will be distributed shortly.

18 May – An evening talk to the Royal Signals Institution by Maj Gen A. J. Raper CBE, Chief Executive DCSA.

18/19 May – The Morrison Cup. The annual major and minor unit athletics event for all R SIGNALS Units.

19 May – An evening all ranks party for those attending the Morrison Cup, all Blandford Garrison personnel and members of all other R SIGNALS units. The event will include free entrance to a funfair, live bands, discos, and a fireworks display.

Those sporting competitions to be held under the banner of the Millennium Celebrations but at times other than the week 15-18 May such as sailing, will continue as planned.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1ST (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS & SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col E. M. Flint**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Hymas**

201 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Colin Lawrance**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Kev Simmons**

EAGLE TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Michelle Hanlon**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Davies**

Following a well deserved Christmas and New Year break, the personnel are back and raring to go. The Troop would like to thank **SSgt Hogg** for organising the range camp and the cold wet weather to go with it. We would like to thank Kestrel Tp for the Squadron Christmas function and the troops very own **LCpl** 'Santa-Claus' **Lomas** for providing us with extra entertainment. Thanks go to **Cpl** 'Tight pink shorts' **Walmsley** who worked extra hard, straining his clipboard to the max organising the regimental junior ranks function which was enjoyed by all. Welcome back to **Sig Dean Barber** who has returned from Bosnia, **Sig Jill Carrol**, who has returned from Kosovo and **LCpl Andy** 'Bulbous' **Harvey** who has just joined us from Support Tp. Goodbye to **Cpl Jenny Campbell** who has moved Troop to Falcon Tp. **LCpl** 'I love pies' **Lomas** is off to 7 Sig Regt and **Sig Kenny** 'I didn't inhale' **Smith** has left us to join 1(UK) Civ Div. Finally **Sig** 'Off at physio' **Hulbert** is still recovering from his honeymoon at the moment, before accepting his promotion when he joins 16 Sig Regt. Congratulations go out to **Sig John** 'I hate Austrians' **Doran** who has just received his first stripe. Finally, an SOS call to **Sig Jamie** 'I may be some time' **Dickinson** who we suspect of being lost in the post. Oh yes and has anyone seen **LCpl Steptoe**'s mini trailer?

FALCON TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Chris Biddulph**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Hogg**

EXERCISE MUSKET DIAMOND

This was a Squadron level, two week shooting camp based in Sennelager Training Centre which made use of the excellent ranges around the area and the admin was on the ball. Thanks to **SSgt Hogg, Sgt McIntyre** and the Adidas crew from all the guys who thought that even though it rained, blew a force ten gale and was mainly cold enough to freeze the nuts off a brass monkey a good time was had by all.

A good standard of shooting was attained by all but a few, and the majority passed the APWT first time. A couple even had marksman level passes including **Sig Gav Wilson** and **Sig Geoff Briggs**; now that's a feat in itself. Thanks again to the DS for some excellent coaching. Morale rose whilst we were out there, probably because it was an Exercise and the bar was open, who knows? It may also have been the Inter-Section Football Competition, which was won by One Section beating the DS Section by seven goals to one. This came as a surprise to our very own Ryan Giggs look-a-like **Sgt Gerry McGachy** who looked distraught after the first four flew into the back of the net. Most of evenings were filled by really interesting lessons such as LOAC and recognition, but this was just a time filler until the bar opened for most of us. An Inter-Section Shooting Competition was run by **SSgt (SQMS) North** where each of the Sections entered a team who ran 5km in CEFO then negotiated the Roupell Cup. The competition scores, unlike most of the weeks scores, were below average for a one legged blind man with no trigger finger. Competition shooting is not as easy as it sounds.

All in all a very well run camp, which all but a few found productive, useful and enjoyable. Oh and if anyone can produce photographic evidence of the Army's new troop carrying vehicle called a 'Dafford' please contact **2Lt Alan Foote** Ext: 3574, as the guys are dying to know what he is talking about. A mention must go out to **SSgt (YofS) Kilburn** and **SSgt (FofS) Ross.** Sorry you were snowed under getting photos of yourselves on your mugs, was this really the reason you could not attend? The mighty 'Falcon' would like to welcome to the nest **Sig** 'New sprog' **Adam Wood** and on inter-troop posting **Cpl Jenny Campbell**. It won't be long before they learn to fight properly. We would also like to say a sad farewell to **Sig Mickey** 'She looked better last night' **Keers** who is REMFing it back in UK with the wondrous 2 Sig Regt and to **Sig** 'Shifty 'I won't be late honest' **Barker** who has gone to join the families centre where we are sure he will be a great asset. A big hello goes out to **Sig** 'Tel' **Frank** who is out in sunny Bosnia. Good luck to **Cpl Linton** 'The women will miss me' **Breaks** and **Cpl** 'Taff 'I hope there are sheep there" **Thomas** who are departing for that well known holiday destination Kosovo. We are preparing to start the year off with UWIs then into a busy few months of exercises.

KESTREL TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt Alan Foote**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'China' **Cooper**

By the end of February Kestrel Tp will have lost quite a few of its more experienced members. Goodbye to **LCpl Andy Plumb** and **Sig Andy Gallagher** who will both be off to 2 Sig Regt and **Sig Rob Vickers** who will be joining 7 Sig Regt, best of luck with your new units. Also farewell to **Cpl Glen Mallows** who is not only leaving the Troop but the Army as well. Good luck to **LCpl** 'Taff' **Lewis, LCpl Dave Harkness** and **Sig Danny Raw**, all of who are off to Kosovo. With half the Troop gone or going, we welcome **Cpl Marc Johnson** from 3 (UK) ADSR. We hope you will enjoy Kestrel Tp as much as all those leaving.

The Troop as a whole have been raising money for charity in the form of sponsoring the Tp Comd to run a 5 Marathon Series. **2Lt Alan Foote** has so far completed three. The first being in Berlin followed by Frankfurt and finally the Millennium marathon in Lancashire, with a personal best of 3hrs 32mins. I feel the CDT team should test him soon. Last month's Troop function was quite eventful with half the Troop falling asleep. **Sig Andy** 'The slug' **Gallagher** decided to pass out in the toilets, leaving his recently married wife **Julie** to carry him home. Meanwhile the Troop's resident bouncer **Sig Geordie** 'GBH' **Bowes** was sleeping after drinking half a shandy supplied by the new barman, **Sig Rob** 'Look at my porn collection' **Vickers.** The big 'GBH' was shocked to discover his whole body was painted black, while the rest of the Troop cowered from the wrath of his anger. The Troop, however, was saddened by the absence of, **Sig** 'Devil's spawn' **Hearty. Sig** 'Lightning quick' **Abbott** (Troop genius) lived up to his reputation yet again this month with two quotes. The first when **Sgt** 'Gash' **Doe** asked how many mils in a circle? **Sig Abbott**'s answer was 'It depends on the size of the circle'. The second quote was while checking his kit list for range camp; 'I don't have a MOD form 90, I'll have to borrow one'.

OPERATIONS TEAM
FofS **SSgt (FofS) Jim Ross**
YofS **SSgt (YofS) Mick Kilburn**

This is the first mention the Sqn Ops team has had in *The WIRE* for a number of months, which just goes to prove that without a shadow of a doubt that they are the busiest department in the Squadron. The last few months has seen the Ops team getting to grips with such joys as the planning of numerous exercises and the provision of equipment and manpower in support of a number of ongoing operations. A particular high point was the planning for Op Falcon (The Millennium Bug Contingency Plan), which the whole team found thoroughly rewarding and beneficial, enough said!! On a lighter note the last few months has seen the opening of **SSgt (FofS) Jim Ross's** cellar Bar (The Pink Flamingo). This has been a popular after work venue, where it is not uncommon for **SSgt (YofS) Mick Kilburn** and **WO2 (SSM) Kev Simmons** to be suffering from the effects of malaria the following day. A special thank you must go out to **Sgt** 'Richy' **Richardson** for organising the SNCO's and Officers evening out in December. The evening involved a meal in a local restaurant, followed by drinks and various bar activities in the Sgt's Mess. The OC Sqn is apparently still undergoing treatment in the Medical Centre for his bruised ribs. At the time of writing 'Richy' is currently designing the new regimental tie, a task which he is tackling with determination and vigour. Hopefully in the next edition of *The WIRE* we will be able to publish a photograph of him modelling the finished design.

211 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj J. R. C. Bunce**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Stan Kelly**

COMMAND TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Mike Morton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Kev Innes**

Now that everyone has a returned from having a great Christmas and New Year, it is back to some good old fashioned hard graft. However for some, it is a new experience, as Command Troop has recently seen quite a large turnover of its manpower, one of those being our Troop Commander. Our new arrivals are **Lt Mike Morton** (after promotion from Comms Tp to Comd Tp), **Sgt Andy Minorczyk** (also being promoted from Comms Tp to Comd Tp), **Bdr** 'Bedders' **Bedford, LCpls Mark Neillings, Jess Limbert, Lee Gobie, Sigs Greville, Baz Maitland, Turpie, Shane Wakeling** and finally **Sig Ward**. Welcome to you all. Farewells go to **Capt Karl Jeeves** (after promotion and good luck in Bassingbourn) **LCpl Matt Whitfield** and **Sig** 'Johnno' **Johnston** (also on promotion). Congratulations to **Sig Shane Wakeling** on being selected for promotion to LCpl and to **Sigs Sharon** and **Dave McCormack** on the birth of their twin boys. We wish all we know a Happy New Year, and look forward to the busy season that lies ahead.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt** 'Spence' **Spencer**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Mick Poyning**

On returning from a very busy October and November, Comms Tp settled down to turning round the vehicles and getting all the ATD'S out of the way. Once this task was completed it was time to enjoy a well earned break from a very busy couple of months. The first function was to say goodbye to **Cpl** (now promoted Sergeant) 'Wilky' **Wilkinson** and wife **Claire** who are of to 16 Sig Regt. Next was a sad farewell to **SSgt John Leach** who is off to the TA (special thanks goes to **LCpl Lee Gobie** for a well organised function), good luck for the future to you all. By now the Christmas period had reached us and it was time to let our hair down. This came in the form of Squadron, and Regimental functions. Thanks goes out to **Sgt Mick Poyning** and his committee on an excellent Squadron function where everyone enjoyed them selves thoroughly. The lads and lasses had a good time at the Regimental Christmas dinner making the most out of being waited on hand and foot! Also during this time we would like to say welcome back to **Sig** 'Head' **Garrod, Sig** 'Am I big enough?' **Wilson** and **Sig Sharon Osgood,** all of who have recently completed their tours of Bosnia. Welcome back also to **Sig Bob Toner** who had a very successful stay with the British Parachute Centre in Sennelager. Welcome to the following, **2Lt Sue Alison** on her detachment to the Troop and congratulations to **Cpl Jones** on his promotion and posting to the Troop. Well done to **Cpls Ogg** and **Royston** and **LCpl Thompson** on completion on their class 2-1 upgraders course. Finally good luck to the members of the Troop who are on Lanyard Trophy training, 'hang on in'. Thanks to all those who volunteered for Christmas and New Year rear details, enjoy your well deserved leave.

RADIO REBROADCAST TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Adam Shakespeare**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Deano Cox**

A quiet period as the countdown for the millennium began. The Troop as a whole was hit with a bombardment of posting orders and detachments. The Troop would like to say farewell to **LCpl Stevie** 'Codackie AKA Barbie' **Codack** who has gone to 7 Bde in time for a sunshine tour. **LCpl** 'Dangerous' **Dave Wallace** who goes off to teach our future soldiers in RSS Blandford (God help us!). **LCpl** 'Taff' **Williams** is posted to 21Sig Regt where he looks forward to some cheap beer and cheap fuel (not). The Troop also has a few lucky people who are attached to 7 Bde and are soon to go on a six month holiday to Kosovo, **LCpl** 'Mac' **McPherson, Sig** 'Fordy' **Ford** and **Sig** 'Swad' **McSharry**, good luck guys. By far the hardest detachment of all was saved for our youngest soldier **Cpl Tom Murray**; who flew out to Kenya for a six week range supervisory job, tough luck **Tom**. Sport within the Troop is at a high standard as was shown in two competitions against 211 Seniors. First came the rugby 10-a-side when 211 Sig Sqn JNCOs beat the SNCOs and officers in what was called a controversial game 13 points to 10 to the juniors, then came the football match with a 10-2 slapping for the seniors, for some reason the kit inspections and block inspections have doubled I wonder why? RRB Tp look forward to three new editions to the Troop in the next couple of months, **LCpl Dave Thompson** who is even younger than **Cpl Tom Murray, Cpl Vickers** and finally **LCpl Teague.**

212 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Capt Mark Purves/Capt Jason Nichols**
SSM **SSgt** 'I'm just nipping off to play football' **Greenwood**

Well it has been a busy old time for the bulk of the Squadron here in Herford over the last few months. A few personalities have come and gone from various operational tours and other jollies generally keeping the remaining personalities in SHQ fairly busy. Congratulations to **WO2 (FofS) Solomons** for coming off the WO1 Board. Just a pity that he missed his celebratory drinks but if he will disappear off skiing for two weeks! What was it that he said about people missing work for sport?

COMMAND TROOP - *by Sig Bob Yuille*
Tp Comd **Lt Stuart Gunson**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Ade Sims**

It was quite a busy period leading up to Christmas leave, with DSG Tp splitting to form Comd Tp and Comms Tp again. Consequently the Tp had to work very hard to finish the never ending CESs prior to the next millennium. We will probably still be using the same 43 series by the next millennium! The Troop organised a 'Millennium' shopping trip to Dortmund. After a few hours shopping for the loved ones it was time for some well deserved refreshment. A visit to a local bar soon proved fruitful as Rangers were playing Dortmund that night in the UEFA cup so a good night was had by all, apart from of course the only Celtic man, **Cpl** 'Mac' **McCallum!** Next up was the Squadron Christmas function. Everyone seemed to enjoy the karaoke and disco apart from **Cpl Jas Carty** who after two large shandys thought he'd take a nap for the night. Thanks to **Sgt** 'Tug' **Wilson** and **Cpl Phil Korba** for a top night. Finally, lucky for us after the Christmas leave it was straight into a regimental plug up, with shouts and screams of 'are we really back at work'? A final mention must go to **Sig Brendan Wilkes** who managed to get back to work, a week late!! Congratulations must go to **Lt Stuart Gunson** for finally getting that elusive second pip!

IS TROOP
Tp Comd **SSgt (YofS) Al Roberts**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Jock Reid**

Supported by the FSST based at Blandford, Exercise Rhino Charge was IS Tp's first attempt at installing a Divisional Wide Area Network over Ptarmigan. It proved to be a great success with only minor faults standing in our way. LANs were set up in each Headquarters, Main being managed by **Sgt Mark Smith**; Alt being managed by **Sgt** 'Porn Tash' **Griffith** and CMSC had **Sgt** 'Rifleman' **Reid** present. It was also a great opportunity for everyone in the Troop regardless of previous experience to learn something new about the system.

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col C. Wakerley MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. C. Keilty**

By the time the next *WIRE* notes are issued we will have said a fond farewell to the Commanding Officer, **Lt Col Wakerley MBE**, who is posted to PJHQ. Best wishes to you, **Jackie** and your children in your new position. The new Commanding Officer, **Lt Col Ian Cameron-Mowat** took up Command of 2 Sig Regt in February 2000.

LONG SERVICE & GOOD CONDUCT PRESENTATION

(L-R): SSgt Sheils, Sgt Cooke, SSgt Tuff, Lt Col Wakerley MBE, Brig Cook MBE, Sgt Kirk, Cpl Preece, WO2 (SSM) McGarry, WO1 (RSM) Keilty

The Commander 11 Sig Bde, **Brig J. C. Cook MBE**, presented the following their Long Service and Good Conduct medals in the Sergeants' Mess at Imphal Barracks on 2 December 1999. **WO2 (SSM) Paul McGarry, SSgt Terry Shiels, SSgt (SQMS)** 'Gaz' **Tuff, Sgts Jim Cooke, Dave Kirk** and **Cpl Pete Preece**. Following the formalities and photographs the Commander presented flowers to the ladies and thanked them for all their support to their partners through the years.

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

Cpl Rumford under instruction on board HMS *York*

Sqn Comd **Maj M. D. Bailes**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) P. V. McGarry**

Welcome to the new OC, **Maj Mike Bailes** who has just joined us from 21 Sig Regt and congratulations to **WCpl** 'Mags' **Harvey** ACTC (SPS) HQ Sqn Clerk on her recent promotion. Twelve members of HQ Sqn and 214 Sqn boarded HMS *York* from 25 November - 3 December to embark on sea experience training and visit Santander in Northern Spain. The Regiment are affiliated to HMS *York* and this is the second time this year the Regiment have boarded the vessel.

Sigs Taylor, Mackay and Reardon practice life saving drills

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY - 14 NOVEMBER 1999

Lt Col Wakerley MBE
lays a wreath at the foot of the Kohima Memorial

2 Sig Regt have held an annual Remembrance Service in the historic York Minster ever since the Regiment returned from Germany in 1983. This year's Remembrance Service was attended by members of the Regiment, their families, local dignitaries and members of the public. 214 Sig Sqn provided a contingent which marched through the streets of York to the War Memorial prior to attending the Minster service. Many comments from the public were overheard with regard to how smart everyone looked. An obvious observation on how many soldiers were in uniform and a good reflection on the Regiment's PT regime.

The York Minster Service opened with a hymn sung with great enthusiasm by all ranks. The CO, **Lt Col Wakerley** then read a lesson which gave people time to reflect on why we in the Army have such a service every year. Last Post and Reveille signalled the start and finish of the two minute silence and was played by a member of the Queen's Division Normandy Band. A collection was made and raised £100.

After the service, the CO laid a wreath at the foot of the Kohima Memorial in Kohima Gardens adjacent to the Minster. Members of the Regiment then returned to their respective messes to entertain their guests, have a curry lunch and have a few drinks to take away the winter chill.

TRANSPORT MAINTENANCE TROOP

It has been an extremely busy year which has seen most of the Troop on deployment in Kosovo, Bosnia (Op Palatine) or the Falklands. Sixteen personnel from TM Tp left for Op Palatine in the first week of December for six months. During this time we have said farewell to **Sgt Paul** 'Alan Shearer (from the Macdonalds advert)' **Richards**, who has left for an even easier time with 33 Sig Regt (V) in January 2000.

Welcome to **Sgt Trev McSween** from 280 (UK) Sig Sqn, 'Hello, and see you in six months,' as he departs for another tour of the Balkans. Also to **LCpls John Beart, Mike Calam, Anthony Clark** and **Scott Wilson**, who have arrived into the Regiment straight from the factory in Blandford. On Friday 26 November the Sergeants' Mess bade a fond farewell to **WO2 (FofS) Yam Bahadur Rana** who deserted to the other side on commissioning. He was forcibly ejected from the mess in time honoured fashion, through the window to surf over to the officer's mess atop an ERV. He leaves behind many friends, colleagues and a large stain on the carpet where he spilt most of his yard of ale! We all hope he enjoys his tour at Area Systems Group in Blandford as TOT and take this opportunity to congratulate him once again on becoming the FIRST Gurkha to become commissioned as TOT.

AGAAMI DIN HARUMA TAPAI ANI, TAPAIKA PARIWAR MA HAARDIK SHUBHAKAMANA!

Members of Mike Troop say farewell
to FofS Yam, Sgt Richards, Sgt Walsh, Cpl Williams
(L-R): Sgt Hebindra, LCpl Bhawani, Sgt Walsh, Cpl McKeown,
SSgt Buddhi, Cpl Rutter, Cpl Randall, Sgt Richards, Cpl Wood,
FofS Yam

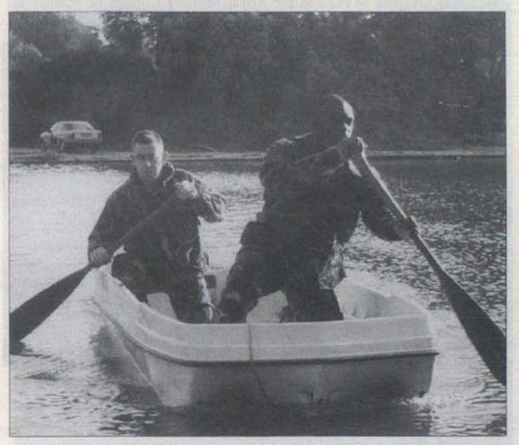
TEAM BUILDING COURSE

Over the weekend 15-17 October 1999 the Regimental Ist XI (no, not football, cricket or hockey, I'm talking about the Training Team) used the facilities of Welbeck College to lay on a Team Building Course for post-graduate students from York University who are studying Post-War Reconstruction and Development. They spend a year studying how to help regenerate the systems of government after a war. The Regiment had been asked to put together a short course to help to get the students working together as a team. **SSgt Tucker** and **LCpl Pounting** had spent much of the previous week 'getting into character' for their survival demonstration. The rest of the cadre turned up on the Friday to run through a rehearsal of the programme which had been produced by **Capt** 'Loads o' medals' **Simon Meadowcroft** before he disappeared on pre-Op Tour Leave. Whilst **WO2 (RQMS) Kev Smith** and his team got on with the business of preparing the living accommodation, the 2IC and RSM headed off with the rest of the DS to set up the Command Tasks.

The 17 students arrived on Friday evening and turned out to be a pretty mixed bunch. Their ages ranged from 25 to 53 and they had an abundance of very different experiences in post-war situations, from a British woman who had been working on an education programme in Mozambique to an Afghani man who had fled to Pakistan as a refugee. After the introductions we got down to some thought-provoking discussions about leadership before **WO1 (YofS)** 'The senior communications Warrant Officer in the Regiment' **Simon Lock** did his best to explain the estimate process to the students with varying degrees of success.

Day 2 started with **WO2 QMSI Dave Clarke** passing on tips on obstacle crossing that the students would find useful during the Command Task phase. He chose to do this by taking them round the confidence course, which allowed some of the students to find out something about themselves (like they didn't like heights). The rest of the day was taken up with the students, in two teams, entertaining the DS with their attempts at the Command Tasks. The afternoon and evening were taken up with 'survival training' at a very basic level. Top tip: based on experience from his survival kits presentation, never ask the RSM what he's got in his pockets unless you have about 15 minutes to spare! After the presentations it was time for the students to put theory into practice and a number of interesting designs for bashas were in evidence. It's a good job it didn't rain! After what should have been a fairly short night navigation exercise, when they thought they were about to come in for the night, the students were issued with their second estimate exercise. This was clearly all too difficult for most of the students so, in his disgust at the lack of effort, the 2IC cancelled the transport and the students camped out overnight.

Day 3 saw the climax of their team projects - the construction of a raft. Overall, this event was very disappointing. The rafts were of far too solid a construction and nobody got wet!



WO2 (RQMS) Kev Smith and WO2 (QMSI) Dave Clarke relive their boyhood fantasies by recreating scenes from the Last of the Mohicans as they paddled about in the water providing safety cover

By the time the students left to return to York they were certainly showing signs of working together better as a team. More importantly most of them went away with a very different view of the British Army.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj D. W. Somerville**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) K. Smith**

Some form of normality has now returned to the illustrious fighting 214 Sig Sqn on their repatriation from the sunnier climes of Kosovo. A good tour was had by all with the opportunity to test the soldiers, equipment and more importantly a new squadron operations team. The training that has been provided by this tour has benefited the Squadron immensely. Now that everyone has completed their full allocation of Post Operational Tour Leave (POTL) the Squadron is intent on channelling its efforts to the Regimental Forecast. The reconstitution of the Squadron, after a large influx of new soldiers from Blandford, and the forming of the first elements of 240 Gurkha Sig Sqn are the main effort for the forthcoming months. The forming of Celtic Tp has proved to be an exciting challenge for all with a need to familiarise and brief with the arrival of the Gurkhas and more importantly the chain of command of **Lt Dhan, SSgt Bhuddi** and **Sgt Debendra**. Once the Squadron had returned from Xmas leave in its entirety the reconstitution was in full swing. The first week comprised of an administration week and to familiarise and brief all on the new Troop nominal rolls (a large turn around!). This was then followed by an intensive week of vehicle maintenance. It was then the turn of the SSM to ensure all soldiers had updated themselves and completed the ITD training package. Preparation was then in place for the first Squadron deployment on a high intensity training exercise for over a year. The hostile environment of Otterburn and Catterick training areas proved even more demanding than the 'tranquil' slopes of Kosovo. A well organised squadron function on the 14 January was a welcome relief and gave the Squadron the opportunity to thank all those that deployed on operations, both attachments and those that had been posted during deployment. The Squadron now look forward to supporting 16 Air Asslt Bde on their first deployed exercise since formation.

We say a fond farewell to **WO2 (SSM) Bob Forshaw** on his posting to 33 Sig Regt (V) as the RQMS and **SSgt (SQMS) Mark Bristow** as he moves across to HQ Sqn as the Health and Safety Advisor for the QM. The Squadron offers a warm welcome to **WO2 (SSM) Kev Smith** from the QM department and **SSgt (SQMS) Colin Dawson** fresh from the deployed AMPANs in sleepy hollow Skopje, Macedonia.

ROMAN TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Stu Whittley**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Chris Symonds**

Following a highly successful tour of Kosovo, an even more successful post-op leave and festive period, the Troop has arrived back in York with car loads of Xmas goodies, ready for what promises to be an extremely busy year. No sooner were we back than the Regimental rugby players were on full time training, blasting the Xmas binges out of their system. Unfortunately things didn't go according to plan against the Duke of Wellington's Regiment. **LCpl Si** 'Cripple' **Hopkins** still bears the impressive scar of a highly bruising encounter, while **Cpl Ray** 'Old git' **MacLeod** is still trying to recover! All the Troop rugby players would like to extend their thanks to the rest of their Troop for their support in the run--up to the match. The postponed Squadron Xmas function in the Merchant Adventurers Hall in York was a good night out, with the hard-core lot making the usual push onto that most exclusive of York hostelries, otherwise known as 'Toffs'.

There are several new arrivals and departures within the Troop. Firstly good-byes to the old (in more ways than one). The Troop OC, **Lt Adam** 'Wannabe Slim' **Honor** who is posted to Blandford on promotion to Captain. He has seen the Troop through some tough times including our recent tour of Kosovo. Although his navigation is still some what suspect... on that note has anyone issued him a route card for Blandford? Our second departure is our Troop Recce Sgt - **Sgt Mark** 'Teddy Bear' **Wilford** has been posted to 34 Sig Regt (V) on promotion to Staff Sergeant. We wish them both all the best with their future careers.

Our new arrival is **Lt Stu** 'Johnny Bravo' **Whittley** who has come to us from the unknown void of Special Comms at JSSU Digby. The Troop has already adopted the 'shields up' position as our new OC, whose Ptarmigan knowledge is about as useful as an inflatable dartboard, is soon to lead us out on the first exercise of the new Millennium.

VIKING TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Jamie Noble**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Terry Shiels**

The Troop wish a fond farewell to **Cpl Del Parkinson** who leaves the Squadron after a long stint to work with the TA, **Sig** 'Tommo' **Thompson** is posted to 1 (UK) ADSR on promotion to Lance Corporal and **Sig Gaz Mazzey** who is now in civvy street, as well as all the lads who were on the wrong side of the inter-troop postings. We wish them all every success in what ever role they are now playing. Hellos go out to **Sig** 'Stretch' **Heron, Sig** 'Grease' **Gun, Sig** 'Jimmy Somerville' **Rees, Sig** 'Geordie' **Cummings** and **Sig** 'Ginge' **Mitchell** who have all arrived straight from Blandford. Also **Cpl Graham Parkhill, Cpl Plumb** and **LCpl Andy Williams** to bolster the ever decreasing relay experience within the Troop. Finally, some promotions and farewells from the Troop, firstly congratulations to **LCpl Andie Ireland** and **Gav Bevan** on selection for promotion to Corporal. Congratulations also to **Sig** 'Maz' **Mazzey, Richie Glass, Dave McLiesh, Daz O'Connor,** 'Pebbles' **Pember, Matt Penny, John Shenvin,** 'Stevo' **Stevens** and 'Theme' **Thompson** on their selection for promotion to Lance Corporal. Farewell's to **Cpl** 'Soon to be Sgt' **Del Parkinson** and family and **Sig Andy Goss** on his return to Civ Div, both will be missed.

On Monday 30 November, Viking Tp set out on Ex Viking Ebor II, an adventure training exercise to complete the three peaks, crossing over the peaks of Ingleborough, Penny Gent and Whernside. The Troop paraded at 0630hrs planning to leave at 0700hrs to make the most of the daylight, however, due to a slight hic-up by **Cpl** 'Hedge, my FTM600 in date, not!' **Hodgkinson** we finally left camp at 0830hrs arriving at our base camp in Ribbleshead at 1030hrs. The weather was excellent for the time of year and this put the group in the correct frame of mind for a good yomp over the hills.

The first leg was a stroll up Penny Gent led by **Sig Sara Jane** 'Pathfinder' **Elliott** whom had a cunning plan to save energy, instead of carrying a rucksack she thought she would wear all of her warm kit from the outset, nice one **Sara-Jane.** The climb was steady and took three hours to complete, this was allowing for a picnic and pies at the top, and **Sig John** 'I'm a potential Officer' **Sherwin's** map reading on the way down, we can all see why you're going Officer, **John**. Back at base camp **SSgt Terry Shiels** suggested a pub lunch only to discover that the pub was shut 'unlucky Staff'.

The next leg Ingleborough was led by **Sig Ben Campbell**, little did we know that **Ben** had missed all of his map reading lessons in basic training. This cheered up the expedition leader **Cpl Neil Binks** as each time **Ben** got lost he volunteered to buy **Neil** a drink. The walk started off at a brisk pace until we reached the foot of the climb, it then turned into a scramble up a never ending track. All thought of flora and fauna went out the window, ever the adventurers we finally reached the top where **Sig Ben Campbell** cheered us all up by announcing, 'There's an old fort here,' cheers **Ben**. All thoughts on the way down were of our much promised pub lunch, sorry pubs shut again, winter hours! There was only one thing left to do, that was to make a command decision and head off to settle for a few sociable drinks and a briefing on the following days activities.

The following morning we all woke to a good old-fashioned Yorkshire Dales welcome, the wind howling and the rain sheeting down. I knew our luck wouldn't last. With blisters taped we set off on our stroll up Whernside with **Sig Matt Penny** at the helm. The going was slow due to the weather conditions but the group remained in good spirits, this was an excellent effort, especially **Sig Matt Penny** who in bad conditions never lost the track.

EXERCISE HIMALAYAN EBOR 1 - 22 December 1999
by Sig Shedden

When it was confirmed that I was going to take part in Ex Himalayan Ebor, I was very excited as I have never been abroad before, let alone to Nepal! Having worked alongside Gurkha soldiers in this unit, I was interested in finding out more about their country and cultural background.

Members of the Team at Annapurna Sanctuary

There were nine team members and the Exercise started at the beginning of December with an extremely long flight halfway round the world. On arrival in their capital, Kathmandu, we realised that things were going to be very different. Slowly making our way through their traffic 'system', you could actually see the pollution and we were forced to endure a constant fanfare of vehicle horns-something you actually get used to! Our minibus had to compete with thousands of motorcycles, bikes, people and animals such as goats and even buffalo. However, things quickly changed when we started our eleven-day trek and the only 'vehicles' then were an endless stream of donkeys! Words can not describe the incredible mountain views and the cultural experiences we encountered along the Annapurna Trail. We saw several cultural dances and all joined in, met many interesting foreign trekkers along the way and learned a lot by talking to the locals who were mostly very friendly. whilst all this was going on **Sig Shedden** virtually managed to drink the whole of Nepal's Coca-Cola supply! Following the trek we went on to do two days white water rafting which at times was quite scary. The rapids were enormous and the current was very strong, every time we hit a rapid I was sure the dinghy was going to turn over. We then went on to the Chitwan National Park where we went on a safari and saw rhinos, wild deer and monkeys. We then went on a very pleasant elephant ride and a not so pleasant boat trip through crocodile infested waters - the sides of the raft we were in were no more than two inches out of the water!

For most of us this was a once in a lifetime opportunity and even the Gurkha soldiers with us were experiencing some of what their country had to offer for the first time. We all had an excellent time and I could fill many pages if I went on detail, both about Nepal and the people who took part in the exercise.

Members of the 'A' Team experiencing the Doko Carrying

IF YOU EVER GET THE CHANCE TO VISIT NEPAL YOU SHOULD TAKE IT.

Team Members:

Capt Hitman Gurung QG Sigs	-IC Ex
Capt M. J. Bargrove AGC (SPS)	
Lt S. Gough R Sigs	- JESMEL
Cpl Ganesh Gurung	- IC Admin
Sig Davies	
Sig Dev Gurung	
Sig Johnstone	- Diary
Sig Min Pim	
Sig Shedden	- Diary

The Exercise itself proved to be a valuable experience for all of the team expedition members. Lots of experience was gained not only in planning and execution of the expedition but also surviving in a very challenging environment and high altitudes. It gave the group the opportunity not only to take part in arduous trekking in some of the most striking terrain in the world but also to experience and enjoy some of Nepal's many different cultures. The expedition was a great success and for many a once in a life time experience. On behalf of the team I would like to thank **Capt Hitman Gurung** for organising this expedition and also 2 Sig Regt, HQ Royal Corps of Signals, HQ 2 Division. **Maj Govinde Gurung** MVO and the Royal Military College of Science for their grants.

A group Photograph taken in Ghandruk, a famous Gurung village

219 SIGNAL SQUADRON
by Cpl Lyon and Capt 'It's Pants!' Tyndale

Sqn Comd	**Maj** 'Oh hello' **Jamie Compston**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Mark Neighbour**

The Squadron has been undergoing a few changes recently as it prepares for its departure to that country of luxury, fun and games - Bosnia! At the moment the Squadron consists of only Eagle Tp which is now made up of all those lucky individuals who are not deploying to the Balkans in December. It now remains up to those highly efficient members left behind to prepare a large fleet of vehicles, generators and radio equipment for the annual PRE. Eagle Tp's previous Tp Comd, **Lt Alex** 'I am the Spider' **Clixby** has left us to join the team at ATR Bassingbourn and has been replaced by **Lt Dhan,** and also **SSgt Roy** 'Please don't send me to Bosnia, I've just come back from South Georgia' **Messenger** who now have the heavy task of managing what is left of 219 Sqn, a warm welcome to you and see you in six months! Also a welcome to **(FofS)** 'Tosh' **Leyland** who has arrived in time to depart to Bosnia where he will join his partner in crime **(YofS)** 'Quentin' **Winstanley** in the Ops Room in Banja Luka.

There have been a couple of events worthy of note, that have occurred in the short period of time that the Squadron has been together. One of those was a day spent walking in the Pennines, organised and run by **SQMS** 'Who else can I poach to join my SQMS empire?' **Tuff.** It was a very pleasant day; the scenery was beautiful and the rain stayed away. However, for those who were unfortunate enough to follow **2Lt Dave** 'When are we getting our UN berets?' **Haslewood** their day was not so good as they ended up taking a very long and messy detour. Fortunately they were found and rescued by Land Rover and brought to the pub just in time for one drink!

Another day was spent hosting the Welbeck Cadets, who had taken time out from their half term holiday to visit the Regiment in order to learn more about the Corps. The cadets spent the day driving around the city using the 321 HF radio on a treasure hunt type exercise, setting up Radio Relay dets in the fastest possible time and completing various command tasks. The Cadets thoroughly enjoyed themselves and really appreciated the opportunity to spend time with the soldiers, so a big thank you to all those individuals who helped with the visit.

GOOD NEWS TRAVELS FAST – PUBLISH IT IN THE WIRE

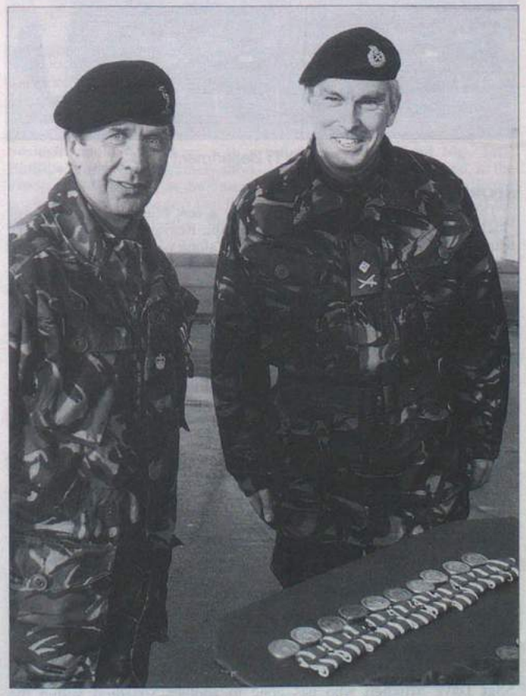
7 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col D. A. H. Jones**
RSM **WO1 S. Smoothy**

PRESENTATION OF KOSOVO MEDALS BY MAJ GEN TRULUK CBE TO 7 SIGNALS REGIMENT

On 8 December, 1999, **Maj Gen Ashley Truluk** presented the Regiment with their Kosovo medals and addressed a Regimental parade on the Square. Soldiers from 1(UK) Div who were attached to the Regiment during Op Agricola travelled from Herford to be presented with their medals.

Maj Gen Truluk presents the Kosovo medal to SSgt Robson



Maj Wally Drain and Gen Truluk

VISIT OF BRIGADIER McDOWALL COMMANDER 1 SIGNAL BRIGADE 17 FEBRUARY 2000

Brig McDowall visited the Regiment on 17 February. He presented the following with LS&GC Medals: **SSgt Ironside, SSgt Mitchell, Sgt Mapstone, Sgt Middlemiss, Sgt Porteous, Sgt Tindale, Cpl Casswell, Cpl Taylor, Cpl Woodward** and **Sig Phillips**. In all this represented a total of 150 years service in a variety of locations: Belize, Hong Kong, Falkland Islands, Northern Ireland, Germany, Canada, The Gulf, Bosnia and Kosovo. The Commander also presented COMARRC commendations for Kosovo to: **SSgt (YofS) Tabor, Cpl Gibbs, Cpl Thompson, Sig Brown** and **Cpl Morley** who was away on a course.

Commander ARRCs commendations presented
by Brig McDowell MBE
(L-R): Cpl Gibbs, SSgt (YofS) Tabor, Cpl Thompson,
Brig McDowel MBEI, Sig Brown and Maj Doherty.
Cpl Morley was away on a course

Sgt Middlemiss is presenteed with his LS&GC

SSgt Ironside
announces his intention to buy the next round of beers

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON
HANDOVER PARADE OF HEADQUARTERS ECHELON SITE 7 SIGNAL REGIMENT TO LANDCENT 2 NOVEMBER 1999

by SSgt (SQMS) Steve Behan

Sqn Comd **Maj W. J. Drain**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Steve Bovan**

As our final departure date drew nearer, HQ Echelon became a hive of activity, especially for the QM's department, with the back-loading of loan and welfare stores, ammunition and Morphine. I, in my capacity as site SSM, continued doing preliminary work on defence and security notes for my hand-over to **Senior Master Sgt Keith Szolga,** USAF, who was taking over as the LANDCENT SSM for this site. After the initial arranged visits to the site, **SMS Keith Szolga,** then started to appear on site more frequently, the majority of the time unannounced. To this end, knowing the British Soldier's sense of humour, and his ability to take the P**s out of anything, this small, thickset American came to be affectionately known as 'Elmer Fudd'. The purpose of his visits were to walk around the site and make his own site plan, but we're not sure if he was not on the hunt for that 'Pesky Wabbit'.

SMS Szolga accepts the site from RSM LANDCENT

SMS Szolga approached me and asked if we could do some form of Flag Raising ceremony, for which I had a provisional plan in mind. However, knowing the American love of brass bands and pomp and circumstance, something more appropriate needed to be devised. After consultation with the site commander **Capt Ray** 'Dick Dastardly' **Cory** a formal parade was agreed.

Maj Hodges, CO 7 Signal Regiment
hands-over the site to Maj Whilie, LANDCENT

I then had the task of formulating the parade, consisting of a march past and a makeshift 'Colour Party', but more importantly, because of the timing, which was extremely short, I had 2x40 minute periods, to practice rifle drill movements and to practice the format of the parade. Many of the soldiers had not touched rifle drill since basic, or Detachment Commanders Courses. So adopting a method of teaching that would make any Guards Drill Instructor's hair stand on end, we managed to present a parade, that was on the whole, quite impressive, until the first rehearsal with Officer's. **SMS Szolga** was very impressed with the efforts made to date, with this in mind, he thought it would be fitting to hire a local professional photographer for the day, from which both Regiments would receive memorabilia photo's of the parade. The rehearsals were now complete, all that was needed was some fine weather, and the arrival of the LANDCENT party. 'H' hour arrived, but there was something missing, LANDCENT flags. A small delay ensued. It was then discovered that the local photographer had also done a runner, so a quick run a round the site was required for anyone with a 'Squaddiematic' camera. Enter **Sig** 'Verge gadget man' **Verrill.** With this sorted, I handed over the parade to **Maj** 'Baileys' **Hodges** who made an impressive halt, but was out of time with me, (I'm the author so I'm right). The hand-over parade went very well, much to the applause of our audience which consisted of the two cleaning girls and a dozen LEC's from the cookhouse.

All officer's and soldiers that took part in the parade felt it was a fitting occasion which reflected the hard work that the Regiment had conducted during the Operation Agricola.

QUARTERMASTER'S (A) DEPARTMENT

After a well deserved Christmas leave, the department is now back and raring to go. **Maj (QM) Doherty** has been walking around smiling like a Cheshire cat thanks to his Kosovo Commendation, Well Done Sir! The RQMS has been sunning himself in Cyprus on a Ex Lion Sun Recce and **Sgt** 'Dusty' **Millar** has been hard at play with the Regimental Rugby Team. **Sgt** 'Sick note' **Chivers** recently found another birthday and found his way to work, get well soon! **Sig** 'Thelma' **Marshall** has been keeping goal for the Regimental Hockey Team and is looking forward to her fiancé coming to the Unit.

QUARTERMASTER'S (T) DEPARTMENT

QM **Capt Ray Cory**
RQMS **WO2** 'Taff' **Burdge**

DEPARTMENT NEWS

On 4 November the Department finally arrived back in Krefeld on completion of the Regiment's deployment in Kosovo. There have been quite a few comings and goings in the past six months. **RQMS Burdge** has arrived from UK and within two weeks had completed UNTAT training and was despatched to 'Theatre' along with **Sig** 'Olive' **MacLeod** and **Sig** 'Mussy' **Musgrave** who had both arrived from the factory in Blandford. Also in November **Sgt** 'Scotty' **Scott** arrived from 280 Sig Sqn. Welcome. On the departures side of life we say farewell to **WO2 Ged Keane** who has taken over as SSM 229 Sig Sqn and **Sgt** 'Si' **Booth** who has departed for 1(UK) Div. The Department would like to thank them for all their hard work and wish them and their families all the best for the future.

The QM(T) Department

SPORTS AND SOCIAL

Due to the deployment there are only a few things to mention. **Sgt** 'Jock' **Castle** has been busy organising the Regimental Cross Country team, which has been extremely successful along with **Sig Keri Johnston** who has been representing the Women's team. **SSgt Kev Scott** is now turning out for the Regiment's 'Veteran' football team and the QM has been seen on Friday mornings in his 'Hobo Gear' explaining that these really are the clothes he uses for Orienteering. The RQ is champing at the bit for some rugby after being concussed in the first five minutes of the Officers/Seniors versus the Juniors Christmas game and not remembering much of the rest of the match. On the social side, if you can call this social, **Sig** 'Chalky' **White** entered the Department in the sponsored truck pull around the camp which turned into an inter-departmental competition. The Department acquitted itself well and in the process raised some money for charity. Well done 'Chalky'.

LATE NEWS

Congratulations to **Des Lang** on his selection and subsequent promotion to Corporal and to **Sig Keri Johnston** on her selection for promotion to Lance Corporal. The military element of the Department would like to thank our civilian colleagues **Al Reed, Collette Devlin, Emma Kinsey** and **Carl James** who kept the Department ticking over whilst we were away on Op Agricola. **Carl** has since left the Department to further his education at college in UK and the Department wish him well.

REGIMENTAL MOTORING TRANSPORT

MTO **SSgt Phil Hay**

To start with, the Troop would like to say farewell to the MTO **Capt Phil Clifford** who has left us for life in civvy street and the MT SNCO, **SSgt Dave Mitchell** who has gone to another Squadron within the Regiment. We also say good-bye to **Cpl** 'Scotty' **Witts** and **Sig Glen**

'Where's my baseball' **Russell,** they are off to get their hands dirty in the Regimental GRS.....good luck. We welcome to the Troop the new MT SNCO, **SSgt Phil Hay** who is playing MTO at the minute, and also **Sig Wayne** 'Wake up' **Kay, Sig Lee Clarke** and **Sig Dean** 'Still here' **Mannion.**

Congratulations are in order for **LCpl Tyrone** 'Nobody's ever shown me how to do that' **Christian** and **Sig Emma Clayden** on the birth of their little girl **Chelsea,** and good luck for the wedding at the end of February. We also say congratulations to **Sig Lee** 'Parker' **Manton** who took part in the 1 UK Div Nordic Ski Championship and finished in tenth place - Well Done. Perhaps he will be able to come back and do some work now.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

Tp Comd **WO1(FofS) Tommy Steele**

Keeping it short and sweet this month, the troop has just returned from a lengthy and much deserved Christmas break, most of us looking and feeling a lot heavier. Looking forward to getting back to some decent work (honest !). We say hello to new arrivals **LCpl Neil** 'Yeah baby' **Austin** straight from the factory and **Cpl Des Lang**. Also we say goodbye to **Sgt Gaz** 'Baldy' **Watkins,** who is leaving us for the delights of 229 Sig Sqn. **Sgt Spence Ord** is also leaving us for the training wing, good luck to both. Recent events included the excellent Children in Need 'Pudsey Bear' challenge, organised by the Troop under the leadership of **Sgt Ord.** Nobody told us that it involved the lads pulling a Bedford around the camp in heavy costumes, but hey it's all for a good cause. Well done to **LCpl** 'Baulchy' **Baulch** for messing with **SSgt Phil** 'Don't touch my bike' **Mackenzie**'s motor bike, lets just say it's a good job you're on the cross country team Baulchy. Good luck goes out to **Sgts Matt** 'Pretty Boy' **Clish, Sgt Ian** 'Sick-Note' **Glover** and **Sgt Ian** 'F-Pian' **Middlemiss** on their Foremans entrance.

229 (BERLIN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Dan Webster** Royal Australian Signals
SSM **WO2 Ged Keane**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS TROOP

The Squadron would like to extend a warm welcome to the new Sqn Comd, **Maj Dan Webster** his wife **Claire** and family. We say farewell and congratulations to the outgoing Sqn Comd, **Maj Chris Robinson** who goes back to sunny Australia on promotion, also farewell to the Sqn Clk **Jeni Smith** who has been with the Squadron for two years.

CHARLOTTENBURG TROOP

Tp OC **Lt Evans**
Tp SSgt **SSgt 'Jock' Reid**

THE PUDSEY BEAR TRUCK PULL

It was a cold and dull day when 229 (Berlin) Sig Sqn decided to take part in the Regimental 'Fun' truck pull in aid of Children In Need. How can pulling a Bedford around Camp possibly be classed as fun??! Not only is it not fun, but you have to pay to do it!! Charlottenburg Tp, having done their research, learnt that there were prizes going for the fastest team and for the team with the best fancy dress costumes. Knowing there was a team of Regimental Winged Warriors competing, we decided to lend them some 'refreshing' encouragement in the form of water bombs, which we're sure they appreciated. The Troop threw heart and soul into their costumes, and provided a colourful spectacle for onlookers as a great deal of make-up had been applied .... reminiscent of a night out in Swindon and giving a chance for people to air those drag costumes again! **Sig** 'Ski' **Sosinski** could have done with a bit more costume, and **Sig** 'Taff' **Phillips'** jeans were extremely short .... the effort paid off in the end, as the Troop won first prize in the Fancy Dress Competition, with a particular commendation for the fact that the whole Troop turned out to support the team! Congratulations to all those in the Troop who have been promoted since returning from Kosovo: **LCpl Paul Brown, Sig** 'Scouse' **Kelly, Sig** 'Canada' **Whitehurst, Sig** 'Andy Mac' **MacFarlane** and **Sig** 'Ski' **Sosinski** - outstanding work lads, you've earned it.

WHISKEY TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Ally** 'son' **Lawson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Paul Robson**

Since the last encounter with Whiskey Tp, the Troop has enjoyed a huge and most welcome Christmas leave period. Prior to the Christmas break, the Whiskey Tp workers, including the office dwellers, engaged upon a festive spree including many a night of drinking at functions held at the Bradbury Barracks establishment, home of the fighting seventh.....

At the Squadron party the Troop enjoyed much success at the raffle with **Cpl Overal** walking away with a tumble dryer much to his despair, having just purchased a dryer two weeks before. Another lucky winner was **Sgt Duncan Cupit** who was rewarded with a holiday at Pontins for two weeks. On the other side of Troop events we had to come back to earth and take part in a Range Day at Haltern Training Area, the weather was foul but the Troop as a whole shot well with the exception of one member, **Sig Trevor** 'The Fool' **Woodward** who managed a score of just 7 out of 60 (with the aid of a SUSAT)! The Troop has now returned to normality and is looking forward to the Regimental Exercise which will soon be upon us.

The Troop would like to welcome **Cpl Andy Morris** and his wife **Jackie,** all the way from 3 Div, **LCpl Steve Mallison** (an unusually hard working Tech), and lastly **Sig Keith Lovell** and his wife **Jinnette** and the kids. Congratulations to **LCpl John** 'Stevo' **Stephenson,** and to **LCpl Jim** 'Lou Bager' **Hewitt** who are now both wearing their tapes. Congratulations to **Sig Jim** 'Laffo' **Lafferty** and to **Sig George** 'LaLa' **Spence** who have both come off of the board and will receive their tapes on posting. Finally we have to say farewell to **Sgt Gaz** 'PC Ventrus' **Beardall** and wife **Micheala** and children who are leaving the Army to join the British Transport Police, also farewell to **Cpl** 'Geordie' **Smee** his wife **Jill** and kids who are off to civvy street. We say goodbye to **Cpl Lance Barr** who departs for his T1 course, **Sig Paul** 'Johno' **Johnson** who leaves for 16 Sig Regt on promotion, and finally we say cheerio to **Sig Nigel Rowbottom** who leaves the Troop for civvy street, we wish them all the best for the future.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON
SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

Sqn Comd **Maj Paul Bosher**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Karl Weaver**

Since returning from Kosovo in November, the Squadron has been spread to the four corners of the world on much deserved leave. However, the work still goes on and a big thank you must go to **LCpl Jody Acty** and **Mrs L. J. Castle** for beavering away in the background keeping the wolves from the door. A big farewell to **WO2 (SSM) Chris Ward** and his wife **Geri** who have been posted to 16 Sig Regt and many congratulations on his recent selection for promotion to WO1. Looks like you will be moving quarter again very soon **Chris.** A warm welcome goes out to the new SSM - **WO2 Karl Weaver** and his wife **Sue. Karl** takes up his appointment having done a year as the Training Warrant Officer.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON
EXERCISE MONOPOLY BACKSTOP

With last years tour in Kosovo, and the Christmas block leave out of the way, the Sqn Comd, **Maj Paul Bosher** decided to reward the Squadron with the opportunity to go downhill skiing, the organisation of which was rapidly passed to **Lt Jon Mayne**. The Exercise was based at Haus Magnus Lodge in Wertach close to Sonthofen. The ten days were split into two five-day packages to allow maximum attendance from the Squadron. With three groups of different abilities, ranging from those who had never even seen skis before to those who reckoned they were the next Franz Klammer, the Exercise was guaranteed to have its fair share of wipe-outs, and more than one person was fined by their group for having the most spectacular fall of the day resulting in a costly night at the bar. This was especially true of **WO2 (SSM) Karl Weaver,** who was determined to get as much air time as possible and therefore launched himself off every available jump he could find, and afterwards told tall tales of the distances he had managed to achieve. As well as the traditional skis being used, many people also got to try out 'Carverinos' for a day. These skis are about a metre long and very easy to handle. Even the novice groups were able to do tricks and 360 degree turns on them. In total almost 50 people of all ranks and abilities attended the exercise, and everyone voted it a success, especially as it hadn't cost anyone a penny! The only person who really had anything to complain about was **LCpl Michelle Gilmour** who on the last day fell and broke her leg resulting in an operation and a week in Obersdorf Hospital. The whole Squadron wishes you a speedy recovery.

Maj Paul Bosher, OC 231 Sig Sqn
on a recent photo shoot for Cotswold camping

231 Sig Sqn - Skiers Ex Monopoly Backstop
Back Row (L-R): SSgt (YofS) Budding, Maj Paul Bosher, SSM Karl Weaver, Lt Jon Mayne
Front Row (L-R): Jenny Evans, Bob Morton, Sgt Tony Downing, Sgt Tony Black, Andy Robertson

OSCAR TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Nicky James**

Finally the Troop has reassembled back at the garages after far too much leave. There are a few formal welcomes to those who arrived whilst the bulk of the Troop were still deployed. **LCpl Hopkins** and **Sigs Corr, Heath** and **Stevens** have all become part of the mighty Oscar. There are also many belated congratulations to **Cpls Applegarth, Beacher, McGee** and **Ritchie** and **LCpls Baynes, Childs, McKay** and **Walker** on there promotion. Their Troop Commander is hopeful that this profusion of promotions will keep everyone keen and eager for the start of the exercise season!

RADIO TROOP
REPORT FROM OCTOBER 1999 - JANUARY 2000
Tp Comd **Capt Ritchie Byfield**
Tp SSgt **SSgt George Farrar**

Well, the Millennium day has come and gone and the end of the world somehow seems to have eluded us, so life must go on, and with Radio Tp it's not such a bad thing. As an outsider coming into Radio Troop, I assumed that the Troop consisted of only a few willing men posted in recently, until I discovered that the main group have spent almost as much time on leave as they have on tour. When in December they all came back, popular comments such as, 'Who are you?' and, 'My God I haven't seen you in years,' were floated about, as well as, 'I cant wait for Christmas leave'. At the beginning of December the troops swapped and shared manpower with Quebec Tp, with many new arrivals from the Rear Details Troop, and we all finally got a chance to meet and greet each other in the time honoured tradition of a few drinks. December also saw the usual Christmas events, including the Troop function at 'Mama's sans all you can gorge Chinese restaurant' which raised more than a smile among our fuller figured members of the Troop.

A fond farewell was said to **LCpl Dave** 'Jabba the Hutt' **Hallway**, who goes on to 2 Sig Regt. The Troop, indeed Krefeld, will be a quieter place without him. Also a farewell to **LCpl Dave** 'Who?' **Naylor**, who goes on to Butlin's holiday camp at Blandford. Before we let **LCpl Dave** 'Jabba' **Hallway** go, he practically begged us to give him one last PT session, so bowing down to his demands, we partook in the Regimental truck pull around camp, 'Jabba' goes away a slimmer man (not much slimmer though). Now you may think that a Santa hat is just for the obligatory Squadron function, well Radio Tp managed to incorporate it into many tasks leading up to Christmas, there is now a hat seller in town who is able to send his kids to Eton for their education.

Congratulations to **LCpl** 'Flossy' **Fallows** and **LCpl** 'Swiss Tony' **Ainscough,** not only on their recent promotions, but on their undying love for each other, by the arrival of their baby girl who is already on the nominal roll for Radio Troop (Manpower, get it while you can). Congratulations also go to the following Troop members who have been promoted recently: **LCpls John** 'Tabs' **Marlborough, John** 'Ken' **Dodd,** 'Thomo' **Thomas,** 'Twiz' **Twissel,** and not forgetting 'Scouse 'Watch your wallets' **Dowell.** One promotion to Corporal was **Mick** 'I've swallowed a cow, whole' **Clark**, who leaves us to join 7 Bde, because he's always wanted to see Belsen and go back to Kosovo. Continuing with Troop tradition, Radio Troop welcome another 'Matty' **Matthew's** who hopefully wont bore us with rugby. Last but not least, commiseration's to **LCpl Andy Crabb**, who discovered that, a bollard is to a car what Saddam is to compassion.

QUEBEC TROOP
Tp Comd **SSgt Andy Saunders**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Dean Wilson**

Quebec Tp has reformed after our recent tour of Kosovo now consisting of a SCRAT (T) rover group and Tech support. A warm welcome into the Troop to the following: **LCpl Craig Irving** and **LCpl** 'Air' **Jordan** straight from the factory. We would also like to congratulate the following members of the Troop on their promotion to **LCpls** 'Merc' **Ainscough, Glen Moffat, Kerry Roberts, Jimmy Samuel, Mike Jennings,** 'Robbo' **Roberts, Mark Lane** and **Phil Brown**.

Best wishes go out to **LCpl** 'Big Pos' **Postlethwaite** who has left us for life in civvy street, and to **Cpl Bob Morton** on his promotion and posting to 609 TCP RAF Leaming. We'd like to congratulate **LCpls Niki Fallows** and 'Merc' **Ainscough** on the birth of their daughter **Bethany Lauren**. Many a sleepless night to look forward to! Finally we would like to congratulate **LCpl** 'Robbo' **Roberts** for his outstanding performance on his PTI course. He certainly knows how to do well on a course by turning up for the course so badly prepared that the staff had no choice in awarding him the most improved student! Well done 'Robbo'!

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Phil Baker**
SSM **WO2 Rick Hughes**

PAPA TROOP

Firstly we would like to say a big Welcome back to the following - **Sgt Andy Mapstone, LCpl Mark Ross, LCpl Manic Mundy, Sig Steff Rees, Sig Chris McLaughlin, Sig Louise Allen, Sig Si Cartmell** and **Sig Craig Sykes** - on their recent return from Operations in Kosovo. Papa Tp have had a busy time recently beginning with their now annual responsibility towards the Regiments' St. Martin's Day celebrations. The whole day had been spent preparing for a few hours in the evening when hundreds of children were to descend on the camp to claim their bag of goodies. Each bag of sweets had been packed earlier in the day by Papa Tp and local German women, only part of this Anglo-German event. The children and their parents walked the streets of Krefeld with hundreds of glowing lanterns and a traditional Oompah band to escort them all the way. The bonfire was lit under supervision by **Cpl** 'Pyromaniac' **Jackson** and **Cpl** 'Eyebrows' **Hepworth**, who swore it would be the last time that he risked the flashback of bonfire duty on St. Martin's Day. The evening, like the bonfire was a roaring success. Nobody was trampled in the mad rush to get the sweeties, and those of Papa Tp who remained till the end were rewarded with some ginger bread from the local German organisers.

Papa Troop was also involved in a visit to Rheinburg Cemetery on Thursday 11 November. After the ceremony a poppy was placed at the foot of every headstone, to pay respect to all those who lost their lives. All in all it was a very emotional day. On Sunday 14 November we had a parade in the gymnasium for Remembrance Sunday. Everyone was smartly dressed in their number twos and hymns and prayers were joined in remembrance. The event went very smoothly and thanks go to all those who were involved in the setting up and taking part in the service. The final Service of the year, the Regimental Carol Service was rousingly led by example from Papa Tp who provided the three readers for the bible passage. This came in the form of a Geordie Prophet **(Sig Laverick)**, a Scottish Angel (**Sig Sykes**) and a Yorkshire Narrator, **(Sig McLaren)**. Finally congratulations are to go to a spate of promotions within the Troop. Firstly to **Sig Carl Shackleton** on his selection for Lance Corporal. Also to **LCpl Duncan Johnson** and **LCpl Shane Hepworth** on their promotion to full Corporal.

HOTEL TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Ben Howarth**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Al Ironside**

The last month and a bit have been an adaptive time for Hotel Troop, with of course the usual movement of personnel. For example it's good-byes to **LCpl** 'Dutchy' **Holland** and **LCpl** 'Stan' **Stanley**, redeployed to practice their technical skills in other troops within 232 Sig Sqn. Hello's go to **Sig Chris** 'Albert' **Hall**, straight from the factory and **Sig** 'Harriet' **Harmon** over from RAF Bruggen. The Troop would like to wish **LCpl** 'LJ' **Murray** and his wife Best Wishes and Luck on his posting to Northern Ireland. We're sorry to lose our honorary Troop mascot, their little Baby son, **Alistair**.

Promotional Congratulations go to **LCpl** 'Lenny' **Victor, LCpl Shaun** 'PTI' **Dinsdale** and well done to **Cpl** 'Shazza' **Dainty**. The Troop started silly season with our own Xmas party. It was well organised and planned by our own **LCpl** 'Taz' **Williams**. After a short trip over the Dutch Border to Venlo, we started off the evening with a couple of games of Ten Pin Bowling. **SSgt** 'Kingpin' **Ironside** showed us all how to play. Then it was time for the tropical barbecue, superb food and heartily enjoyed by all. To top the night off we all kitted-up and prepared for war in the Lazer Zone. A few of us may have taken it a little too seriously and the fun was brought to a premature end due to its violent nature. A good night was had by all and provided a terrific prelude for the Squadron and Regimental Bashes.

It's safe to say the majority of the troops time, in the last couple of months, has been spent on Post Kosovo, Christmas and New Year Leave. Some may have enjoyed their time a little too much, mentioning no names but… **Sig** 'It's not my fault' **Laverick** spent Xmas day with his fiancé, at Her Majesty's Pleasure. Other more enjoyable places visited by Troop members, were South Africa and we are still eagerly awaiting the return of **Cpl Matt** 'Busker' **Duddles** from a months visit to New Zealand. An interesting and extremely busy year stretches out ahead of us.

EXERCISE LIZARD-ROCK BACKSTOP
ROCK-CLIMBING PROFICIENCY IN THE COSTA BLANCA
by Lt T. M. Noakes

In November of last year I was fortunate enough to lead a rock-climbing exercise to the Costa Blanca in Spain for three weeks. Exercise Lizard-Rock Backstop aimed at qualifying three successive groups of six soldiers in the rock-climbing proficiency award. The participating soldiers were all from 7 Sig Regt, most of whom had only recently returned from Operations in Kosovo. Some of the soldiers returned early from their post operational leave to take part in the Exercise. The previous rock climbing experience of the soldiers varied considerably from novice to indoor lead-climbers. All of them were to find the multi-pitch limestone crags of the Costa Blanca an eye opening, and challenging experience. The original idea was born from the knowledge that under the remodelled adventure training system a unit JSRCI is encouraged to supervise and instruct rock climbing proficiency courses for soldiers within their unit. Thus encouraging young soldiers to participate in AT activities early in their career and foster development towards becoming an instructor. This opportunity was like a red-rag to a bull. Having recently passed my JSRCI during my R&R from Kosovo in May upon my return from Operations in August I set the wheels in motion to enable Lizard-Rock Backstop to be born.

This was the first full scale Adventure Training Exercise that I have organised through the military system and in hindsight I hope it will not be the last. I have certainly learnt some lessons that will make such a task in future less draining. Like many other Exercise organisers there were moments when I swore 'never again', when my instructors pulled out days before kick-off and had to be replaced at the last minute. That said, the appreciation of the eighteen soldiers involved and the quality of the memories that I take away were more than worth the effort. The Exercise was organised so that the instructional team was based in Spain for the whole period whilst three groups of six soldiers flew out successively from Germany to participate in their one-week course. Each course ran Monday to Friday allowing the weekends free for instructor training! Our permanent base was a Villa called 'Casa Mabeni' in La Fustera on the outskirts of Calpe. The Villa not only provided a hard base from which to conduct evening teaching sessions and lectures, but the self catering aspect provided the flexibility required to make the most out of the time available. The instructional team consisted of **WO2 Mike Holman** MIC currently at Blandford Gym, **Lt Tania Noakes** JSRCI and Course Provider at 7 Sig Regt, **2Lt Richard Vowles** JSRCI currently at RMAS, ably assisted by **Cpl Ewen Whitney** a JSRLT from Blandford with experience above many active JSRCIs. My thanks have already been extended to them all for stepping in at the last minute in the knowledge that without them this excellent opportunity may have been lost. I know that they all enjoyed the experience and hope that there will be many a reunion in future!

The Costa Blanca is renowned amongst British climbers for providing an excellent winter-sun climbing experience on both bolted and traditional routes. Three weeks are barely enough to scratch the surface of what is available. There is a wealth of venues of very different character all within one-hours' drive from Calpe. These varied from small, difficult but bolted sport crags, to single and multi-pitch roadside crags and sea cliffs. There are also plenty of long multi-pitch crags with straightforward access and very long Multi-Pitch Mountain Routes for the full-on Mountain Day experience. If you haven't climbed at Puig Campana whilst in the area where have you been? (See photo for a rock-climbing haven). The variety of climbing sites available allows most weather to be dealt with. If it is raining in the mountains it is usually dry on the coast and for those rare days when it is raining everywhere some specific routes stay dry. Out of twenty-one climbing days only two were rainy. On the first the corner route of Povlos Magicos on the Penon D'Ifach was found to be dry and on the second the rain had cleared sufficiently by midday to visit Toix Oeste and conduct Lead Climbing Instruction. The areas which we used during the course of the three weeks included, Toix Este and Oeste, Candelabra Del Sol, Mascarat and Aguja Inferior, Penon D'Ifach, Gandia, Sella Cul Del Rino, Sella The Divino and Puig Campana, (a pretty busy three weeks!). The area lends itself very well to teaching a group of reasonably strong novices. The courses that were run covered in depth the multi-pitch climbing system and introduced all the students to leading their own climbs by the end of the week. I would mark out two particular elements which were key to the success of running these rock-climbing proficiency courses in such a challenging environment. The first was an element of selection and training of the candidates before the Exercise proper. From the start it was emphasised that the exercise was aimed primarily at identifying potential future instructors and the level would be pitched as such. By far the most important element however was the fact that all four instructors are currently active rock climbers at a level above British HVS/E1 and all had a true commitment to their sport. This allowed the students the chance to draw on over forty years worth of climbing experience, and gave the instructors an opportunity to introduce newcomers to the sport on a very personalised basis. Although the number of easy climbs in the area is low, those that exist are of high quality and require placed protection throughout thus allowing the students to learn traditional climbing skills. The quality of the bolted protection on most climbs 6a or above was found to be excellent, however on routes of a lower grade a climbing rack was taken and invariably used. (Unless you get a perverse thrill out of some of the coat-hanger heads that we found instead of bolt hangers.) The level of climbing difficulty meant that the students were significantly challenged from day one and that the pace of the course was unrelenting. Their learning curve was necessarily steep and for the most part all the students coped very well. I cannot deny that the Costa Blanca is an area that forms a deep impression on inexperienced and experienced climber alike. (All of the instructors plan to return.)

Cpl Whitney and WO2 Holman
of Dierdro UBSA (Grade S+) Penan D/Fach

Some of the longer routes subjected the soldiers to a level of exposure akin to nothing they had experienced before. Some found this a humbling experience and others found it liberating. The students were thoroughly challenged and in hindsight all participants enjoyed their course without exception. To add a further insight into the rewards of such a challenging introduction to the sport here is **Sig Claire Davies**, aged 19, who joined 7 Sig Regt in the Summer of 1999 in her own words.

'As a Novice climber I found this 5-day course in the Costa Blanca extremely inspiring. I learnt a lot in the five days, more than I imagined I would, from basic rope techniques, to ethics in the mountains. The multi-pitch climbs were amazing, even though the weather was not perfect on the first couple of days the views were spectacular. I didn't realise there was so much opportunity for novices like myself. A few of the pitches were very challenging and some of us coped better than others, but all of our climbing skills had improved by the end of the week and all of us had thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. I would be extremely pleased if I was to see more Adventure Training Exercises like this in future. I gained a lot from the five days training and would like to see others given this experience also.'

Sig Davies on the Spectacular pitch in Dierdro UBSA (Grade S+)

It was particularly encouraging that the feedback at the end of the course was so very positive. Of seventeen students who attained the award sixteen said that they would continue the sport in one form or another, with at least ten who were keen to do more multi-pitch climbing and learn to instruct others in the sport. For each course an instructor was allocated two students for the duration of the week, and some of these RCP partnerships have endured to continue rock-climbing in their own time. This is after all what we all hope will happen after attending an RCP course!

LCpl Steve Minto learning to abseil - Toix Este

I am with 7 Sig Regt at least until the Summer months of 2000 and plan to use the time to foster the continuation training of these budding rock-climbers. Some of them are ready to take their rock-leader training already and will be visiting one of the Joint Services Centres for the first time later this year. Although I am planning further Expeditions for the Regiment later this year I hope to run additional RCP courses for the soldiers who missed out on this opportunity over several weekends at my current local crag-Freyer!

14 SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO **Lt Col D. P. Meyer**
RSM **WO1 Palmer**

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)
Sqn Comd **Maj Dakin**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Richardson**

HEADQUARTERS TROOP
Tp Cornd **Capt Hawes**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Hughes**

It has been a fairly busy period for the Troop since the Millennium, deploying on exercise 'Foxes Horizon' from the 10-14 January for a pre-Kenya shake down and true to the normal Welsh weather it never stopped raining for the whole exercise (good acclimatisation). This was swiftly followed by Ex Dragon's Test from the 17-19 January which saw most of the Regiment deploy at short notice to Sennybridge Training Area for the CO's Cup, a 55km walk in the park with a couple of stands to complete on the way round! (Apart from **LCpl** 'Otis' **Reading** who played his get out of gaol free card (literally).) The Troop was tasked to provide a Mine Clearance stand for the Exercise. With as much illumination as Blackpool Tower, the stand was set up in record time on one of the highest points on the training area, Flag 28. Congratulations to the Squadron 'B' Team on coming second in the competition, five places in front of the 'X Team'.

A warm welcome from the Troop goes to **Sgt** 'Mac' **MacDonald, Cpl** 'Mat' **Turner, LCpl** 'Stu' **Grey** and LCpl 'Otis' **Reading** who make up the Squadron Tech Workshops, that is if they can find a place to put them. They have only been here for a few months and are already on their fourth move back in with the MT. Where is that port-a-cabin that we have been promised? The MT would like to thank the Gymnasium for letting **Sig Morris** join them back in the Squadron to do some real work, only to find that he is off to Kenya on Devil's Horizon for six weeks. They would also like to say, 'No,' to **Sig Bradford**, you can't go on another 6-month tour (Skive) to Kosovo and **Cpl Campbell** how could you let the ED's down? The rear party would like to wish the members of the Troop a safe journey as they deploy on Exercise Devil's Horizon for a six week holiday in Kenya, while they support the Operational Trial for Odette in the Salisbury Plain area (a close second 1 don't think.) Don't forget to send us a postcard and remember to wear your sun screen.

VICTOR TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt F. Reid**
Tp SSgt **SSgt (Supvr R) Watters**

Since returning from Christmas leave the Troop has been involved in a number of events. The most important is the forthcoming deployment to Kenya on Ex Devil's Horizon. This has meant the boys being dragged away from the 'trailer of knowledge' to ensure the vehicles and equipment were ready. While all this was happening we managed to fit in a Squadron Exercise and a Troop level exercise, another weekend spent working. Many thanks to **Cpl** 'Swampy' **Wilkins** who sank an entire complex when a hard standing was less than ten feet away! The CO's Cup also provided much merriment when it was decided to complete a 58km tab around Sennybridge Training Area. **Lt** 'Taxi' **Coleman** misunderstanding the word tab much to **SSgt Tony** 'I haven't got the fare' **Watters** annoyance, but well done to both teams who took part. Especially **Sig** 'Biggsy' **Hancock** who still managed to find time to play darts with a winch peg using **Cpl** 'Tommy' **Tucker**'s hands as a dart-board. Happily the vehicles are finally packed for Kenya and off our hands, with the lucky ones putting the finishing touches to their personal kit before jetting off for eight weeks in the sun. For those remaining behind, ODETTE courses are the priority in preparation for the arrival of the new EW system to take us forward in this Millennium! Finally the Troop bid a sad farewell to **LCpl** 'Flyover' **Salter** who left us on promotion (Finally) to 225 Sig Sqn.

TANGO TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Waddell**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Ollie Camphell**

Once again the Troop has been busy this month with exercise straight after Christmas leave and now the mad rush of packing for Kenya. The Squadron had a little surprise for them on returning from Exercise in the form of the CO's Cup at Sennybridge Training Area. The two teams from the Squadron spent two days tabbing their hearts out while the lucky ones left behind took a nice easy stroll along the coastal path from St Davids to Brawdy. Well done the 'B' Team on beating the 'X Team but it was unlucky for the 'X Team who had to put up with the new Troop Sergeant, **Chris Mulligan** who had been complaining all around the course with sore feet (and not enough pies).

The Troop likes to welcome back the holiday makers from Bosnia, **Cpl Pete Dimmack, LCpl Nell Parsons, Sig Chris Martin, Sig Boy Thomson and Sig Phil Lee**. Also we welcome back **Lt Waddell** who has been on a long extended holiday skiing in Austria for the last couple of months (lucky for some). We would like to say a sad farewell to **LCpl** 'Clubby' **Club** who's off to Arborfield to spread his joy with the recruits and team up with his old friend **Andy**. Also farewell to **Sig** 'Capt' **Jones** who's off to 2 Sig Regt (or is it the Royal Marines)? Congratulations to **Sgt Chris Mulligan** and **Cpl Tom Wise** on the latest additions to their families (well done the wives).

245th SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Hodges**
Sqn SSM **WO2 (SSM) Mo Fisher**

Firstly the new arrivals: Hello and Congratulations to the new **Capt Jenni Simpson** Int Corps who is double batting as an Int Officer and OC Z Troop. Bye-Bye to the Old Z Troop hierarchy who do the Kosovo thing. Hello to somebody called **Lt Fiona Stewart** a past from the BLAST Congratulations to the soon to be **WO1 (YofS)** 'Taff' **Owens** and also to the soon to be **WO2 (FoS)** 'Ski' **Sharpe.**

EXERCISE DRAGON'S TEST

A break from the norm was required. The forecast of events is too packed to allow the traditional format for the CO's Cup. As an example our Squadron is on the build up to the System Operational Field Trials for Odette and another, rumour has it, has a forthcoming exercise in Kenya. (Mentioned only nine times in their *WIRE* notes it's six weeks you know)!

Capt Jackson and the RHQ 'A 'Team'
receive a lesson on the Turfer Winch
from Sgt Turner on the 245 Sqn 'Vehicle Recovery'Stand

The Regiment deployed en masse to Sennybridge Training Area on the Monday. That night they began a long march around the area completing stands en-route. The distance varied from 55km to 155km depending on whom you talked to ... and who got navigationally embarrassed.

LCpl Cleary is defiant
'It's a trap .... there isn't a breath of wind nor a cloud in the sky ... it's January therefore this isn't Sennybridge' (it's a fair point!)

The teams returned to 'Brawdy Lanes' for excessive curry and beer action on Wednesday in time to watch the Squadron hierarchy, stand DS and any other 'Odds and Sods' compete for the CO's plate. This final part of the competition required teams to run in along the coastal path from St Davids Head to The Lanes. The finish line was populated with all the Sennybridge competitors, now with beer in hand, enjoying watching this final piece of torture inflicted onto the Squadron desk pilots.

HOCKEY SEASON 1999/2000

The 1999 hockey season for the Regiment looked good. We had new blood posted in, new equipment bought, but best of all a new astro-pitch completed during the summer. The initial results were as follows:

Against	30th Signal Regiment	Home	Win	7-1
	9 Regiment RLC	Home	Win	2-1

This put us through to the 5 Div final against either 3 Div Sig Regt or 11 Sig Regt, two recent champions. Those two teams ended up playing their semi-final on the morning of the Divisional Final, that could only be to our advantage. Then the final: (best read in the voice of Bill MacLaren)..... On a cold, wet and windy Blandford afternoon the Regiment took to the field against 3 (UK) Div HQ & Signal Regiment. A good start to 14 with early chances falling to **Sgt Tompson**, **LCpl Jones** and **SSgt Davies**, the latter being outside his usual role as an Army goalkeeper. **Sig Harris** on the opposing team. current army under 21Keeper, saved these with apparent ease. Then disaster for 14 as 3 Div's young **Sig Salmon** destroyed the not so young trio of **Maj Richardson**, **WO1 Devine** and **WO2 Watton.** A truly magical goal over the head of **WO2 Spears** shows the experience of the 14 Sig Regt team is no match for the speed of the youngsters from Bulford. Just to prove me wrong an almost instant reply, a long ball from **SSgt White** picked up by **SSgt Davies** and tapped across to **Sgt Tompson** who slots home the equaliser.

After half time the 14 Sig Regt team came out meaning business. The score went to 3-1 in our favour. 3 Div fought back with the score at 3-2 and only ten minutes to go. Some resolute defending allow 14 Sig Regt to hold on to their lead and get our first victory in the new enlarged Div competition.

The youngsters of 3 Div who gave us a hard first half

The victorious 14 Signal Regiment Team
Experience finally wins the day

16 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Morphet**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Fradley**

EXERCISE SJUSJOEN BACKSTOP

Ex Sjusjoen Backstop 11, was the Regimental Annual Nordic Ski Camp to Norway over the period 14 November - 19 December 1999. Fifteen soldiers, by then highly trained athletes from the previous build up training, deployed in four Landrover Wolfs to Norway, transiting Denmark. The ferry journey passed without incident and we arrived in Skei, near Lillehammer in the late hours of the 15 November 1999. There was no snow! No problem - there's plenty of hill training to be had in the mountains! After a week and still no snow, **Sig** 'Robbie' **Fowler** and **Lt Mark Crinnion** headed off in search of snow. The temperature was 13 degrees Celsius inside the Arctic Circle and with no prospect of snow for the following seven days the decision was made to return to Germany. The party transited JHQ en route to Ruhpolding, Bavaria. At last, snow! **Cpl Mark Blears** and **Sig** 'Robbie' **Fowler** set to work teaching the group of novices how to ski whilst the more experienced **Cpl Dale Armitage** and **Sig** 'Pete' **Beardsley** concentrated on skate and race technique. It did not take long for all to pick up the basics of cross country skiing. Awards for endurance go to **Lt Emma** 'Donkey Kong' **Bruce, Sig Kerry** 'I hate this' **Sims** and **LCpl Tracy** 'I'm not moaning' **Mills**. During the three weeks in Bavaria, **Cpl Blears** put all of us through our paces during ski training and built on the biathlon training that we had received in Norway. Unfortunately, **Cpl Kev Smith** injured himself during training, but all came away from the exercise as competent skiers. One of the aims of the Exercise had been to select two teams for the Divisional Championships -Ex Pipedown in January. It was hoped that a female team could be formed but this was not to be. **Cpl Blears, Cpl Armitage, Cpl** 'Scotty' **Davies, Sig Beardsley** and **Sig** 'Gaz' **Restall** made the cut for the 'A' Team; **Sig Fowler, LCpl Chris Ferguson, Sig Chris Stewart** and **Sig Nikki Harrison** made up the 'B' Team.

During Exercise Pipedown both teams performed to expectations with some excellent performances from all the novices. The 'B' Team in particular did very well considering all were novices and had to compete in the maximum number of races. **Cpl Davies** and **Sig Restall**, both novices for the 'A' Team have had an excellent first season. Four of the ten have now been put forward for instructor courses and most wish to return again next season. There were a number of Royal Signals Units competing in Ex Pipedown and it is hoped that this nucleus will form a Corps Camp next season. Units are asked to give serious consideration to entering a team for the camp. **Lt Crinnion** can be contacted on JHQ MI 3556 for further information:

Find out what events are planned by the Museum
VISIT THE MUSEUM WEBSITE
royalsignals.army.org.uk/museum

Sig Harrison after 4x7.5km Biathlon Relay

Sigs Restall and Beardsley during the Patrol Race

16 SIGNAL REGIMENT ALPINE SKIING SQUAD
THE CORPS TRAINING CAMP AND CHAMPIONSHIPS
KAPRUN, AUSTRIA NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 1999

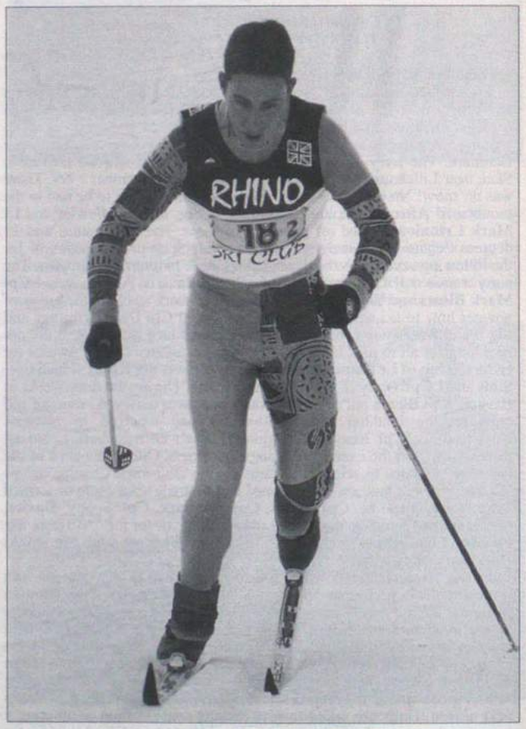
Following a later than anticipated return from Kosovo it was something of a shock to **Lt John** 'Where did you say Admin was again?' **Lyons** that he was now responsible for taking the Regimental Alpine Skiing Team away to the Corps training camp and Championships. However, after linking up with several members of the team as well as **Sgt Dean** 'Who needs snow chains!' **MacKenzie** he was feeling happier. The squad moved off to meet up with the members of 230 Sig Sqn, who were already in Zell Am See as part of a Squadron Adventure Training Expedition. The weather for the trip was encouraging for skiing and led to some hair-raising moments for all concerned.

LCpl Ferguson skating in the 4xl 0km Relay

Following a safe arrival at the accommodation, the party was surprised to find that they were sharing the hostel with a party of Dutch schoolgirls. What a nightmare! Morale was soon stepped on, however, as we discovered several measures enforced by the friendly people at the Austrian Tourist Board. These included lights that automatically turn off after 15 seconds, and a whole building that was wired to shut down should you be unlucky enough to have your kettle on at the same time as anyone else on the floor. Needless to say we spent a lot of time being plunged into darkness, much to the annoyance of **Cpl Bruce** 'More garlic anyone?' **Findlay.**

The next day, up on the glacier, the Team got down to the serious business of race training. Everyone was keen to get on with it as, out of the sun, the temperature was known to fall to a 'fresh' minus 22C°! Not somewhere you would want to be stood still for too long. However, with the training team that had been assembled this was unlikely to happen as the Team, along with others from the Corps, embarked on three weeks of intensive training. At this point we should really thank the training team -**SSgt Andy Brown, Sgt Dean MacKenzie, Cpl Chris Sweeney** and **Cpl Andy Dawson** - for their efforts. As a result of these efforts the team as a whole made real progress as **Cpl Tony Orange** cemented his position as the leading competitor at the championships, closely followed by **LCpl Graham** 'Couldn't grow a beard if I tried' **Rennie**. Other members of the Team were making real progress as well with **Cpl Bruce Findlay's** technique improving all the time, and **Cpl Ritchie** 'The Rocket' **Turnbull** lived up to his nickname by leaving his sense of self-preservation at the bottom of the mountain each morning. Unfortunately the squad was weakened by two retirements from the training, **LCpl Mark Ellis** and **Cpl Joanne** 'Barking mad Billy' **Beaumont**.

The competition week went exceptionally well for the Regiment as we collected the first prize for every competition we were eligible for! Overall **Cpl Tony Orange** headed the seeding list with **Lt John Lyons** in Fourth, **LCpl Graham Rennie** finished a slightly disappointing Seventh, then came **Cpl Ritchie Turnbull** Eighth and **Cpl Bruce Findlay** despite injury finished a very creditable Fifteenth. With this fine performance from all concerned the squad moved on to the Divisional Championships with high hopes of qualifying for the Army Championships, more of which will follow later.



Sig Restall competing in the 15km Classic
for 16 Sig Regt at the Divisional Championships

REGIMENTAL KAPE TOUR

In November of last year, seven members of 16 Sig Regt were tasked with giving a presentation on Kosovo to schools in Scotland, as part of a R SIGNALS recruiting drive. All team members had recently returned from Macedonia or Kosovo, and so our experiences were fresh in our minds. **Lt Emma Bruce** organised the team, and tasked **Sig** 'Pez' **Perry** and **Sig Glen Armitage** with making a three minute video from a video she had on the conflict in Kosovo. Two days, seven minutes of video (we got carried away!) and many broken copyright laws later, the masterpiece was complete and ready for it's premier showing - we can safely say there wasn't a dry eye in the room! The rest of the Team had concurrently been

working on the script itself. The final breakdown of the presentation was as follows; an introduction by **Lt Bruce** on the geography and history of Kosovo, which challenged even the most dedicated student to stay awake! A 'tear-jerking' insight into the refugee crisis and an account of what NATO did to improve the situation by **LCpl Tracy Milligan** and **Sig Kathy Williams.** The video was next and was followed by a brief by **Sig Perry** and **Sig Armitage** on the communications used during and after the initial move into Kosovo, including a practical demonstration with radios. **Cpl MacPherson** provided a humorous talk on living in the field - the field toilet part of the speech was vetoed by RSS Blandford, however, much to **Cpl MacPherson's** dismay. Finally **Sgt** 'Where's the Bar' **Green** summarised the presentation. It also has to be said **Sgt Green** was our technical expert and managed to rig up a mobile sound system for the video that even the Manic Street Preachers would have been proud of. With the presentation complete, and the team sick of rehearsing, we departed for RSS Blandford to, hopefully, be given the rubber stamp of approval. We did not have to wait long with just a couple of points being picked up by the 'board of officers' before we were on our way to Sunny Scotland.

On 8 November 1999, the team set up in the first school, and were very well received. All reservations were wiped away by the end of the presentation, and everyone was left feeling a lot more confident.

Cpl McPherson with one of the pupils at Montieth High School

The KAPE Team with a class of pupils at Monteith High School

The Team averaged about two schools a day for a week which meant a lot of travelling, setting up and tearing down. The funniest point of the week was when a female pupil asked **Lt Bruce** whether girls could join the SAS. **Lt Bruce** was in the midst of trying to explain that, 'If they had passed the course', when she got her As and Is mixed up. I'll leave it up to your imagination as to what she said instead of passed! Needless to say it was an expensive night for her! The last school the Team visited was a special needs school which we were slightly apprehensive about. In the event everyone enjoyed this school immensely and felt it was the most rewarding of the whole week. Overall the KAPE Tour proved hard work during the preparation phase but this was more than compensated for during the Tour itself I think everyone enjoyed themselves and found the experience both challenging and rewarding. This coupled with the fact that Scotland had very long licensing hours ensured a good time was had by all!

LEICESTER TROPHY RUGBY

Once again we are in the middle of the cornerstone of Regimental Sport, the Leicester Trophy Competition season. As such, a cold winter's day saw the Regiment vying for the prestigious title of Rugby Champions. Ten teams were supposed to enter, nine turned up. It is at this point we must publicly acknowledge SAN Tp, 255 Sig Sqn unfortunately due to chronic under-manning, courses and a widespread allergy to physical exertion, had to drop out of the competition, supplying however MAN Tp with a number of their squad. Well boys, you know what they say, if at first you don't succeed .... CHEAT! The day's activities thankfully went well, with all games being played in an excellent spirit. I must thank both of the referees for the time and effort they put in to make the day a success. I must also mention the contribution made by the Regimental 2IC who not only played but refereed as well. All joking aside, MAN Tp were the tournament's eventual winners, beating the seemingly unstoppable 252 'B' Team in a closely contested final, with Kowloon Tp placing third, due to a better points difference than fourth placed TN 015. Thanks must also go to the CO, **Lt Col Morphet**, for presenting the prizes, and a huge thank you to **WO2 (FofS) Bob Vowles** for the help he provided in ensuring that the normally 'administratively challenged' **Lt Simon Gladwin** managed to put the day together in the first place!

255 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Burgin**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Aimer**

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Bruce**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Roberts**

It's time for Support Tp to say goodbye to a whole host of people. In fact, it is difficult to remember a time when so many people escaped - I mean left - the Squadron at once! We would like to say farewell to **Cpl Dave Sawyers** who has moved to Arborfield, **Sig Steve Pearce** who has left for sunny Bulford and **Sig Ross Turner** who has been posted to 30 Sig Regt. Sp Tp would also like to give their best wishes to **Cpl Nick Tipping** and **Sig** 'Coops' **Cooper** who have moved within the Regiment to HQ Sqn - enjoy the Sergeant Major's PT sessions! Furthermore, the Troop would like to welcome **Cpl Parry** who has arrived from 7 Sig Regt and **Cpl Kev Smith** who has moved within the Regiment from TM Tp. Our warmest and in some cases belated welcome also goes to **LCpl Pinkney, LCpl Morgan, LCpl Jacklin, LCpl Gill, LCpl Birbeek, LCpl Richardson** and **LCpl O' Neil** who have arrived from RSS Blandford. The Troop has also had the addition of a new officer. **2Lt James Mason** is attached to the Regiment for eight months prior to attending university. Congratulations go out to **LCpl** 'Tax' **Powell, LCpl** 'Peck' **Ramsden** and **LCpl** 'Bash' **Bashford** on their recent promotions - an excellent effort by the line section. Lastly Sp Tp would like to congratulate **Sig** 'Knuckles' **Whitworth** for his CONWOR Commendation for his service during Op Agricola. I think few would disagree that he is an extremely committed and hard working individual and deserves this recognition for his efforts.

MAN TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Crinnion**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Fensom**

The majority of MAN Tp have returned from Christmas and post deployment leave, and are now preparing for the forthcoming Regimental, Brigade and ARRC exercises. The Troop would like to welcome **Cpl Kev Parkes** from 252 Sig Sqn, **LCpl Mark** 'Geordie' **Appleby** posted in from 3 UK Div, and **Sigs Donaghy, Jelfs, Johnson** and **Steele** posted in from RSS Blandford. The Troop would also like to welcome **2Lt Neil Clements** on attachment prior to attending the Troop Commanders' course at RSS Blandford. Congratulations to **LCpl Pete McMahon, LCpl Jane Robinson, LCpl Louise Underwood** and **LCpl Glen Armitage** who were all promoted in post and remain within the Troop. Sadly we say goodbye and congratulations to **LCpl Nikki Kenvon, LCpl Sam Gontler** and **LCpl Al Cheetham** who are all posted on promotion - good luck. The Troop also says goodbye to **Sig Rob Brown** who has been posted to 252 Sig Sqn. Congratulations again go to **LCpl Kenyon** for her CONWOR Commendation on return from Op Agricola.

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Mike Lithgow MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Al Higgins**

OPERATIONS CELL - RANGE DAY 1 FEBRUARY 2000

In order to keep up the basic skills required the Regimental Operations Cell Staff (less those Tech Adjt's sporting pink shirts) spent a very windy afternoon on the range for the pistol APWT. The training was conducted by **WO2 (SSM) Andy Young** and the shoots were controlled by **SSgt Craig Wrath** and **Sgt** 'Deano' **Cartledge.** Unfortunately the wind was atrocious and 'moving targets' were the order of the day. The highlight of the afternoon was **WO1 (FofS)** 'Billy the Kid' **McCreath** charging down the range having been briefed to step forward and make ready – there are no bayonets with pistols **Bill**!! Overall it was a very pleasant change of scenery and the scores on the doors meant that **WO1 (YofS) Andy Campbell** and **Maj (Tfc) Pete Barron** achieved hps of 32 with **Maj Garry** 'Can you just run through that again?' **Hearn** trailing in at 25.

ROYAL SIGNALS WINDSURFING CHAMPIONSHIPS 1999

by LCpl Gaz Pope

This year's Royal Signals Windsurfing Championships were held in Weymouth from 15-17 September and they gave the newcomers and the more experienced windsurfers the chance to compete at a thoroughly

challenging and exhilarating sport. The first day was the inter-unit competition, with major and minor units from within the Corps competing. With moderate winds the Regiment managed to retain the Major Unit title with a team of four, **Sgt Dave Bennett**, **Cpl** 'Taff' **Richards**, **LCpl Carl Kidner** and **LCpl Gaz Pope**. After the inter-unit competition it was time to see who the best individual windsurfers within the Corps were. The winds picked up and this made for some excellent sailing with **Cpl Helen Nolan** becoming this year's Royal Signals champion female novice. The competition proved to be a great success for the Regiment and for the competitors, who enjoyed excellent windsurfing and the thoroughly deserved social life in the evenings.

SUPPORT SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj R. H. Galdwin**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Young**

INTER SQUADRON SHOOTING COMPETITION
29 NOVEMBER 1999

It was what seemed to be an ordinary November morning, birds were singing, the sun was just coming over the horizon, and it was freezing. All this was going to change, each of the four Squadrons had a team of marksmen (and women) going to Kingsbury ranges to take part in an Inter Squadron Shooting Competition consisting of a pistol match, rifle match and LSW shoot. The Support Squadron team, led by **Sgt** 'Deano' **Cartledge**, were looking good and were very confident. We arrived at the ranges and proceeded to clean our weapons, then as if from nowhere a little voice piped up, 'Can someone show me how to use this??' We looked round to see where the voice had come from and there was **Pte Mitchell** looking puzzled at her rifle. After a little instruction on the rifle (what it was, how to use it, which end to point where) and a few arguments on who was going to have the lane next to her, we set off for the rifle match. The rifle match was an APWT style shoot, and even though we somehow managed to keep our respirators on through the whole of the last stage of the shoot (thanks **Sgt Morgan**) we were confident we had done well. We made our way to the 30m range, where a team of four 'veteran' shooters were to take part in the pistol shoot, another APWT style shoot. The four old men of the team (**Sgt** 'Deano' **Cartledge**, **Sgt Lee Clark, Cpl Scott Phillips** and **Cpl Ian** 'Cush' **Cushing**) stood in trepidation waiting to shoot. We were all happy with the scores, which were out of 32 and we had all scored between 29 and 32. It was looking good for a Support Squadron win. The big challenge of the day was for **Sig Pratap** 621 and **Sgt Lee** 'I Tab Everywhere' **Clark** who were chosen to take part in the gun shoot. This involved a sprint from the 600m point to each firing position and engaging the target. We had high hopes, but it was a hard event. **Sig Pratap** amazed us all with his marksmanship. Scoring over 50 points, the next best shot had just over half of that. We made our way back to the admin area to await the results, not knowing how the other Squadrons had performed. We had to wait until we went to the 501 Club to find out the results, and for some reason **Cfn Adamson** was really eager to get there, perhaps it was the mention of beer? When the results were announced we were all overjoyed to find that we had in fact won by a HUGE margin, and all the other Squadrons should be jolly disappointed with themselves. All in all a good day on the ranges.

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj J. E. Swindells**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Tivey**

BATTLEFIELD TOUR DECEMBER 1999

On 1 December 1999, C Tp went to Cambrai, in France on a battlefield tour. After a long and tiring journey, which included getting lost in the French road systems, we arrived late afternoon feeling a little lethargic. We then booked into the Hotel Ibis and prepared ourselves for a long night on the town. Waking the next morning with some members of the group not yet returned and most others not feeling one hundred percent, we prepared to go on the tour. On the roads we once again negotiated the confusing road system and from sheer luck arrived at the site of the Somme. Whilst touring the site all members of the group were moved by the scenes before them, and the descriptions portrayed on the information boards at each of the locations. Everyone concerned agreed that it was difficult to understand how such an event could have taken place by modern standards. After returning to the hotel we reluctantly decided that another night out would be the answer to finish off the day. This proved to be an eventful evening with the troops having their own methods of flagging down a taxi. One of the group, no names mentioned, decided that the best way to grab the drivers attention was to part with his clothing. Other methods included chatting up the local Kebab shop owner, which proved fruitless. The return journey was hampered by bad weather so unfortunately the group had to visit the booze shop and finally when we managed to board the ferry a few members were not feeling too great, funnily enough. Those present were:- **SSgt Hurren, Cpl Hay, LCpls Fields, Fairbairn** and **Hellyer** and **Sigs Clarke, Earp, McGinn, Niven, Shaw, Smith** and **Wood**.

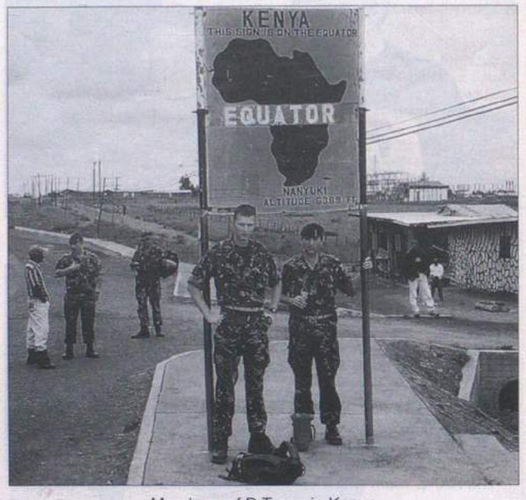
ALPHA TROOP

'A' Tp has had a busy period over the past two months in preparation for deployment on Op Surety. Each detachment has been on activation, and therefore extra training on the various equipment required for the Op was undertaken to ensure a trouble free deployment. The Brussels det had to work that little bit harder in the build up phase due to the introduction of MOST 4, which was to be deployed for the first time within the Regiment. Once all the testing was complete the troops departed for a short Christmas break and returned on Boxing Day to deploy.

One det located at 19 Mech Bde HQ, 'Pristina University', where they managed to confuse everyone as to what they were supposed to be doing. The Op was generally uneventful, however the crew had fun in the antenna field with knee-deep mud. Also, when temperatures dropped, so did the comms link as the 522 decided to develop a disliking to cold weather. In general though, comms were successful.

As soon as the det arrived in the province they had a security brief where they were told that everybody was gated. As a result, **Capt Owen Finnie**'s golf clubs never saw the light of day (ha ha). The power man thought that it was going to be plain sailing. However, as soon as the det powered up, the PSU blew and use had to be made of the generator power. **LCpl Lindsay** certainly earned his £39 that day. Night shifts passed quickly with the help of the whiteboard facility on JOCS. For **LCpl Chris Bradford** and **Sig Paul Taylor**, however, it was a case of what night shifts? The newly promoted **Sgt Frank Baker** amused everyone with his rank slide changing antics. He was a Corporal at meal times and a Sergeant at other times in between servings. The ferry journey back was the highlight of the op, not only because everybody was going home but also **Sig John Roberts** entertained everybody with his bouts of seasickness. The Troop would like to say 'Thank you' to all computer programmers out there who conceived the Y2K bug and consequently ensured that our festive celebrations over the millennium holiday were sufficiently dampened ..... Cheers!!!!!

BRAVO TROOP - EXERCISE GRANDPRIX



Members of B Troop in Kenya

It has been a very busy year for the Squadron, what with Kosovo, Macedonia and Albania. So it was nice to have an exercise, the fact that it was in Kenya just added to the anticipation. The rear link detachment under the command of **L/Sgt** 'Scouse' **Parry** left a very cold and wet UK heading for an African dream. The Exercise wasn't all work, we managed to pass the time chasing lions on night safari and trying to chase off baboons on the Aberdare Country Club Golf Course. We also tried out white water rafting, which we were all a bit wary of, given the wildlife out there. **LCpl Paul Taylor** threatened to sign off if we made him go into the water so he finished his adventure training propping up the bar in the Sportsman's Arms. The rafting turned out to be the highlight of the exercise, attacking rapids and jumping off 40ft waterfalls. The bruises and sunburn were well worth it, even though **Sgt Dean Leach** did resemble a lobster for a week after. **LCpl** 'Grey' **Wootton** found time in our hectic work load to climb Mount Kenya while suffering from frostbite and hypothermia (his own words), while **LCpl Scottie Cooper** kept himself busy cleaning up the rest of the detachments mess! All in all a very enjoyable exercise which will not be forgotten in a hurry!

CHARLIE TROOP

Since December the Squadron has been involved in several trips over seas, some of which were work orientated and some not. The first was a jolly to France (as explained earlier) and the second, Op Surety where members of A Tp were sent to various places around the globe ie. Belgium, Kosovo, America and NI for the duration of the Millennium celebrations. Thanks to A Tp for taking the job on so C Tp could have a relaxing leave. Certain members of C Tp were involved in Race Relations and Ethnic Recruiting, what was actually involved was several demonstrations showing the different sides of Army life. The log demonstration was interesting and I am sure the on-looking audience appreciated it, but I am not too sure if synchronised log lifting was the most impressive advert for the Army of the future. Never mind we had fun doing it! The other demonstration was a Basketball match, which actually was shown on Sky Sports, obviously Rupert Murdoch knows how to get the viewing ratings up! Next onto the CO's Challenge, which the Squadron did brilliantly at, winning the competition convincingly.

The Christmas party season was a success with most people letting their hair down especially **Sig Dan Vietch** who thought he would step into a fight to do his referees bit but to his dismay found himself on the wrong end of a few flying fists. Hard luck **Dan** and good luck in civvy street whatever you decide to do. C Tp would like to welcome to the Troop **Sgt** 'Gaz' **Shuck** and **Cpl** 'Paul The Egg' **Henderson**, at least now **Mr Dagless** will have somebody to talk to. The Troop would like to say farewell to **Cpl Pete Smedley** who will find it difficult in SHAPE with all of the extra cash he will be earning. Well done to our newly promoted personnel there are too many to list them but we now need some more Siggies sent to us from the factory please!

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj J. Swindells**
SSM	**WO2 M. Webb**

OPERATION LANGAR – THE RETURN OF DELTA TROOP

Mid November and morale is at an all time low. Rumours of an early return to the UK are rife and life is quiet - the det has settled into a routine. **LCpl** 'Trotter' **Trotman** has got the generator that he has been asking for from the start of the tour so he, at least, is happy. **Sgt** 'Billy' **Kidd** has his admin squared away and is already planning the early move back to 'Blighty'. This requires frequent trips to Darwin to assist **LCpl Kerrie Rawlings**, **Sig Trish Walker-Scott** and **Sig Ian Marsden** with packing the NCC Rear and keeping their morale up by having a few beers in Darwin. Meanwhile **Cpl** 'Crypto' **Wyllie** with his crypto sorted, could make sure he had a tan for the entire det! Finally the word is given, and chaos descends on our peaceful life and the real start to make the move home is made. Kit is made ready and gathered from across East Timor and accounted for. This is the first time the kit has been together since **Sgt** 'Rancid' **Rogers** left his trail of mis-accounted for equipment in his usual admin vortex!

The first move is back to Brunei Garrison, the detachment is turned round and maintenance is carried out before time is found for a little R and R. Firstly the Brunei Garrison Christmas party gets the 30 Sig Regt touch and the party goes with a swing. The next day the det visits the Brunei theme park that has all the best rides in the world. Best of all it is free, courtesy of the **Sultan of Brunei** (for removing the joys of alcohol). After the delights of Brunei the crew goes their separate ways. The lucky few depart on a Hercules with the 501E for five days and the rest of the crew travel back on VC-10, the quicker two day option. The 501 crews next stop is the Maldives and what a stop it is - two nights in a 5 star hotel on its own island. First time for the 'Frank' moment for all of us. The next stop is Oman and another 5 star stop for a night and the last time for a bit of power tanning. The final stop is Crete where the RAF boys could only fit in a 3 star hotel! This is where we get our first taste of the weather to come and finally into Lyneham for the real shock of true English weather. Meanwhile, the crew on the VC-10 stop in Sri Lanka for a refuel and do not leave for another three days. This makes their two day trip a five day one and they arrive back a day after the Hercules. Needless to say though, they also had 5 star accommodation en route!

So that brings us to the end of this D Tp round the world voyage. Everyone is back home for a well-deserved rest and to take part in the Christmas festivities with their families. Not forgetting a healthy dose of flu and a cold thrown in for good measure after all that tropical heat.

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS NEWS

The Squadron headquarters has worn out yet another Officer Commanding. **Maj Joe Cooper** has drawn the short straw and will no doubt find the demotion from working with the best, to working with the rest a hard task. **Maj Jules Swindells** has none of these problems of course, as he is promoted from OC 256 to OC 258. Clearly, it will be sad to lose a great OC and we will all miss him, but at the same time we welcome **Jules** and **Liz** to the 258 posse. The Boss is dead, long live the Boss! Whilst we are losing a great OC, much comfort has been forthcoming with our loss too of the Billy Smarts Circus of the JTFHQ Sig Sqn. As a result we are all looking forward to a nice relaxing year…

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Teri Downes**
Tp SSgt	**Sgt Gaz Middleton**

Delta Tp, would like to say a warm welcome to **Cpl Dambar** 'Dimebar' **Gurung** coming across from 250 GSS and to **Sigs John** 'Winston' **Ellson**, **Steph** 'Trunks' **Hawkins** and **Paul** 'Catalogue Pose' **Howells** - all coming straight from the factory. A fond farewell goes to **Sgt Dave Rogers** and family and **Sig Jacqui** 'Brunei' **Bridger** who are both posted to the Royal School of Signals down in Blandford. Also fond farewells to **LCpl Lee** 'You ain't seen me, Right!' **Kemp** to 1 (RBY) Sig Sqn, **LCpl Paul** 'Unlike the Murphy's' **Hines** to 7 Bde and **Sig Mark** 'Mr Logic' **Palmer** to Northern Ireland. We must also say goodbye and good luck to **Cpl Andy** 'Jurassic' **Smart**, **Sig Oscar** 'Weight gain 4000' **Phillips** and **Sig Baz** 'Beefcake' **Still** who have all seen the light and are leaving the Army for civvy street. Congratulations go to **Sgt Gaz** 'Barry Sheene' **Middleton** and wife **Angela** on the birth of baby **Edward**, as well as to **Sgt Dave Rogers** and wife **Christine** on the arrival of baby **Lauren Jade**.

ECHO TROOP

Tp Comd	**Capt** 'Mumra' **Rae**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt** 'Doc' **Halliday**

It has been hectic here in E Tp for the past month and it is forecasted to continue right up until mid-Feb when the whole Troop deploy lock, stock and barrel (carrying thermals) to the Balkans for a six month tour of duty as the 'Balkans Satcom Tp'. In preparation members of the Troop have been sighted cramming in various trade courses, military courses and exercises prior to deployment. Hence, the lads have adopted the title of Colgate Tp - 'still working'. The photograph below shows members of the Troop training on the new Military Off–the–shelf Satellite Terminal 4 (alias the beloved MOST4).

Up and thrusting Sig Doherty – or is it up and coming .....?

Now for the usual 'hellos' and 'goodbyes': Firstly we welcome into the troop the latest batch from the factory: **Sigs Dowling, Clutton, Lamb, Sellers** and **West**. We also welcome **Sig Mclean** who has just arrived from 3 Div. The Troop has a number of farewells to say; so 'goodbye' and 'good luck' to **Cpl Mick Gregoire, Cpl Aide Lowe, Sigs Rob Woollard, Fred West** and **Dave Gregg** who are leaving for pastures new in Civ Div. We also say goodbye to **Sig Dave Sims** who has finally left and has been posted to 1 Div - early reports here are that the NAAFI bar's takings are down!

We would also like to say 'well done' to the newly promoted Lance Corporals in the Troop and they are as follows: **LCpl Aaron Donnelly, Stu Engleby, Ray McKay, Dave Walker** and **Dave Steadman**. Get the beers in! Finally, congratulations and best wishes to **LCpl Lee Nicol** who has finally decided to do the right thing and marry **Yvonne** on the 22 January 2000. The white stilettos and lycra leggings are on their way Yvonne. Also congratulations to **Cpl** 'Paddy' **Bevan** and **Debbie McAllister**; they are tying the knot on 5 February 2000.

EXERCISE CYRAEG BEAR - *by Sig Lee Simmons*

Ex Cyraeg Bear was a four-day 'Troop bonding' exercise with the purpose of instilling unity and teamwork into the Troop. Despite ideas that a good night in Magaluf would have had the desired effect it was decided that the exercise would be better suited to Sennybridge in Wales, where men are men. To kick off the Exercise was Ex Icebreaker, this is where everyone was given a chosen topic to talk about for three minutes. The phrase 'Errrrmmm' became popular and everyone suddenly became aware of their hands and what to do with them; **LCpl Jeff** 'Jeffers' **Ford** found himself picking his nose at one point!

A new day and a new challenge; this challenge was a race between all four sections over the unforgiving Sennybridge assault course. Four sections of white shivering things were paraded around the course, which consisted of obstacles such as mud, water and muddy water. The sections raced in pairs in super quick time (considering it was just after the Christmas break!). The winning section was Section 5. During the course **LCpl Fred Hazard** thought it best to cheer his section on from the sideline and whilst running beside them, took a nosedive into the freezing cold river. Points were awarded for his graceful entry and the ability to hold his breath whilst swearing. Best impression of 'Bambi' had to go to **LCpl Lee Nicol** on the rackety bridge. The next physical challenge for the sections to overcome was a combined day and night orienteering exercise. The daytime orienteering went without any major hitches however, night time was a different story all together! On the night navigation Section 2 found themselves about 5km off the orienteering map with the strong conviction that the maps must be wrong. The conversation went as follows:

Sig Adam 'Pathfinder' **Toner**: Do you know where we are?'
Sig Lee 'Scarface' **Simmons**:
'Yes. We're here on the map, but the map doesn't show these woods either side of us.'
LCpl Lee 'Magma' **Nicol**:
'These maps are officially 'gash'; they're ALL wrong. Let's carry on!'

Like 'Lemmings' Section 2 continued and finally returned some three hours later after they realised the errors of their ways! The Exercise wasn't all physical, as our mental ability and reasoning were also stimulated, especially through the use of appreciations. All the sections were tasked to get an injured man to medical attention by the fastest means possible. This involved taking into consideration such factor as terrain, equipment, daylight hours, weather, morale and comms. After minutes of thinking **Sig Matt** 'Gink' **King** appreciated that the problem was the injured man and concluded: 'shoot the bloke and put him down as an exercise loss.' Standby Sandhurst!

To end the exercise the sections all had to provide a 5min skit. This brought about some beauties such as the infamous 'International Arse-burning championships'. During this competition four contenders had to sit on a heater for as long as possible. The best section competition was won by Section 4 who were led by **Cpl Brendon** 'Ladies' **Plant**. On the whole the exercise was enjoyed by everyone and did complete its aim and it gave all the members of the Troop who are deploying to the Balkans a chance to get to know each other better. Next time though could we give the Magaluf idea a chance...?

BANJA LUKA DET – 501 PURPLE

The first elements of the Balkan Satcom Tp deployed on 3 January 2000 – at daft o'clock. **Sig John** 'Pathfinder' **Lawrence**, and **Sgt Al** 'Give me the map' **Barker**, decided they preferred to fly from Brize Norton. Consequently, a two hour journey to RAF Lyneham became a painstaking four hour fun ride! On arrival at Split, we were told to catch a flight to Banja Luka. Upon sighting the Czech aircraft we were about to travel in (complete with oil dripping from the fuselage and wings), **Cpl Tony** 'Whaaaaaaat' **Gallagher**, produced a photograph of his beloved children and embraced it. Eventually we reached our destination in one piece, however **LCpl Michelle** 'Chunderwomen' **Black**, was convinced she had lost her ability to hear when the airport appeared silent yet busy? We discreetly advised her to remove her earplugs! On completion of the arduous take-over from 249 Sig Sqn, we conducted a 501 activation to test the tails kit. During this period **Cpl Tony** 'I require an interpreter' **Gallagher**, was required to make numerous phone calls. Whilst speaking to the SQMS, he had attempted to quote our Euromux number, but became utterly confounded with the amount of fives and sixes it contained. Whilst pronouncing the number he would cut off mid-flow exclaiming 'Whaaaaaaat!' After composing himself he rambled on discussing problems concerning the enhancement of the 501 as well as the CES; we had no idea what he meant, presumably the SQMS had as we received the correct CES! However the SQMS also highlighted with 'Anymore problems, phone somebody else.'

In order to alleviate the tedium and lethargy long associated with cold winter evenings, the detachment has adopted a healthy regime of fitness. After one of the squaded sessions, **Sig John** 'Kebab' **Lawrence**, upon returning to base decided to unwittingly sign in under a false name. Three hours later he was summoned to the guardroom to explain himself to the Colour Sergeant who spoke fluent Geordienese. After a valiant attempt to explain himself, he was asked to 'Chill out!', **Sig Lawrence** in response promptly saluted the Colour Sergeant for reasons only known to himself?

On the second week we conducted a further 501 activation to inform 228 Sig Sqn, what services we could provide for them. Meanwhile, **LCpl Jamie** 'Sinner' **Slade**, and **Cpl Gav** 'Dod Gam Dood' **Wallace**, were liaising particularly well with other units in BLMF and were clearly willing to do whatever it took, to appropriate whatever was required by the detachment. The activation went splendidly with only one minor hiccup when **Cpl** 'Long arms' **Gallagher** got his Rover stuck in the snow! The initial elements of Echo Tp have deployed successfully, and are looking forward to the remainder of Echo Tp joining us.

FOXTROT TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Morag Southern**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Stu Fidler**

It was a busy end to the Millennium for Foxtrot Tp. Our return from Ex Bright Star (which was held in Egypt from September to November) saw all available members of the Troop getting stuck into the job of removing tons of the Western Desert from the kit that we had deployed with. Following the turn-around, the Troop took part in the Remembrance Day Service at St Nicholas Church, Bramcote, before escaping for a well earned long weekend. The Troop welcomed a few new faces upon our return from Egypt. **Sig Andy Jordon-White**, **Sig Gaz** 'Doris' **Day**, **Sig Jim** 'SUSAT' **King** and **Sig Dave Scott**, all join the Troop from the Royal School of Signals and have been crated immediately as per Troop SOPs! **Cpl Lucy Mason** also rejoins us after her tour at Arborfield.

The Second week of December saw anyone who could be spared, taking part in a winter week of military training at Swynnerton Camp. Apparently the week went well, but the author of this article tore his ligaments on the assault course on the first day! On a happier note, congratulations are in order for the following: **Sig Danny Cooksey** and **Sig Faye Wood**, who will now be known as Lance Corporal's of the Royal Corps, **Sig Danny** 'Captain Co-ord' **Thwaites** and **Sig Andy** 'My body is a temple' **Armitage** who successfully completed the ACAI's course at Aldershot and are now doing sterling jobs as baby gym-queens and of course to **Sig Frankie Langford**, who has just come off the board. The Troop welcomes back **LCpl Dickie Lane**, **LCpl Gav** 'Leo' **Sayers**, **LCpl Kerry Rawlings** and **Sig Kev Spinks**, who returned in December, having been deployed on Op Langar's tour of the Pacific Rim, visiting Singapore, Brunei, Australia and of course Timor (where they spent most of their time dodging the tirade of Australian NDs!). Fortunately, despite the best efforts of the Aussies to 'bag a Brit', our steely eyed globe trotting warriors returned unscathed and immediately disappeared for a well earned four weeks leave. The rest of us embarked on Christmas leave on 18 December and as the Millennium bug didn't bring about the collapse of civilisation as we know it, returned with a collective hangover, eager to finish the preparations of the JTFHQ role to 256 Sig Sqn.

On a final note, as the Troop look forward to Exercise in Diego Garcia, we bid farewell **to SSgt Paul Boughey**, his wife **Trudie** and children **Mollie** and **Jack**. **SSgt Boughey** will be picking up his White Helmet once more, to resume his favourite pastime of jumping through flaming hoops and stuff. Also **LCpl Faye Wood** and **LCpl Danny Cooksey** move on to newer and greener pastures elsewhere. The Troop wish them all the very best of luck.

250 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj R. P. Wilson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Chandrabahadur Gurung**

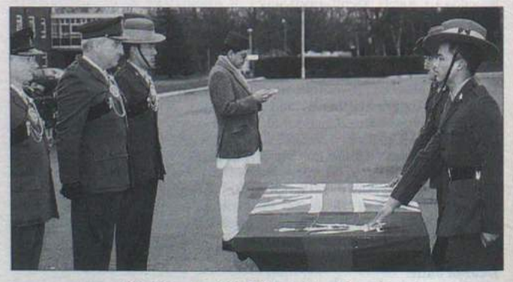
LIFE OF A SUCCESSFUL QUEENS GURKHA SIGNALS RECRUIT - *by Sig Bikal Gurung*

It was five o'clock in the evening of 8 November 1999. The evening was quite freezing for November. Everything seemed to be new to us about this camp; but we were happy because it was the day we set foot in the Regiment. On the first day, we had our initial tests on English and mathematics. Then we had a two weeks course on English and computing. Tutors from North Warwickshire and Hinckley College helped us in improving our written and spoken English. Computing was somewhat new to us but we got along with it quite well during the course. Now we are capable of doing packages like Databases, Word processing and Spreadsheets.

The following week, we had another two weeks course on mathematics and basic electronic principles. **SSgt (FofS) Ratna** and his team were with us during this part of the course. The tutors were mixtures of Gurkhas and British ranks. Initially it was quite confusing in understanding British instructors but we realise that this was done for our own benefit to get used to English people in their native tongue. In addition we had driving lessons (theory) every evening. One afternoon of the following week, it started snowing; the first hint of Christmas. I had forgotten all about it. Probably I had concentrated too much on my studies. Well, it wasn't over yet because on the Christmas break we were familiarised on different equipment used by the Regiment.

We were tested on every field to assess us for our suitability for the three trades in Queen's Gurkha Signals. The Trade Board sat on the Fifth and on the Sixth the result was announced. On that day, hope was rolling high in everybody's hearts. When we were finally told of the result, we were all relieved and the last two months waiting was over. Finally we felt as though we were worth something. From that day on we practised drill, took part in parades like other members of the Regiment. Our next big event was the Attestation parade. **Brig S. M. A. Lee OBE**, was the Inspecting Officer which took place on 12th January 2000. We took oath touching the flags of the Regiment and the Nation. The day was made joyous by the persons who received their LS&GC Medals and even merrier by the newly commissioned officers. For us it was the day we proudly became a Signalman of Queens Gurkha Signals.

Lt (QGO) Prem (Left), Lt Yam (Centre) and Lt (QGO) Mahendra receiving their commissions from Brig S M A Lee OBE and Maj Govinde Gurung MVO



QG Signals 1999 Attestation Parade

MY VERY FIRST OPERATIONAL TOUR IN KOSOVO
by Signaller Deepak Rai

It has been little over four months that 250 Gurkha Signal Squadron has been to Kosovo on Op Agricola. 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn took over from 256 Sig Sqn during the month of July 1999. As for myself, I was always wondering what it would be like to be out on an operation because it would be my very first operational tour ever. We flew from UK on 19 July 1999 and landed a Petrovec in Macedonia, from where we were driven straight to Kosovo on the same day. As we were on the way I saw numerous people on streets who appeared to be homeless and a lot of children who seemed to be parentless. They were holding out their hands begging for money and food. As we crossed the border from Macedonia to Kosovo. I saw number of houses badly damaged and burnt. After three hours of driving we finally arrived at our final destination, Pristina, which is situated in the centre of Kosovo. Being one of the new soldiers who has recently joined the Regiment, I have always been curious and eager to learn about the Vehicular Satellite Communication 501 (VSC501) systems and the duties and procedures in a Communication Centre (COMMCEN). Both of these skills are very important to know as a Radio Telegraphist within the Royal Corps of Signals. Everything seems to be going great and I have managed to gather a huge amount of knowledge and information on Satellite Communications Systems, as I was learning bit by bit every day about the equipment. Moving into the COMMCEN side of life, as our COMMCEN at Pristina University is very busy I have to deal with lots of incoming and outgoing signal traffic. I have learnt a lot about the COMMCEN work and feel myself, proud to have become confident in my work. On the physical fitness side, I have always managed to maintain my standard by going for a run almost every day if I can, and also spending a bit of time in the gymnasium. In summary, I have been enjoying every moment here in Kosovo along with the rest of the Squadron personnel.

My first Operational Tour in Kosovo

TERRY FOX RUN AT GOLES HILL (KOSOVO)
by Sig Autar Shrestha

The Terry Fox Run is a charity run, which was organised by the Canadian Army on 25 September 1999 at Goles Hill, approximately 20km south-west of Pristina, Kosovo. The aim of the run was to raise money for the Terry Fox Cancer Research Fund. The running route itself was 5km long, all the way up to the Goles Hill with a significant gradient. The organiser had set up a good start point, well-marked running route with scenic finish point on the top of the hill.

Terry Fox, originally **Terrance Stanley Fox**, is the name of an amputee who had his right leg amputated because of cancer. Despite being disabled, he successfully ran between the East Coast and West Coast of Canada to raise money for cancer research. Even with only one leg, **Terry** proved that anything is possible if you are determined and, physical barriers pose no threat to your ambitions. His ultimate goal was to raise one dollar from every Canadian of the national population of 24.1 million for the Terry Fox Cancer Research Fund. As a direct result of **Terry's** dogged determination and sacrifice, he finally succeeded in raising more than 24.17 million dollars for the fund. Sadly, he died on 28 June 1981, just one month short of his 23 birthday.

The Canadians were very delighted to see us participate on the run. Although being on operation, a total of 70 runners from different NATO countries spared their time to take part in the event. Six members of the Balkan SATCOM Squadron including myself, volunteered to take part in the event. Even though the route was uphill all the way from start to finish, we all felt quite at home and, comfortably achieved creditable positions between Sixth and Thirteenth. The Canadians were very much impressed by our excellent performance on the run. After the event, the Canadians asked us a lot of interesting questions including the selection procedures for joining the legendary Gurkhas. Finally for our memory, we took a photograph with a Canadian flag before departing to our detachments. Yet another victory for the Regiment. Jai QG Signals!!!

The Runners
(L-Rt) Sig Autar, LCpl Tirtha, Narendra, Lt Davis, Sig Parta, LCpl Kumar and Cpl Krishna

31st (CITY OF LONDON) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS - SOUTHFIELDS

CO **Lt Col Linda Harrison TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) John Gibson**

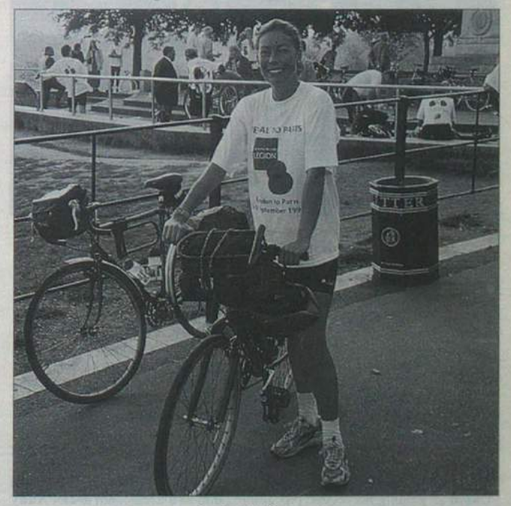
HELLOS AND GOODBYES AND THE NEWS

A number of new members to the permanent staff team have arrived in Southfields recently. So it's welcome to **WO2 (RQMS) Neil Roome** fresh from 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (207) in Hohne. We all hope that you settle quickly into the Regiment and your new post. Welcome also to **Sgt** 'Del' **Trotter** who has arrived from 15 Sig Regt to swell the technical ranks of the Regiment. Farewell to the QM, **Maj Ken Clark,** who is off to 21 Sig Regt. Good luck to both you and **Edna**, we all hope that you are happy in your new post. Finally farewell to the RAOWO, **WO2 (SQMS) John Woolley**, who is a casualty of SDR and therefore gets an early escape to Bicester. After the Summer break the new Training Major, **Maj Tim Cooper** and Yeoman**, WO2 (YofS) Si Tyler** were not going to allow the troops to rest on their suntans for too long so it was straight back into Trade Training and preparation for October's Brigade FTX. Meanwhile the Adjt, **Capt Mel Rayner**, got on her bike and pedalled off to Paris for Charity – some doubted whether she would find her way there, let alone her way back!

More recently a big welcome to **WO2 (SQMS) Dave Pope** who has arrived from 256 Fd Hosp (V) to take up the new post of NRPS RAOWO. We all hope that you settle down quickly and enjoy working in RHQ – good luck with **Betty** and **Thelma,** our two 'mad civvies' in the Orderly Room. Farewell to **WO2 Brenda Prater,** who leaves the Regiment after over 20 years as a serving member of the TA and nearly as many as a civilian employee. Good luck in your new post as AA at the Baird Health Centre. We all thank you for your many years of dedicated service and hope you settle quickly into your new job.

PEDAL TO PARIS 1999 – *by Capt M. J. Rayner*

Pedal to Paris is an annual 450km charity cycle ride in aid of the Royal British Legion. The ride attracts people from all walks of life, all ages and all levels of fitness. The event starts at Greenwich Park in London and four days later finishes at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. I was a willing volunteer and thus early on Thursday 2 September I found myself at Greenwich Park along with 170 other lunatics.



Capt Mel Rayner
at Greenwich Park with 450km on a bicycle yet to come!

By 1530 hrs that day, with the first 120km under my belt, I was in Dover. I can say with a degree of certainty that the hill between Folkstone and Dover is definitely not recommended for the faint hearted! The support from the Royal British Legion en route had been superb and we had been very well fed and watered to help us on our way down to the South Coast.

After a service at the Calais War Memorial the next morning, we faced a 120km ride to Abbeville. We were blessed with another day of glorious sunshine and tremendous support from the French people. After a great day cycling through lovely French countryside we enjoyed a pleasant evening in Abbeville nursing our tired limbs and numb bottoms! Day Three saw the ride to Beauvais. Once again, glorious sunshine, great support and great food (shhhhh don't tell them about all the red wine at lunchtime). The final leg on Sunday 5 September was 95km from Beauvais to Paris. Although we had been split into ability groups depending upon the speed you cycled for most of the route, as we approached central Paris everyone formed up into one massive group for the last few kilometres. All the traffic was stopped around the Arc de Triomphe to allow 170 cyclist to converge en masse at the great monument. It was a truly spectacular sight and very moving. The arrival was followed by a ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The band of the French Signals were playing, wreaths were laid and the Mayor of Paris and the Director of the Royal British Legion met many of the cyclists. We then did a spot of sightseeing on bicycle, as the next stop was the Hotel des Invalides. Getting there entailed a cycle along the Seine, past the Eiffel Tower and over Alexander III Bridge. Having loaded our bikes onto the lorries that would take them back to London, it was straight inside for medals and a delicious buffet (with a couple of glasses of Kir – well we had earned them!) After a night on the pop in Montmartre and a day of sightseeing I collapsed onto the Eurostar on Monday evening to return to London slightly more quickly than it had taken me to get to Paris.

The whole trip was a wonderful experience. The camaraderie between the cyclists had been truly amazing. The support from the British Legion and their French counterparts had been superb and even the weather had smiled on us. I would have no hesitation in recommending the trip to anyone (providing you invest in a pair of padded shorts – they were an absolute lifesaver!). It's good fun, good fitness and raises money for a good cause. I have raised £1350, so a big thank you to everyone who was pressurised into sponsoring me for the event. See you there next year!

WANDSWORTH CIVIC RECEPTION – MONDAY 29 NOVEMBER 1999

The CO, **Lt Col Linda Harrison** and the Adjt, **Capt Mel Rayner**, donned their Mess Kit to fly the Regimental flag at this year's Civic Reception at Wandsworth Town Hall. The evening marks the presentation of Civic Awards to those members of the community who have made a major contribution to community life. The evening was a grand affair with the Mayor, **Cllr Chief Mrs Lola Ayonride**, presiding. Awards were presented to a vast cross section of the community including care workers, policemen, school cleaners, leaders of the local Sikh community and yet more. The Regiment has strong ties with its local borough and an evening such as this is an ideal opportunity to raise the profile and forge greater links.

The CO and Adjt with The Mayor of Wandsworth and CO of the London Regiment (also located within the borough of Wandsworth), Lt Col Easton

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON - SOUTHFIELDS TAC

Sqn Comd	**Capt D. Parr**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Stanton**

PROMOTIONS

The whole Squadron would like to congratulate **Pte** 'Ebok' **Okon,** the Sqn recruiting clerk and **Sig Chris Cox** of Delta Tp on their well earned promotion to **LCpl**. Well done both of you and keep up the good work. **LCpl Jo** 'small one' **Ogle**, also of Delta Tp, has two reasons to celebrate, not only has she been promoted, but she has also got married to **Cpl Steve Hook** of 238 Sig Sqn – congratulations to the new **Mrs Cpl Hook.** To complete the Delta Tp hat-trick, congratulations to Tp OC, **2Lt Paul Ukpai** on gaining his second pip. Joining him as a Lieutenant is **2Lt Andy Lowther,** OC RRTT, who was promoted by the CO on Exercise at Pirbright at the beginning of October. **SSgt Keith** 'Tiffy' **Finnemore** was

Cpl Hook (238 Sig Sqn) and the new Mrs Hook on their big day!

selected for promotion to WO2 and moves to 30 Sig Regt to take up the post of ASM. We held his leaving lunch on 19 November which started with him putting money behind the bar (a wonder in itself) in the Sergeants' Mess at Southfields. After presentations and speeches it was time to adjourn to Footlights Restaurant in Wimbledon for a meal and a few 'cheekies'. The permanent staff then proceeded to visit a number of other establishments to ensure that the other Public Houses in Wimbledon did not feel hard done by!! Much laughter ensued – thank you to the RSM and the RQ for providing the entertainment!! A great afternoon was had by all – it was not followed by quite such a great morning though!! We will all miss 'Tiffy' as he has done a great job within the Regiment. We wish him, **Liz** and the kids all the best at 30 Sig Regt in Bramcote.

WO1 (RSM) John Gibson presents WO2 (AQMS) Keith Finnemore with his leaving present from the Regiment

More recently there were promotions for **Sgts Cox** and **Becks Strickland**. Congratulations to **LCpl** 'Mac' **MacKay** on successfully completing the TA PTI's Course.

FAREWELLS

The Squadron and Regiment would like to bid a fond farewell to **WO2 (RQMS) George Coffin**. He will be sadly missed by the whole Squadron. We wish **George, Andrea, George Jnr** and **Patrick** all the very best at Warminster and hope you keep in touch.

ARRIVALS

Welcome to **WO2 (RQMS) Neil Roome** and his family from Hohne. No more tax free cars and drinks. However, we hope your tour is an enjoyable one. Also the Squadron is pleased to announce the arrival of **Sgt James Alderson** posted in from SHAPE in Mons, Belgium. Hope you have a good tour and enjoy your time in London. Welcome to the new 'Tiffy', **SSgt (Art Veh) Wilson.** We all hope that you settle in quickly and enjoy your tour.

PERMANENT STAFF ADVENTURE TRAINING

It was time for a well earned break for the permanent staff and to the joy of the workforce the RSM, **WO1 (RSM) John Gibson** organised a week of 'Adventure Trg' at Tregantle Fort near Plymouth in Cornwall. To aid the planning of the activities, one of HQ Sqn's TA soldiers, **Sig** 'Jethro' **Rowles** volunteered his services as local tour guide and driver. He totally impressed everyone with his local knowledge. The only problem was that 'Jethro' apparently passed his driving test in a tornado aircraft, either that or he thought he was driving one! However, he was a great asset all week and many thanks go to him. As well as the occasional trip to Plymouth and Newquay, to integrate with the indigenous population and their culture of

course, various arduous activities did take place. Whilst the Adjt took to the hills on her mountain bike, the 'boys' headed for Looe on the coast for a golf competition. This gave the Quartermaster, **Maj Ken Clark** the chance to dish out a few lessons. One of the highlights was a fantastic day out Go-Karting, which was organised by the CO's driver, **LCpl** 'Disco' **Dave Wynne.**

Cpl Steve Taylor, WO1 (RSM) John Gibson and SSgt Keith 'Tiffy' Finnemore observe the dubious activities on the race track!

The RSM also gathered the troops for a spot of sea fishing. Most of the permanent staff mastered the sailing issue and caught some excellent fish. However, **SSgts Craig Bruce** and 'Dez' **Eldridge** (more commonly known as the 'Brothers Vom') had a little trouble on the ocean waves. The whole trip was a storming success and thoroughly enjoyed by all those who attended.

TRADE TRAINING WEEK

The Trade Course took place at Bramley Training Camp near Reading and lasted for ten days. 23 students were attempting to gain their Class 3 and Class 2 Tele Op (TG) trade status. The course was run by **WO2 (YofS) Si Tyler** and he was ably assisted by the following instructors PSIs, **SSgts Craig Bruce, Alfie Kirkham, Wullie Loch** and 'Dez' **Eldridge: Sgt Cox** HQ Sqn, **Sgt Manns,** 56 Sig Sqn, **LCpl Butler** 56 Sig Sqn, **Sgt Dowds** 56 Sig Sqn. All the students worked extremely hard and achieved their aim. The Class 2 Course were put through their paces as COMMCEN supervisors. Both courses had their minds blown away with Joint Message Handling (JMH) procedures. **LCpl Chris Cox,** HQ Sqn, grasped the COMMCEN side of life easily ..... NOT!!, but none the less passed the qualification with ease. A very worthy note of thanks to **Sgt Steve Howells** (recently promoted) for his culinary creations during the course, excellent and definitely appreciated.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON CHRISTMAS PARTY

The planning of this year's party was underway early in the year in the form of **Cpl** 'Small One' **Hook** (nee Ogle) writing around 100 letters to every company she could think of in and around the London area. This produced excellent results, with great prizes for the Squadron raffle. The choice was made to move the venue of the party out of the TAC and we ended up on a 'Thames River Cruise Ship' sailing from Lambeth Pier. Members of the Squadron arrived at the pier and to their surprise found that the ship was a very stylish affair. The buffet for the evening was expertly produced by our very own happy, smiling chef, **LCpl** 'Babs' **Cameron**. It was an excellent spread, thanks 'Babs.' The only, initial flaw in the plan was that the boat was 'positively baltic', as quoted by our ever truthful **SSgt Craig Bruce BEM**. This was soon rectified by **Sgt Becs Strickland**, as she led 'the masses' upstairs onto the dance floor, where **LCpl Chris Cox** was situated ready to give a quick 'TP' on how not to dance to attract the opposite sex. Overall the event was a great success and a big thank you goes out to all concerned, especially to **Cpl Jo Hook** who did us proud, well done and we look forward to next year's party.

The permanent staff relaxing over a sumptuous Christmas lunch

PERMANENT STAFF CHRISTMAS LUNCH

As well as all the other parties going on, it was time for our old friend **Colin** 'Sgt Maj' **Wilson**, the AO here at Southfields, to put his organisational skills to the test yet again and arrange the permanent staff Christmas lunch. With the venue arranged, the transport booked four weeks in advance and in triplicate with the ever 'user friendly' MT, all that was left was the extraction of both civilian and military personnel alike from the Sgts' Mess bar. Easier said than done!! As expected, **Colin** planned every detail to perfection. The only factor he overlooked was that he hadn't allowed for the fact that after three drinks **Betty** (the mad civvy from the orderly room) had an urge to kiss all male members of the permanent staff at least three times.....an hour, well done **Betty**! The lunch was very much enjoyed by the Commanding Officer and all of her permanent staff and all concerned would to thank **Colin** for his fantastic efforts.

REGIMENTAL RUGBY MATCH VS BRIGHTON UNIVERSITY SUNDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2000

On a typical British Sunday morning the Regimental rugby team led by **Lt** 'Of course I've sorted the admin' **Keiron Francis**, departed Southfields for the South-coast and a challenge match against Brighton University. The match had been arranged between **Sig** 'I'm a Hooker' **Bishop** and **Sig** 'I'm a Hooker as well' **Hulin**. They are both students at Brighton University and for this match were on opposing sides. The only thing marking this otherwise typical day apart from any other was the fact that it was after the Regimental 'Burns Night Supper'. Despite hard evidence, there is no truth in the rumour that the RQMS came directly from the Mess to the pitch (honest). The team (who by some strange coincidence were mostly called Gareth) would like to thank those guests of the Burns Night who allowed themselves to be pressed at short notice to play. If only the recruiting team could use the same tactics. The CO came down from London to watch the game along with our visitor from the 111th US Sig Bn. Apparently they stopped for an exotic fish and chip lunch on Brighton Pier on route to the match - we know how to show people a good time at 31!!

The match was played in less than ideal conditions. The Referee after turning up, promptly left again due to some misunderstanding caused by Eastbourne RUFC who denied all knowledge of a game being played on their pitch. The two teams agreed to Referee one half each. Both teams displayed adventurous play and willingness to run the ball. The Regiment playing down hill and at full strength finished the first half 12-0 up. The second half, however, was played uphill with the Regiment providing **WO2 (YofS)** 'I'm a coach' **Tyler** as referee (wasn't that because you were injured though YofS?). The downhill momentum soon brought Brighton level with the Regiment struggling to hold their own. An injury to **Cpl** 'Sid' **Aluhwalia**, removed the parity between teams and Brighton Uni ran in two more tries converting one to end the game 24 - 12 winners. Both teams retired to TAC Eastbourne tired and bruised for after game refreshments and tea provided by the able talents of **Sgt Steve Howells** RLC. The event was an outstanding success and the Regiment is looking forward to a return fixture in the not too distant future. Whether or not the Trg Maj, **Maj** 'Nice but' **Cooper** will play again is another question, displaying only one black eye on Sunday night, the permanent staff were surprised to see both eyes blacked by Tuesday morning. This leads us to ask whether he actually asked SO1 Domestic if she minded him playing in the first place!!

41 (PLK) SIGNAL SQUADRON – COULSDON TAC

Sqn Comd	**Maj Baker**
SSM	**WO2 Watson**

HELLOS, GOODBYES AND CONGRATULATIONS

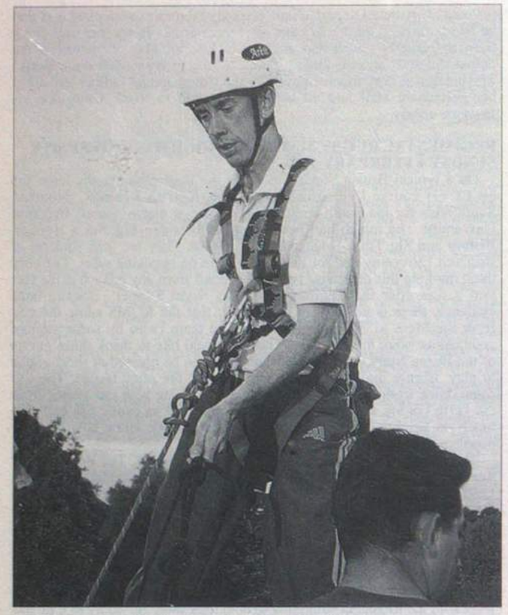
We welcome back **Capt Steven Ong,** who has returned to the Squadron from his role as Ops Offr at RHQ. **Capt Ong**, a familiar face around 41 (PLK) Sig Sqn, has been appointed Sqn 2IC. **Capt John Symonds** has also returned to the Squadron, after a tour in Bosnia. He returns to take up the position of Troop Commander of J Troop. We also welcome **Sig Harris**, who is ex RLC and has now decided to rejoin the TA; **Pte Houbé,** who has transferred into the Squadron from the PWRR, and takes up a role as Squadron Medic; and **Rfn Burbidge**, an ex Royal Green Jacket, who is in the process of re-enlisting into the TA. We hope all will be very happy in the Squadron.

The Squadron welcomes a new OC, **Maj Toby Lankester**, who took over the running of the Squadron in January. He has already arranged our first adventure training weekend, so we think he's good news....Anybody who approves of skiing and kyaking has got to be good for Squadron retention! It was with sad faces that we dined out the old OC, **Maj Steve Baker**. His poor bar jokes and sense of humour will be sadly missed, but at least the Squadron consumption of diet cokes will go down. It was not until after he left that we discovered that he had got engaged to long-time girlfriend **Cathrine**, so we take this opportunity to offer them our congratulations. We also wish **Lt Paul Owen** good luck. He started a new job in Worcestershire this year. We hope to see him now and again on exercise, but wish him well back in his home territory.

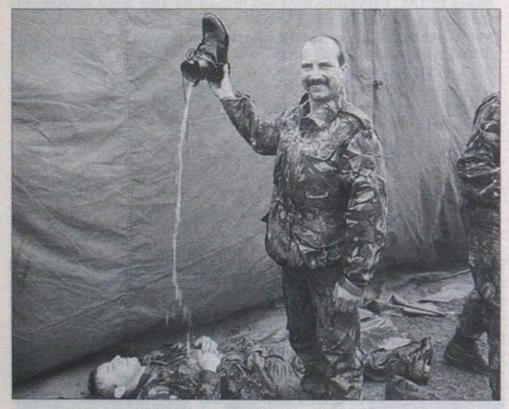
PROMOTIONS AND CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations go to **SSgt Len** 'Nobby' **Clark**, who was awarded the QVRM in the New Year's Honours List. He went to the palace in March to collect his medal, and we are sure that it was a splendid day for both him and his wife. See the next edition of *The WIRE* for photos! **SSgt Clark** served for over 40 years in the TA. He began his military career with National Service and never looked back. He originally joined 41 Signal Regiment, before we became 41 (PLK) Signal Squadron (and part of 31 Signal Regiment) so he has seen quite a few changes in his time. Congratulations are also due to our PSI Tech, **Sgt Mark** 'Del Boy' **Trotter**, whose wife **Louise** is pregnant. We wish them all the best and look forward to calling him, 'Daddy.'

Well done to **2Lt Debbie Speakman,** who is now the proud owner of a second pip! Congratulations to **SSgt Bob Stanton** and **Sgt Ian Mackay** who have both been promoted. I'm sure the Sergeants' Mess will be a more interesting place due to **Sgt Mackay**'s additional presence.



Newly promoted SSgt Bob Stanton
deep in thought as he plunges over the edge!!



Newly promoted Sgt Ian Mackay
not looking nearly so apprehensive!!

Congratulations too to **LCpl** 'Shakespeare' **Presley** who has just had a poem published in a compilation book. Most of us are more familiar with **LCpl Presley**'s cooking skills, rather than his poetic ones, but well done! Is this the beginning of a whole new career we ask ourselves? Congratulations are also due to **Cpl May** and **LCpl Pearl Sethna** who both successfully completed all modules for their Class 2 Trades Course. Well done to both of you.

SSGT CLARKE'S FAREWELL

The Squadron bade farewell to **SSgt Clarke** in the first weekend of September. He was dined out in the field by the Squadron whilst on exercise in Meredith Woods, Kent. We had spent the day testing our skills in vehicle recovery, anti-ambush drills and driver training, we then took part in a night navigation exercise before returning for a well deserved meal and celebration. **SSgt Clarke** began his military career as a cadet in Hammersmith, and from there joined 41 (PLK) Sig Regt (as we used to be). He served for over 30 years in the QM's department, during which time 41 (PLK) Sig Regt became 41 (PLK) Sig Sqn – and part of 31 Sig Regt. **SSgt Clarke** returned to 41 (PLK) Sig Sqn as pay clerk three years ago, and will be greatly missed by all in the Squadron. He was presented with a brandy decanter and set of goblets, a swanky Squadron sweatshirt, and a cut glass flower vase for **Mrs Clarke**. The Squadron then listened whilst he reminisced about life in the Squadron (albeit with a few interruptions from hecklers at the back). We all wish him the very best for the future.

OFFICERS' MESS DINNER

The other highlight of the social calendar for the month of September was an Officers' Mess Dinner at Mercury House, the Duke of York's Headquarters on Saturday 11 September, Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig Hughes** and the SOinC A), **Brig Burton** were the guests of honour. Prior to the Dinner, the SOinC (A) presented **Maj Mike Jackson** with his Territorial Decoration.

SOinC (A) presents Maj Jackson with his TD

After the dinner came the speeches and presentations. **Maj Jackson** presented the CO, **Lt Col Linda Harrison** and the Regiment with a Wilkinson Sword 'Millennium Sword of Peace'. He purchased the 83rd of a limited edition, in recognition of 83 Sig Sqn, and spoke fondly of his time in the Regiment.

Maj Mike Jackson presents the 83rd Millennium Sword
to the CO, Lt Col Linda Harrison TD

SQUADRON WEEKEND OCTOBER

The Regiment practised a deployment to a holding centre in the grounds of Stoney Castle. Troops were broken into to their CROST role manning, and exercised at Troop level. K Tp, under **Lt Beth Pollard**, established a Troop location in the Pirbright Training area and established a JOCCOMEX link with 2 Sig Sqn and HMS *Anglesey*. Meanwhile, J and N Tps deployed to Bramley, but couldn't quite get to grips with the concept of communications. They waited and waited, but didn't ever seem to quite get in touch with the rest of the Regiment. Better luck next time!

PLK REMEMBRANCE

The Squadron attended a PLK Remembrance Service at the Duke of York's Headquarters on Sunday 7 November. By tradition the Princess Louise's Kensington Association hold their Remembrance Service a week before the nation-wide ceremonies. This was the last time this Remembrance Service will be held at the Duke of York's, home to the PLK silver and memorials, which made the service a yet more moving occasion. **Sig West** read a poem and the lesson was read by the Regt 2IC, **Maj William Brown**. The Padre, **Maj David Crawley,** dedicated two Memorial Books, which have been compiled by members of the Princess

Louise's Kensington Association. These books, known as Project 2000, are a record of every grave of the soldiers from the 'The Kensington's' who died in the Second World War - 137 of them in total. They show a picture of the individual grave, and a short dedication explaining how each soldier died. Also present at the Service were the Mayor of Kensington and Chelsea, **Cllr Mrs Ian Fraser**, the President of the PLK Association (also a former CO of the Regiment) **Col Keith Bruce-Smith**, and members of the PLK Association. All stayed for a curry lunch in the bar afterwards.

COULSDON REMEMBRANCE PARADE

The following Sunday the Squadron marched to the local church at Old Coulsdon for a Service, followed by a short Service of Remembrance and the two minutes silence at the War Memorial outside the church. Sqn 2IC, **Capt Steven Ong,** led the parade to the church and back. Afterwards members of the Squadron and their families enjoyed a curry lunch in the bar. **Lt Debs Speakman** represented the Squadron in Kensington and Chelsea on 14 November. She laid a wreath at the War Memorial on Kensington High Street on behalf of the Squadron and read the Affirmation, before meeting members of the borough later at Kensington Town Hall.

EXERCISE AUTUMN BELLE

Ex Autumn Belle was planned and coordinated by two members of the Squadron, **Sgt Amy McAuliffe,** and **LCpl Maria Traynor.** Soldiers from every Squadron of the Regiment deployed to HQ LAND at Wilton to take part in this HF Exercise, which by all accounts was a success, and a credit to the soldiers who ran it. Well done **Sgt McAuliffe** and **LCpl Traynor!**

HEADED FOR KOSOVO

We wish the best of luck to **Sig Phil Davy**, who left us for Chilwell, in preparation for his imminent departure to Kosovo. **Sig Davy,** a university student, who is taking time out from his studies to do this, admitted that of all his friends, his would be the most unusual place chosen to spend the Millennium. We wish him all the best, and look forward to his return to the Squadron next year.

CHRISTMAS BALL

The dynamic duo of **Cpl Kerry McAuliffe** and **LCpl Maria Traynor** excelled themselves once again by arranging yet another successful Christmas Ball, on Saturday 18 December. They organised a superb evening, but quite how they got it to snow as well, is a mystery! I think several people wondered what they had been drinking when they came out of the drill hall, to find inches of snow on the ground outside. Just how much alcohol was there in that Christmas pudding?

Sgt 'Trav' Travis, Cpl Ian Byrne, WO2 (RQMS) Dean Clark
and Sgt Traynor enjoying the 41 Christmas Bash!

First prize in the Raffle appropriately went to **Cpl Kerry McAuliffe** (did she rig it?) who won a day's motor racing at Brands Hatch. **Sgt Brian** 'Cuddles' **Traynor** won a teddy bear almost as big as he is (could have been his twin brother!), whilst **LCpl Alan** 'Ladies man' **Bryan** won dinner for two in the raffle, and also won the unofficial prize for managing to bring along the most female guests. Other raffle prizes included a trip to the local beauty parlour, and National Lottery Scratch Cards (although if anyone did mange to win a million they've certainly kept it quiet). **Cpl Simon** 'Jim Davidson' **May** was our evening's compere, and the evening finished with a disco until the small hours.

NEW YEARS EVE IN COULSDON

Why did so many people pay so much money to go off and do exotic things (those who weren't working of course) when the liveliest party of the Millennium took place in the JRs bar in Coulsdon? This was the party that everyone was talking about! Where better to celebrate the new Millennium than the TAC at Coulsdon? Nobody can say we didn't see in the New Century in style!

SERGEANTS' MESS CHRISTMAS BALL

Saturday 4 December saw huge amounts of adrenaline flying around the Swallow Hotel in Bournemouth, where the Sergeants held their Sergeants' Mess Christmas Dinner, and what a night! The entertainment began with a string quartet playing on arrival. A magician impressed all with his tricks (I bet he couldn't teach **Sgt** 'Trav' **Travis** a trick or two!) A band played after the meal, a disco took over until dawn, and for those still standing, a Champagne breakfast was served the next morning. The guests of honour included the Hon Col, **Maj Gen Bill Robins**, and his wife **Kathy**, the CO, **Lt Col Linda Harrison** and her 'wife' **Alisdair**, and the Supervising Officer, **Capt Paul Samways**. Superb prizes were given away during the course of the evening, including a ride on the Millennium Wheel, with dinner at the Oxo Tower; a ride on the Orient Express won by **Foreman Maurice Byrne**; a helicopter ride along the Thames; a day's tank driving (won by **Foreman Ray White** - very useful for a Foreman in the Royal Signals) and a day at the Brands Hatch racing circuit, racing motor vehicles (pretty much the way most Sergeants drive anyway!). There could be some very interesting stories in the Sergeants' Mess bar over the next few months.

OFFICERS' AND SERGEANTS' MESS BURNS NIGHT SUPPER SATURDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2000

WO2 (FofS) Jamie Harper (proud owner of his new sparkley NATO Kosovo Medal) with his wife Jacqueline and his Mum Jenny at the Regimental Burns Night Supper - nice Tartan chaps!

Officers and Sergeants from the Regiment celebrated 'Burns Night' again this year with a dinner at RHQ. This event has become one of the social highlights of the Regimental Calendar, and the night certainly lived up to expectations. Before the dinner began, a couple of presentations were made by D Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Col Lawrence**. Firstly, **WO2 (FofS) Jamie Harper** was presented with his miniature NATO Medal Clasp Kosovo (yes FofS you will be getting your No 2's on to receive the main medal). The occasion was made more special for the FofS as his wife **Jacqueline** and Mother and Father were all present. Secondly **Capt Sarah Street** was awarded TA Honours for representing the TA at the inter services orienteering match. It was then on with the proceedings.

The CO and senior guests were piped into the dining room by **SSgt Ian Harrison**, the Regimental Pipe Major,who piped superbly. **Mr Alisdair Harrison**, the CO's 'wife', addressed the Haggis in flamboyant style. The meal, which was fantastic, was followed by a number of speeches. **Mr Colin Wilson** read the Immortal Memory in his typical eloquent style. It was then the turn of **SSgt Mick Johnson**. He recited a poem entitled 'Address to the Unco Guid or the Rigidly Righteous'. He performed all the versus in very creditable 'Jockinese' without reference to any notes - Staff we are not worthy, you were fantastic! **SSgt Johnson** is always whining about the fact that his fellow PSI, **SSgt Craig Bruce**, always gets his photo in *The WIRE*. Well Staff, I don't have a photo of you from the Burns Supper, but I do have one of you showing the world how not to dance with your wife **Sue** at another Mess function….

SSgt Mick 'Twinkle Toes' Johnson dancing the night away
with his wife Sue - go for it Staff!!

Back to the Supper, **WO2 (FofS) Jamie Harper** proposed the Toast to the Lassies, to which **Lt Beth Pollard** ably replied. Well done to both of you. **SSgt Craig Bruce** (is there no getting away from this man!!) entertained us with Burn's Ode to a Soldier - sorry Staff no photos! The meal was followed by a Ceilidh and a disco, where various members of the Mess showed off their dancing prowess! Once all the dancing was over it was time to move up to the Sgts' Mess and carry on the motion. Rumour control has it that most of the PSIs didn't leave until about 0600hrs Sunday morning! Other guests for the evening included **Maj Steve Davies**, the Ops Offr of the 111th US Sig Bn, our sister Battalion in the States, **Mr Tim Wood**, the rep from our sponsoring Livery Company and **Col Keith Bruce Smith.** A fantastic evening, and one to put in the diaries for next year!

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS) – EASTBOURNE

Sqn Comd	**Maj Brian Howe**
SSM	**WO2 Godden**

NEWS, HELLOS, GOODBYES AND PROMOTIONS

We have said 'Goodbye' to **SSgt Hattemore**, who after 26 years in the TA, has hung up his beret and now stands on the other side of the bar on a Tuesday night, selling the beer rather than consuming it. (Oh, I forgot, he is tetotal anyway!) Congratulations to **2Lt Keiron Francis** on gaining his promotion to Lieutenant. We have also enjoyed the dining out of **Capt Jackie Blake**, **WO1 Phil Waterhouse** and **SSgt Paul Hattemore** in Eastbourne where, once again, a marvellous spread was provided by Corporal, now **Sgt Steve Howell**. Yes, congratulations to **Sgt Howell** and **SSgts Martin Cooper** and **Chris Maginnis**, who were all recently promoted by the Lord Lieutenant of Sussex. We have welcomed **Lt Anthony** 'Aussie' **Lamb** into the Squadron and enjoyed his impression of a waiter at the Dinner Evening. (He called it his Mess Dress!)

Christmas has been and gone and we have since welcomed in the New Millennium (according to some). Sadly our expertise was not required by HQ LAND over the New Year period so Op Surity was called off and those who had volunteered suddenly had to make plans for a party instead! We sadly had to say goodbye to **Dino Constantino** just before Christmas. **Dino** had been with the Squadron for many years, initially as the REME Corporal and more recently as the civilian driver. He was also a gourmet chef, specialising in some very hot curries! His enthusiasm, willingness to help, jovial nature and loud voice will be sorely missed by all. Good luck for the future **Dino**. Hopefully by the time this article is published **Lt Antony Lamb**, our friend from down under, should be formally transferred into the Squadron and hopefully promoted to Captain so it's a welcome for this issue and a fingers crossed for the next!

EXERCISE COCKNEY JERSEY 20-22 AUGUST 1999
859/857 RADIO TROOP

Over the weekend of 20–22 August, members of 857 and 859 Radio Tps embarked on a weekend of adventurous training on the Isle of Wight. The superb Jersey Camp was to be our home for two days, whilst we cycled, walked and participated in various water sports. **Capt Sarah Streete,** OC 859 (Radio) Tp, led an advance party to set up camp early on the Friday morning. The rest of the troops followed later that evening under the auspices of **2Lt Keiron Francis,** OC 857 (Radio) Tp, and **WO2 (SSM) Kevin Godden.** The first morning comprised of mountain biking over the hills surrounding Sandown. A beautiful sunny day made the cycling even more exhilarating, but plenty of regular water breaks and the superb view kept morale high, despite the mammoth hills we had to cycle (push the bikes) up. **LCpl Jo Reader**, managed to go airborne from her bike at one point and softened her fall by landing in stinging nettles! The afternoon comprised of water-sports with lessons from a local surfing school. Only **LCpl Paul** 'Surf Dude' **Renaud** managed to stand up properly on the boards. Kayaking, Canoe Surfing and Swimming finished the afternoon off, but not before **Sgt Tim Odam** showed us what he could do on his kayak! As we were sharing the camp with the Intelligence Corps, also on Adventurous Training, we challenged them to a game of softball to encourage and build 'esprit de corps' between us. **Sgt Martin Cooper** started well for the Royal Signals by scoring a direct hit with the softball on the Int Corps bowler's leg. More fun was had as they continued to bring in new players until the team numbers stood at 15 Royal Signals – 48 Int Corp. Needless to say, we were victorious! The next morning **WO2 Jim Paine** took us on a 10km educational 'yomp' around the North West Coast with the emphasis on visiting some of the many Napoleonic Forts along the way. A visit to The 'Needles Point Battery Museum' and a continual history lesson all the way made it a very enjoyable day, before the trek home to Eastbourne.

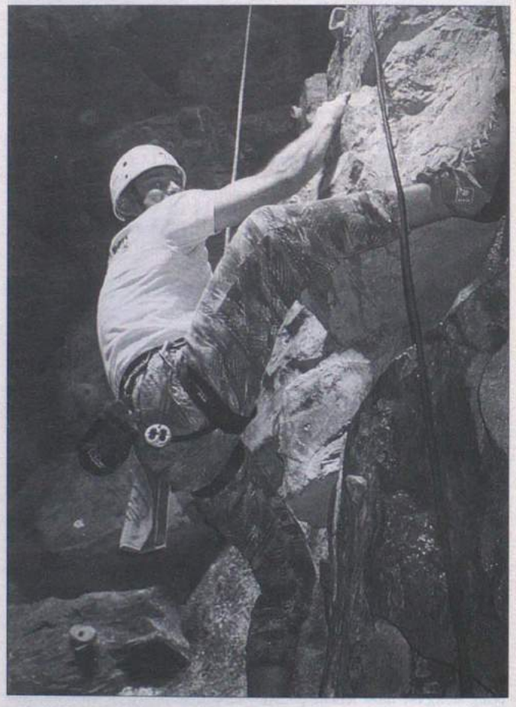
EXERCISE COCKNEY ADVENTURE 20-22 AUGUST 1999
858 SIGNAL TROOP

858 Sig Tp, fired up by their team building experiences of camp, deployed on a Troop Commander's weekend to Llangorse, near Brecon to carry out adventurous training. Llangorse Rope Centre was chosen as a base. This afforded easy access to indoor rock climbing, kayaking on the lake and the Black Mountains. **Capt Tony Potter** and his group were first to attempt the climbing package. **Sgt Dick E. Bonner** and **Sig** 'Rich' **Baldwin**, both decked out in designer climbing gear took to the face like Welsh mountain goats while others were not so sure. Kayaking provided an opportunity for character building and self development and these were clearly achieved. However, the ability to hold ones breath was a clear winner in this self development exercise.

To be fair, **WO2 (FofS) Ray White** only really developed his suntan. A barbecue, ably prepared by **LCpl Eric Gardyne** and **Sgt Steve Hall**, provided the perfect opportunity for the Troop to say farewell to **LCpl**

858 Tp on tour with a strange green visitor from 83 Sig Sqn!

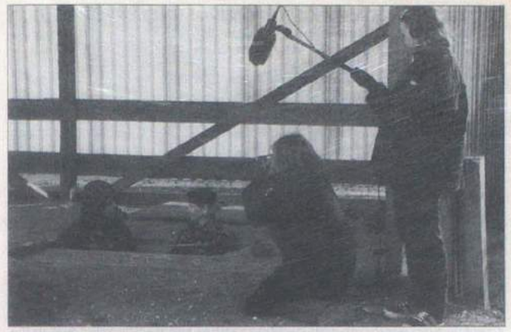
Mark Grieve who is now serving with 7 Sig Regt on FTRS for a couple of years - Good luck. The weekend concluded with a navex over the local terrain. **Sgt Chris Maginnis**'s attempts at diplomacy with a native farmer's wife have been noted. Luckily the biggest and most vicious dog was blind!



Sgt Dick Bonner opens his legs and shows his style!

BOUNTY TRAINING DAY – 6 NOVEMBER 1999

'So what makes you want to get up so early on a cold, November morning and lie on your stomach with your hands freezing, shooting at targets?' was the question posed by presenter, **Claire** while filming for **Lorraine Kelly**'s programme 'Up front with Lorraine' at the recent Bounty Training Day. A pregnant pause; can you really answer, 'The £1050'? 'Naturally, it is due to the comradeship, the sense of achievement and the skills that we learn!' Whilst this interview was going on and questions such as, 'Were you a toy boy when you were younger?' were being asked of **Capt Sarah Streete**, many other members of the Regiment were spending the day passing as many tests as possible. They shot on the range, blew into the dummy (no, not the RSM!), were gassed in the chamber and yomped the four miles across Pirbright Training Area with huge (well, they seemed like that) packs on their backs. Many also had their moment of glory when they were filmed shooting on the range or interviewed while simulating the TACFT at a snail's pace, so that the film crew could keep up! Despite the distractions, they all passed most of the tests and are one step nearer the reward in April!



Capt Sarah Steele, wearing the beret, mid interview!

LORD LIEUTENANT'S MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

The Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex, **Admiral Sir Lindsay Bryson KCB** visited the Squadron on 23 November in order to present his Meritorious Service Awards, Cadet of the Year Awards, NATO Medals and TA Efficiency Medals. One of the amusing aspects of the evening was the sight of **LCpl Paul Renaud** precariously balancing each certificate on a red cushion belonging to the PSAO, **Capt Ian Murray**! Congratulations to the following who were all presented with an award:

WO2 Jim Payne	NATO Medal (former Yugoslavia)
WO2 (FofS) Ray White	TA Efficiency Medal
SSgt Paul Hattemore	TA Efficiency Medal (2nd Clasp)
Sgt Sandra Burns	Meritorious Service Certificate
Sgt Bob Cooper	Meritorious Service Certificate
Sgt Mike Dowds	Meritorious Service Certificate

Congratulations, also to **Sgt Bob Shevels** who was awarded the Major Gilyeat Award for the Soldier of the Year at 56 Signal Squadron (V). We were proud to host many families and friends, including our Mayor and Chief Executive during the evening and they were all then invited to join us for a buffet supper.

Paul Owen who managed to extend all their overs to 15 or so balls due to a large number of wides. **Capt Paul Samways** was conveniently placed on the boundary for his fielding because it was feared that his can of beer would be knocked over at mid wicket. **Julian Carmichael**, who was clearly playing after a gap of many, many years, did not find it easy to remain in his fielding position and even harder to stop the ball! Despite the Officers' skill and expertise, they still felt that it was right and proper that they should allow the Sergeants' Mess to once again lift the trophy and so when the last ball was bowled, they were still about 30 runs short of the target.

THE SERGEANTS' PERSPECTIVE! - *by WO2 (SSM) Kevin Godden*

The opening batting partnership of **WO1 (RSM) John Gibson** and **SSgt Craig Bruce BEM** was to provide a solid foundation for the team until they were both out in the first over – several times for the RSM who was still honing his skills! Some fine batting displays from **WO2 (RQMS) George Coffin, WO2 (YofS) Simon Tyler** and **SSgt Des Eldridge** soon provided those badly needed runs which meant we had a score that the Officers would have to really chase if they were to beat us. Indeed, our target of 161 runs proved to be too big for the Officers' Team, who, despite the enthusiasm of the Captain, **Capt Sarah Streete**, were no match for the competitive and skilful players of the WOs' and Sgts' Mess. Superb close fielding by **SSgt Willie Loch** and **Sgt Graham Browning** (he stopped the balls the wicket keeper missed), and quality bowling slowed the run rate down to provide the WOs' and Sgts' Mess with another fine and well deserved victory.

ARMY ORIENTEERING CHAMPIONSHIPS

On two very cold November evenings, the Regimental Orienteers (still awaiting their brain examinations) competed in the Inter Unit and Inter Corps Orienteering Championships. The Inter Unit was held on Bramley Training Area and the male team seemed to quite enjoy spending a lot of time running around it in the dark. **SSgt Des Eldridge**, in particular, preferred staying outside with the rabbits, deer and pheasants rather than keeping warm indoors. **SSgt Neil Fisher** was on his way in and decided to dive along the empty track, completely destroying his hands and his knees. The female team, meanwhile, finished second despite starting ten minutes late, due to a technical hitch (where is **SSgt Fisher** with our control cards?) and **Capt Mel Rayner** having an ankle blow out early on. She courageously completed the course, but ended up with damaged ligaments and a rather good limp for a few weeks!!

Sgt Sandra Burns, Sgt Bob Cooper, the Lord Lieutenant of Sussex, WO2 (FofS) Ray White and Sgt Mike Dowds at the Meritorius Service Awards in Eastbourne

OFFICERS' MESS V SERGEANTS' MESS CRICKET MATCH
THE OFFICERS' PERSPECTIVE! – *by Capt Sarah Streete*

On a hot day at the beginning of September, the Officers' Mess turned out to take on the Sergeants' Mess at the Annual (ish) Cricket match at Kneller Hall. The Sergeants' Mess had been victorious at their last meeting and so the Officers were determined to correct this! The Officers started well by winning the toss and putting the Sergeants into bat. The rules, slightly altered for the occasion, meant that players batted for seven overs and lost runs each time they were out. Consequently, no one had the embarrassment of walking out to bat, only to be dispatched back to the pavilion after facing just one ball! Top scorer for the Sgts was **SSgt Des Eldridge** who hit most of the bowlers all round the ground. Top score for the Officers was the 'Extras' thanks to **Capt Dave Parr** and **Lt**

The Inter Services event consisted of a night and a day event across Ash Ranges. Due to the nature of the terrain, both were very much cross county courses, favouring the good runner (shame that is not all of us!) The Corps team of **Maj Jean Payne**, **Capt Sarah Streete** and **Cpl Rebecca Strickland** finished Fourth overall, whilst congratulations go to **Lt Linda** 'I am still young' **Davis** who finished as the winner on the U25 course.

TA v THE REGULARS

On an even colder morning, when the temperature failed to rise to 0°C (or so it seemed), **Capt Sarah Streete** and **Lt Linda Davis** represented the TA in the annual orienteering match against the Regulars. It was held on a bleak moor in Derbyshire and involved rock climbing, skiing in the

mud, paddling in the streams and running around the sheep, as well as the anticipated orienteering. Everyone was very keen to get to the finish but before achieving this, there was a 320m climb up a muddy cliff face causing many competitors to go into crawl mode! Once again, the Regular team was the victor but, nevertheless, we enjoyed the event and would like to thank our captain, **Maj Jean Payne** for organising the team.

The Team
(L-R): Lt Linda 'G' day' Davies, Capt Sarah Streete,
Maj Gaby Bushel and Maj Jean Payne

CHRISTMAS - 56 STYLE

The Squadron celebrated Christmas during a training weekend in the middle of December and it began with a Christmas Service of Carols and Readings in the bar, led by the Padre, **Maj David Crawley**. Having experimented with a different format the previous year, we returned to the popular 'bun fight' formal dinner with the Officers and Warrant Officers waiting on and everyone eating and drinking their full. As usual, the food was superb thanks to **WO2 Fred Bramble, Sgt Steve Howell** and **Sgt Bob Shevels**. The OC, **Maj Brian Howe** congratulated and thanked the Squadron for their efforts and achievements the previous year and wished everyone well over the holiday period. **Sig George**, the newest recruit, responded on behalf on the troops. This was followed with the ever popular 'joke telling' and a rendition of 'Sussex by the Sea'. It is just a great shame that no one knows the tune! Groans were heard all round at 7am the next morning when the OC and **Capt Tony Potter** woke the Squadron with the notorious gunfire, tea laced with brandy, which everyone had to taste!

TRAINING IN THE NEW YEAR

The New Year, Decade, Century, Millennium (whatever you call it!) kicked off with a Millennium weekend at Crowborough where 'fun' was defined by the Training Major, **Maj Tim Cooper** as 'wet, cold and muddy'. We had fun!! The weekend was enjoyed by all. The next bout of training was a Trade Training and Officer Training weekend. The Trade Training was held in sunny Eastbourne, although the soldiers worked so hard they had little time to stroll by the sea front or walk on the South Downs. The Officer Training took place at Southfields. The turnout was good and ranged from **OCdt Rob Wood** to a few crusty captains (AKA **Tony Potter**). They had all turned up to hear words of wisdom from the 2IC, **Maj William Brown**, the Adjutant, **Capt Mel** 'Sponsor me' **Rayner** (she is always off cycling/running in aid of something - what a good egg), Ops Offr, **Capt Guy Bewsher**, 2IC 41 Sqn, **Capt Steve Ong** and EO Offr, **Capt Steve Jones**. The subjects were diverse and interesting in the extreme - Army Doctrine, Service Writing, Health and Safety, Estimates and Orders. Everyone was duly impressed by the files and file dividers they were given, but not so impressed with their homework (distance learning). (Having seen some of the results, the Adjutant will be handing out detentions next week!! - only kidding guys, thanks for your efforts).

Sig Fisher, Sig Scott and LCpl Gardyne
proving it does take three to roll up a quad!

83 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS) CHELSEA

Sqn Comd	**Maj Julian Carmichael**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Jim McMahon**

HELLOS, GOODBYES AND PROMOTIONS

The Squadron has a number of personnel to say a fond farewell to, beginning with **Maj Mike Jackson** who commanded the Squadron for two years but has now left for pastures new. His 2IC, **Capt Guy Bewsher,** has also jumped ship to take up the reins as Ops Officer at RHQ, **Lt Andy Lowther** who has only been with us a few months has also been poached by RHQ to fill the role of OC RRTT, **WO2 (SSM) Jim McMahon** is leaving London to 'start anew' in Harrogate. We wish them all good luck in their future TA careers. We also extend a sad farewell to **SSgt** 'Dinger' **Bell** who has been with the Squadron longer than most current recruits have been in long trousers. He has now retired from the TA. A warm welcome is extended to our new OC, **Maj Julian Carmichael** and 2IC, **Capt Alan Pepper**. We hope they enjoy their time with us. The Squadron would like to extend a warm welcome to **SSgt Bob Stevenson** who took over the reins as our A/SSM. Having transferred from the Armoured Corps, we are gently introducing him to radios and familiarising him to the ways of the world in a Signals unit.

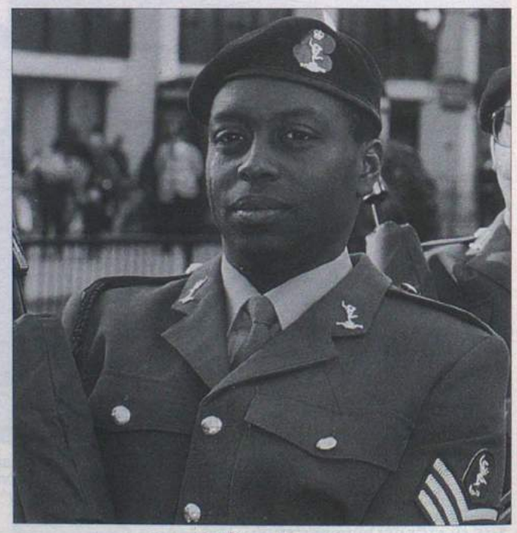
Congratulations to all those promoted on this year's camp. They are as follows **Capt Liz Fitzpatrick, Cpl Martin Bell, LCpl Bobby Donner, LCpl Robert Leyland** and **LCpl Tia Snell** who was presented with her tape whilst on attachment in America. Congratulations also to **WO2 (SSM) Bob Stephenson** and **Cpl Ian** 'Baby' **Byrne** on their recent promotions.

DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER'S CUP

83 Sig Sqn (V) excelled themselves once again by walking away from this years mil skills competition with the 'Best Section' and 'Best Squadron' Trophies. The competition was carried out over one day and involved a number of stands. The stands were judged on speed, fitness, initiative and marksmanship. A sense of humour was also essential as teams waded across a field in flippers and hung from a rope, which didn't quite reach the finish line. **Sig Knight** proved the most buoyant of the team as he and his kit sank like a stone during a simulated river crossing. The 'A' Team led by **Capt Dave Thomas** was a team of whippets, managing to get the fastest time on the forced march and the assault course. The 'B' Team led by **Capt Liz Fitzpatrick** came a close Second on the March (beaten by only 33 seconds!!) Well done to all those who took part and to those who supported the teams.

THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW – 13 OCTOBER 1999

A contingent from 31 Sig Regt (V) and the University of London Officer Training Corps made up the Guard of Honour at this year's Lord Mayor's Show in honour of **The Rt Hon, The Lord Mayor, Alderman Clive Martin, OBE TD DL**.



Sgt Dave Alleyne
83 Sig Sqn on Parade at the Lord Mayor's Show 99

The Lord Mayor's Show is the world's largest unrehearsed procession, a celebration through London to mark the beginning of the Lord Mayor's term in office. This year's theme was 'The Best in Britain' and all proceeds went to Dr Barnardo's. The Guard of Honour comprised 38 OR's and OCdts with the Parade Commander being 83 Sig Sqn's **Capt Liz FitzPatrick**. A very successful parade if you didn't mind missing the footy (England v Scotland!) and putting up with nosebags ..... so who can't count then!

The Lord Mayor of London and Cpl Bell of 83 Sig Sqn (V)

TAVRA OPEN DAY - DUKE OF YORK'S HQ
30 OCTOBER 1999

Well done to **Cpl Sid Ahluwalia** who headed up a professionally presented recruiting drive at the Duke of York's annual TA Recruiting Day. Two stands attracted the attention of the public and the promoting of the R SIGNALS began. The display of a Radio Det, Lanward Det and Euromux Equipment from 36 Sig Regt (V) drew many enquiries with over 30 names taken and the promise of follow up visits to drill nights.

CHRISTMAS PARTY
LAST BASH AT THE DUKE OF YORK'S

Cpl Jay Eastwood organised an outstanding Christmas party to see out our last days at the Duke of York's Headquarters and her hard work was much appreciated by all. It was an evening of much merriment, drinking and dancing. The night was a huge success with over 80 party goers in attendance, many of whom made it to the 6am close. The Squadron seized the opportunity to say goodbye to a number of 'old favourites' - **WO2 (SSM) Jim** 'Silver Fox' **McMahon, Maj Mike Jackson, SSgt** 'Dinger' **Bell** and **WO2 Brenda Prater**. We wish them luck in their future endeavours. Many tears were obviously shed at the fact that this was the last party at the D of Y, roll on the first at White City!

MILLENNIUM WEEKEND CROWBOROUGH
15-17 JANUARY 2000

The Squadron and the Regiment were out in force over the weekend of 15-17 January 2000, in order to support a Regimental Millennium extravaganza. The CO, **Lt Col Linda Harrison,** had tasked her permanent staff with arranging a 'weekend to be remembered'. It kicked off with the Regiment converging on Crowborough Training Camp where they were greeted by the Trg Maj, **Maj Tim Cooper** who, though accused of wasting good Friday night drinking time, insisted on allocating all personnel to teams. A leisurely 8am breakfast (the RSM drew a line at it being served in bed) led into the day's activities. This consisted of ten stands that were cleverly designed to inflict maximum amounts of cold water, dirt and wind chill factor on every competitor. There were also a few cuts and bruises thrown in for good measure. The favourites by popular vote were 'Resupply', 'Prisoner Escape' and the 'Assault Course - with a difference'. They involved moving heavy kit along a river which was strewn with obstacles, walking blindfolded through a wood, and carrying eggs over an assault course.

WO2 Rat White demonstrating the dismount
from the abseiling stand with the assistance of
NRPS SSgt 'Old as the hills' John Mackins

Capt Dave Parr's Team reigned victoriously beating **Capt Liz FitzPatrick**'s Team by that all important one point - WELL DONE to all those who took part and those who organised stands. After a short break for personal admin the Officers enjoyed the company of the Seniors in their Mess for a few drinks before joining the rest of the Regiment for a smoker. The Squadrons did themselves proud with fine examples of both acting and singing talents. It was agreed that PSI **SSgt** 'Dez' **Eldridge** has missed his calling to the stage. A few Officers and Seniors were in for a rough ride, but most escaped relatively unscathed as nothing 'career limiting' was actually said. We are hoping though that the YofS might take the hint and start producing slightly shorter admin instructions! **LCpl Pearl Sethna** (of 41 Sig Sqn) led a particularly amusing Kangaroo Court for **Sgt Matt Cahill**, who was somewhat ineptly defended by his supposed mate **Sgt Dave Alleyne**. We are also keen to find out exactly what **Cpl Payne** of the LAD expected the AQMS, **WO2 Andre Scrivener** to do with that banana?! After the smoker, the tone for the evening was set by **SSgt Dez Eldridge** and the Adjt, **Capt Mel Rayner** when they were cast as opponents in a Sumo Wrestling competition. I'm not actually sure who came off best, but it was rumoured that 'the PSI was throwing the Adjt around like she was a muppet' - yes 41 Sqn, we do read your Squadron rag! The night then flowed with dancing and 'refreshments' into the small hours. A big thank you to everyone who organised the event, what a night!!

Unfortunately a great night is invariably followed by a bad morning, made even worse by a PT session which was organised for 7.17am. Having gathered our bodies, it was time to gather our thoughts as the Padre led a service of reflection. The weekend ended with a traditional round of potted sports. Varying degrees of skill were displayed on the football pitch, hockey pitch, tug of war and volleyball court. Great fun was had by all and the weekend had been a tremendous success. There was a general consensus that all training weekends should be like this, however, the CO and Trg Maj felt that there is such a thing as too much fun!! Shame!

33rd SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

42 (CITY OF MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd	**Maj I. G. Kelly TD** KINGS
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) G. Ward**

CLASS THREE TRADE TRAINING CAMP - WHITBURN

A trade training camp was held at Whitburn over the period 22 January - 6 February 2000 for initial class three training in all R Signals trades. For those of you who have never experienced the delights of Whitburn, it is situated between Sunderland and South Shields on the Northumberland coast. The chilly North Sea can be seen immediately behind the firing butts on the ranges and it is a great place for bracing early morning runs along the sea front (that is unless you have consumed too much of the local brew the night before). Several members of the Squadron joined others from the Regiment, and some guest attendees from 60 Sig Sqn in Aylesbury, to attend this fifteen day camp. **Sgt Marcus Rashid** (ex Kings) and **Sig Bill Staples** (ex Queens Lancs) had a go at the technicians course. **Sgt Marcus Rashid** took it in his stride while **Sig Bill Staples** decided that it was all too difficult and opted to have a go at the officer selection instead (Looks like the secret is out)!!

Cpl Brent Jefferson (rear) awaits his turn
to come to grips with the 3.5 KVA Onan generator while.
(L-R): Cpl Roman Marczak, Sig John Schofield and a member of
60 Sig Sqn are already bored with the whole thing

Cpl 'I have finally made my mind up' **Brent Jefferson**, ex RMP, ex REME and now R Signals, headed the driver electrician course with **Cpl Roman Marczak** (ex RMP) and **Sig John Schofield** (Manchester University student) to keep him company. On the Tele Op RR course, **Sig Paul Winch** and **Sig Wesley Rodgers** did extremely well and can now blow up a 40ft Clark mast with the best of them. All in all, the camp proved a great success, and we look forward to the next one in June this year.

ROYAL SIGNALS INSPECTION TEAM (RSIT)

No sooner had the excitement of the Christmas and Millennium period died down, when we were faced with the sobering thought that the dreaded RSIT inspection was almost upon us. To be fair, we had been given plenty of notice but, as with many things, distance had provided an illusion of comfort. Our Foreman of Signals, **SSgt** 'Gazza' **Clapham**, had been overheard muttering on about this, whilst staring moodily into his beer glass, during the many functions over the festive season. However, a cunning plan had been hatched by the technical brains of the Regiment to thwart the best 'nit-picking' efforts of the RSIT team. The regular technicians, including the Squadron Foreman, were to be centralised to enable them to descend on the relevant Squadron prior to the inspection and ensure that all was well. This plan appeared to have worked, judging by the positive comments from the RSIT team members on the day, and the large turnout of TA personnel who were buzzing around their various comms vehicles with a confident and optimistic attitude. It is hoped that this euphoria will not be punctured when the report eventually arrives, and that the boys from Corsham, led by **Capt Marcus Sullivan** and **FOS Andy Marston-Weston**, will have been suitably impressed.

SSgt (FofS) 'Gazza' Clapham,
wondering whether a swift blow from the hammer
might speed up the RSIT prep by
LCpl Sue Heaps and LCpl 'Stew' Green

POTENTIAL OFFICER SELECTION WEEKEND

To assist in meeting the Officer recruitment target for the Regiment, a potential officer selection weekend was held at Holcombe Moor Training Camp, North of Bury, over the weekend 4-6 February 2000. 42 Sig Sqn provided five potential officers as well as being tasked to provide the admin support. The event was organised by the Regt 2IC, **Maj John Miller**, and the potential officers were put through a demanding programme of command tasks, group discussions, essay writing, general knowledge, exercise planning and physical fitness. They became more than familiar with the famous Krypton Factor assault course and have still got the bruises to prove it. They were chased over this by the unfortunately named **Cpl Joy**, who is a regular Para trained PTI attached to 42 Sqn from 216 Air Assault Sig Sqn, based in Colchester and who proved invaluable as a member of the DS staff.

Potential Officers flanked by Cpl Joy and the RSM,
WO1 Rod Cowan. Sig Gibbons, Sig Staples, LCpl Pennington,
Sig Sawyer, Sig Doherty, Sig Gee and Sig Donnelly

OCdt Charles Vincent (DS),
shaking his head as another master plan falls short

Finally, as we go to press, the Squadron looks forward to four days skiing in the Cairngorms next week. Our Sqn 2IC, **Capt Dave Titheridge**, leads a Regimental expedition to the Rocky Mountains for two weeks in March. We have a stocktaking board for a hand-over of Sqn Comd's shortly. We are being inspected by the Investment in People Team on the same evening as we have a 'Bring a Boss' night. Last, but by no means least, we have a Regimental Comms Exercise to warm us up for the Brigade FTX, Ex Spring Eagle. Who says life in the TA is dull!!!

35 (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

XXXV

CO **Lt Col S. J. Potter, TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) P. Marshall**

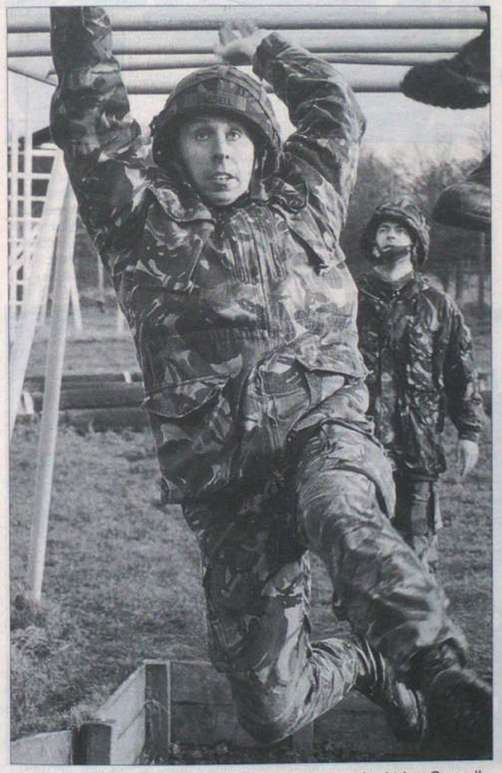
EXERCISE SILVER OUTLOOK

On Saturday 15 January I found myself standing outside the entrance of Anzio Camp near Leek surrounded by the early morning mist. It was cold, the weather was miserable and in my discomfort, so was I. As my mind wandered and I looked around trying to probe through the mist in an effort to recognise some useful landmark or friendly face, I allowed myself a fleeting thought of where I would rather be and who I would like to put in my place. However, as the sun began to break down the mist, I glimpsed the beauty of the Staffordshire Moors and the Peak District beyond. Then it dawned on me that Leek was one of the many towns and cities that provided the historical 'homes fit for heroes' following the Great War. Confronted by the ghosts of the past, this poignant thought brought me crashing down to earth and put my own feelings firmly into perspective and my gloomy thoughts dissipated as quickly as the haze. For a while at least it became noticeably warmer and my own spirits were revived, but perhaps this was merely because I was feeling much more positive about the weekend ahead and more importantly about myself, but I digress. Ex Silver Outlook was a well-planned weekend exercise that was designed primarily to address the management and leadership skills of all Regimental Officers and SNCOs. It also provided the new CO, **Lt Col Stephen Potter**, an ideal opportunity to meet most of his senior staff and

to communicate his vision and philosophy for the future. 'Quality not Quantity' was the message that came firmly across, which had to be combined with style, good leadership and effective but manageable training programmes. The way ahead was firmly set and established 'under provide and over deliver' but its success now very much depends on this important message and principal reaching all ranks throughout the Regiment. How this is achieved is now down to each Squadron and the CO emphasised the importance of C2 – communication and commitment - to reinforce his message.

The weekend itself opened with a series of important briefings from the CO and his Training Team. These were combined with a series of syndicate tasks that were designed to reflect and address current training, manning and equipment problems. Syndicates were tasked to tackle these areas and to basically come up with some new ideas based on old themes.

On the second day nominated syndicate members had to present their master plans and many humorous analogies were delivered to reinforce messages even though some rebounded remorsefully on their hosts. My own particular favourite was the fireman's shiny axe parallel presented by **WO2 (FofS) Pete Stowell** and the humorous response by **WO2 Mick Clarke** stating that an axe doesn't need to be shiny for it to work! I do believe that both protagonists agreed that while we are not prepared to accept low standards, achieving high standards is difficult, so a compromise has to be reached to find an acceptable maintenance level that, with limited manpower resources, is achievable. Coming a close second was **Sgt Mick Macdonald**'s response to the news that the Regiment would soon have its own recruiting web page on the Internet. He asked, quite innocently, if it would be open only at Weekends? We even discovered during the Equal Opportunities briefing given by **Capt Dave Tarrant,** that size does really matter even if sexual orientation doesn't!



Swinging the lead - Lt Peter Ayre pretending to be Lt Ian Cassell

At this point I feel I must declare that these humorous interludes took place at the closing stages of the weekend and therefore came after the equally humorous command tasks and the assault course race between the officers and sergeants messes. Clearly the intense physical activity prior to the syndicate briefings had sharpened the minds quite effectively and removed all traces of alcohol from the social get together the night before. Much to the chagrin of the officers, those tireless warriors, the Sergeants, thrashed them soundly over the assault course and are now looking forward to the re-match next year. The command tasks provided different challenges and I just can't erase the disturbing pictures of intertwined bodies of all shapes and sizes and at all angles either dangling precariously over hedges, ditches, and oil drums, out of my mind – I'm just relieved I wasn't roped in! I am sure though that a Training Risk Assessment or Law exists to say it shouldn't be allowed! However, as a source of entertainment it couldn't be bettered. The weekend may have started on a personal low but it certainly ended on a very high note with all participant's dispersing to their respective TAC's armed with positive messages and plans for the future. In closing just to keep you up to date with my Y2K changeover problem, I am now attempting to cope with the change but I remain to be convinced why such a change is necessary!

The Training Maj and Adjt fighting over the ammo box

The Adjt Walking on air!

Negotiating the Logs

RECRUIT AND RETAIN

On Saturday, 11 December, our first recruit intake since July took their first tentative steps towards their Phase 2 training at Blandford. Fifteen recruits who had just successfully concluded their Phase 1 Training proudly paraded in the Training Hall at Canley TA Centre to receive their prized badges and other awards from the CO, **Lt Col Stephen Potter,** who was also the inspecting officer.

Many parents, relatives and friends watched the parade from the sidelines and happily shared this special occasion by lending their support and encouragement. The importance of this support and encouragement was acknowledged by the CO following the parade when he addressed the recruits, their guests and instructional staff and paid tribute to all their efforts following this first important step towards becoming a fully trained TA soldier. During the parade the award of Best Recruit was presented to a jubilant **Sig Peter Cater** who celebrated later with his equally proud and overjoyed parents.

The CO presenting the award of Best Recruit to Sig Peter Cater of 89 Sqn

The final course of 1999

RING THOSE CHANGES

Once again the Regiment has had to adapt to the changes in personalities that are commonplace in every military unit. In December we said farewell to **LCpl** 'Nobby' **Styles** who sadly leaves the Army to join the legions of civilians and belatedly welcome his replacement **LCpl Ashley Hawkes** who apparently (according to the Chief Clerk) is an ardent Coronation Street fan. On the NRPS side a belated welcome is also extended to **SSgt Kevin Cardberry** an SDR casualty from 5 RRF who replaced **SSgt** 'Uncle Bob' **Heaselgrave**. Bob retired in November after serving both the Regiment and the TA with distinction for many years. I know he will be missed by his many friends and colleagues throughout the Regiment but hopefully he will retain his connection as an Honorary Member of both the Sergeants Mess and his Squadron. In February we also bade a particularly sad farewell to our outgoing QM, **Maj Rod Gladwin** and wife **Shirley. Rod** was dined out of the Officers Mess during the Burns Night Supper on Saturday, 12 February, and gave a traditional poetic farewell speech. A special welcome has been extended to his replacement **Maj Jim Coffey** fresh from 30 Sig Regt. **Jim** who everyone knows is a boxing enthusiast apparently missed the Tyson fight when he went to make a cup of tea! Finally some changes have also taken place amongst our dedicated civilian staff. These unsung heroes are often overlooked in this column but I hasten to add not deliberately. To rectify this unintentional anomaly and to make amends for the future a special welcome is extended to **Mr Pete Frizwell** as the new MT Driver and to **Lindsay Kane** who is employed as the Registry Clerk in RHQ.

CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY

The cheque presentation at 95 Sqn

Way back during the Summer months members of 95 Squadron raised a Three Peaks Challenge team in aid of the Macmillan Nurses Appeal and successfully completed the challenge, albeit a little slowly. Macmillan Nurses have a tremendous reputation and respect for providing palliative care for those who are terminally ill with cancer and their families. Their aim and charter is to provide total care for patients and their families at a time when care and symptom relief is more important than treatment and they rely heavily on charitable contributions to help them achieve this standard of care. Even though the Macmillan Appeal is well supported throughout the Regiment it was with some relief that by the end of the year all contributions from 95 Sqn's sponsors was collected. The magnificent sum of £350 was raised and **Maj Jo Fathers** presented this to **Mr Ian Musty** the Appeal Director at Sundorne TA Centre.

THE VISIT OF THE COMMANDER 143 BRIGADE

On Tuesday, 25 January, the Regiment welcomed the Comd 143 Bde, **Brig John King** on a formal visit to RHQ and HQ Sqn at Canley. The purpose of the visit was for the Comd to see for himself how well the unit was establishing itself in Coventry and to receive a Regimental update.

The Comd was met by the CO and the RSM and was then given a full Regimental Brief by the CO and the Regimental Operations Staff. Following the formal briefings the Comd was handed over to OC HQ Sqn, **Maj Rick Logan,** who gave the Comd a guided tour of HQ Sqn and the LAD. Here he met many members of the LAD and HQ Sqn and shared one or two humorous exhanges with **Cpl Si Marsden, LCpl Simon Brown** and **LCpl Tracy Brand**. This successful visit ended with the Comd being entertained by the Regimental Officers and Sergeants at a special supper in the Sergeants and Officers Mess.

The Commander with members of HQ Squadron

EXERCISE TRANSGLOBE

Capt Helen Molyneux who serves with 89 Sqn is an avid follower of any adventure training pursuit and has already reported on her earlier exploits on the Transglobe Sailing Expedition. The expedition, which lasted over a year, has now concluded and **Helen** has submitted the following article to close another exciting chapter in her life with the TA.

Ex Transglobe was a tri-service round the world yacht race using 3 Nicholson 55s, HMSTC *Adventure* (Navy), *Broadsword* (Army) and *Racer* (RAF). The race started during November 1998 and finished in December 1999. It had been split into nine legs with a full crew change for each leg. I had taken part in Leg 1 Antigua to Panama over Christmas and New Year 1998 – 99. The prize giving ceremony was held on Saturday, 22 January 2000, in the presence of **HRH The Princess Royal** at the Royal Naval College Greenwich. The ceremony itself was held in the spectacular surroundings of the Chapel, and consisted of a brief description of each Leg. This was followed by presentation of cups to the winners of each leg and medals to all crewmembers. Although the Army had won Leg 1 I had to receive my medal from the President of the RAF Sail Training Club as I had been part of the RAF crew. The overall results were very close run. Both the Army and Navy had accrued 22 points, with the Navy coming Third and the Army Second (calculated on the number of legs won) and the RAF won narrowly with 21 points. Following the ceremony, we made our way to an adjacent hall for a champagne reception with a light buffet (lots of smoked canapés). **HRH** mingled with the guests and met many crewmembers and skippers. Once the champagne had finished and the **Princess** had departed, we made our way down to the bar, which was situated in the cellar under the Chapel, for a disco and more champagne. An excellent night was had by all, reminiscing and comparing sailing stories and 'our worst moments at sea'.

37 SIGNAL REGIMENT (V)

CO **Lt Col P. J. Grogan**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) A. Cox**

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

The Regiment bids a fond farewell to the outgoing CO, **Lt Col A. Whittle** and his wife **Pam** and wishes him all the very best in Corsham as SO1 Comms. After a fond farewell we would like to wish a warm welcome to the new CO, **Lt Col P. J. Grogan** and his wife **Alison**. We hope they have a fulfilling tour with the Regiment.

OPERATIONS

Planning is now hotting up in RHQ with the Brigade Exercise almost imminent (well it's in the summer) and **WO2 (YofS) Chris Nutt** and **SSgt (FofS) Andy Burns** are busy studying comms plans and map traces for the annual exercise. This goes along with the endless recces to Scotland. Ops would like to say farewell to **SSgt Jill Summers** who is leaving the Army and to wish her well in her chosen path. To replace her, in comes **SSgt Tim** 'I can sing, dance and play musical instruments' **Abbott** along with his wife **Judith** who join us as NRPS from Aberdeen.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. Riley**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) J. Krikorian**

This has once more been an exceptionally busy period for the Squadron. On the social front the traditional round of Christmas festivities were held and the PSAO was concerned as to whether his drill hall would ever reappear from its guise of 'Club TAC'. The Squadron held a supper party to bid farewell to the outgoing CO, **Lt Col Alan Whittle** who has now departed for pastures new. The new-year has seen training renew with a fresh vigour. One of the highlights of this training being, a visit by a group of Shakespearean Actors to the training weekend to enable them to get into character! A full report of the visit will appear in the next issue.

53 (W) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj N. Cox**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) N. Rees**

1999 was a year of tremendous change for the Squadron and contained a number of achievements for which all should take credit. We have seen departures of **Maj John Duggan, Lt Catherine Cox, SSgt Lindsay Warren, Sgt Roger James** and most recently **Capt Brain Carney** the Squadron PSAO. Although change brings a degree of uncertainty, it also brings new and fresh ideas. **Sgt Dave Jones, Lt Andrew Henderson** and **Capt Andrew Rance** have this year joined 53 and are all making positive contributions to the Squadron. 1999 saw some notable successes, such as the Lanyard Trophy in which the Squadron were a key contributor to the Regimental Team. The Squadron were also commended for the quality of the service delivered whilst supporting 160 (W) Bde at Otterburn with Mould tasking.

67 (QOWWY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj R. Hall**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) M. H. Walker**

The November parade is the most important in the calendar. The two locations Stratford Upon Avon and Stourbridge did the parade in style with the SSM and 'The Honour Guard' carrying the sword of peace at Stratford Upon Avon. Stourbridge Tp had 100% turnout on parade, continuing the proud heritage of their predecessors, the Queens Own Warwickshire and Worcestershire Yeomanry. Ex 'Hoar Frost' is the annual dinner in the field with the Officers and SNCOs serving the meal. This was preceded by a very active time on the range at Swynnerton, followed by an OBUA attack at first light Sunday, a very effective test for **OCdt Huw George** who is doing his Basic Officer Cadet Training. In the last weekend of the training year, Stourbridge Tp laid on a 'small' dinner for the departing CO and also the Deputy Mayor of Dudley. The silver was on display along with the famed 'Pear Blossom' made by Karl Faberge. The 69 people who sat down listened to a speech from the OC, **Capt Paul Fowler-Smith**, and watched while the Troop presented a brandy glass to **LCpl Andy Foster** who is emigrating to the USA.

93 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd **Maj A. Unwin**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) N. Reid**

To 93 Sig Sqn (V), based in Blackburn, Exercise Three Crosses is an annual shake down mobile exercise enabling troops to gain experience in map reading, voice procedure and detachment drills. It is run in conjunction with a long distance walk organised by the East Lancashire's Long Distance Walkers Association in which, in exchange for safety cover, those troops not involved in the exercise can take part in the walk itself. The distance is approximately 28 miles and is a triangular course between three points, which are marked by ancient crosses high on the moors.

The area is bleak and usually the rain is horizontal. The detachments, organised by **SSgt Robin Fitzpatrick** and **Sgt Mick Clarke**, deploy in the early hours of the morning, which this year dawned cold but dry and bright. Everything progressed well with detachments finding their locations, setting up, passing drill traffic, closing down and moving onto the next grid reference. **Sgt Mick Rutter,** our REME fitter and **Sig Wendy Ambrose** were keeping an eye on road discipline and the mechanical condition of the vehicles. Following one of the checks they were flagged down by a civilian to be told that a walker had been taken ill and had collapsed about a mile from one of the check points. Using their own set he radioed in the report then deployed to the scene to give assistance. On receipt of the report the control station alerted the civilian organisers who were able to be updated by **Sgt Rutter** who had arrived at the location of the collapsed civilian. A 999 call had been made due to the persons deteriorating condition but because of the remoteness and inaccessibility of the location, the emergency services decided to call out the regional air ambulance helicopter based at Blackpool airport. By this time other personnel from the unit had arrived to assist and prepared an emergency-landing pad for the helicopter. Within a short space of time the air ambulance had arrived and taken the casualty to the nearest hospital. Towards the end of the Exercise the unit was given the sad news that the person, a middle aged male, had died from a heart attack shortly after arriving at the intensive care unit. Without doubt the action taken by **Sgt Rutter** and others from the unit had ensured that as little time as possible had been wasted, a fact recognised by the deceased persons family and the Walkers Association.

This was a perfect example, if one is required, of the support that can be given to the civilian community from which the TA is drawn, at no extra cost to the public purse. It also brought home to those taking part in the exercise how crucial communications can be in a real life situation.

96 SIGNAL SQADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj R. Bowden**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) C. Taylor**

96 Sig Sqn (V) has had a busy couple of months. December saw the traditional Christmas Exercise 'Cold Comfort' held at the Royal Engineers training area at Chickerell Camp, Dorset. Much to the relief of a worried OC, this time no-one ended up in Casualty – which is three down on last year. Even **SSgt Convery** failed to perform and this year selfishly failed to amuse the Squadron and didn't put his head through the ceiling. This year's format was to have taken the form of an Inter-Troop Competition, there was a watermanship stand using British Army Mk5 assault boats with outboard motors courtesy of our friendly 225 (R Mon RE) Fd Sqn of Royal Engineers. Six sappers made the long trip down to Wyke Regis to help run the watermanship stand. There was also to be half a day on the ranges. However, no-one had guessed that we would find ourselves in a force eight gale and this time the wind had nothing to do with **LCpl Mullins**. The first to go was the watermanship with the Sappers declaring that white water and safety do not mix. This was much to the concern of **LCpl Gray** who was extremely disappointed not to be going on the water. At least that is what we thought he was saying.

The next to go was the Ranges. As the figure 11 targets (and nearly **Capt Barker**) started to snap in the wind we considered that it might not be such a good idea. However, what really swung it was the thought of **LCpl** 'Gripper' **Flynn** on the firing point being caught by the wind. The fear of what damage an out of control 'Gripper' could do once he started rolling was enough and we hastily abandoned the ranges. A hastily improvised trip to the Tank Museum at Bovington nearly didn't happen. However, no sooner had **Sgt Pollock** asked, 'What is the chemical safety rule?' then the stampede was on and it was down to the museum. The dinner and evening's entertainment produced no trips to hospital although at one stage it was feared that **Sig Myrie** would explode under the duress of an overloading of Christmas Puddings. Yes it was a shame that he didn't win the pudding eating competition with the Royal Engineers but I somehow feel that if he had won then a comedy moment might have been lost.

Our congratulations go to **Sgt Julie Brookes** and **LCpl Steve Tuck** on news of their engagement and forthcoming wedding. Good luck for June 2000. Apparently there is no need for a shotgun at this stage. January also saw the very successful - if rather predictably named - Exercise Millennium Warrior at Sennybridge. The Squadron hosted our cousins 67 (QOWWY) Sig Sqn - an estranged part of our Regimental family whom no-one discusses - and some members of HQ Sqn for what proved an extremely enjoyable OBUA Exercise at Cellini Village, Sennybridge. With dry training during Saturday and a night shoot on Saturday evening, the weekend was capped by a superb joint assault between 96, 67 and HQ Sqns on Sunday. The highlights perhaps being **Maj Dickie Hall**'s valiant attempts at defence by sitting on the head of anyone who attempted to enter his defended attic area in one of the houses. The prospect of having the modestly proportioned **Maj Hall** sitting on the head of anyone naïve enough to stick it up into his loft deterred most, but not **Sig Cocker** who now has the flat head to show for it. All in all, a very enjoyable and successful Exercise.

38 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS
CO **Lt Col Nigel Harrison MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Steve Carr**

46 (CITY OF DERBY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)
Sqn Comd **Maj Bob Ward**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Jim Batchelor**

MAJOR 'BOB'S' 20 YEAR AMBITION

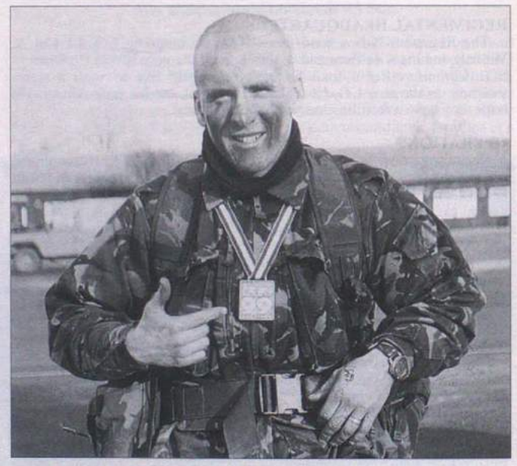
When young 'civvy' **Bob Ward** walked through the doors of 46 Sig Sqn nearly 20 years ago, little did he realise that one day he would be the Squadron Commander. That dream came true in January 2000 when he rejoined 46 Sqn as OC after two years serving with 49 Bde as the SO2 G6 CIS:

'Becoming OC has been my ambition for many years and it is a wonderful feeling to have achieved it after all the hard work and exams. It proves that hard work pays off, and you can get to the top if you are prepared to 'go for it'. I hope that some of the recruits joining now will follow in my footsteps. The next two years are going to be fantastic for 46 – after all I have been planning the training for 20 years!'

NEW YORK, NEW YORK
SO GOOD I RAN ROUND IT TWICE!

That was the verdict of **Sig Stuart** 'Legs' **George** when he ran the New York Marathon recently along with the 32,000 other runners. **Sig George** came in at 3 hours 25 minutes and managed to raise over £2750 for Cancer Research. The highlight of the event was running through all the districts of New York such as The Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn, Manhattan, China Town and Greenwich Village to name but a few. 'I really enjoyed it and am now looking forward to the Chicago Marathon later this year.' Well done 'Legs' – keep up the good work! The Squadron's congratulations go out to **Cpl Fiona Harrison** on her recent engagement to **Cpl Dave Parnell** (ex-Squadron member).

Congratulations to Cpl Fiona Harrison on her engagement to Cpl Dave Parnell (ex-member of the Squadron)



Sig Stuart 'Legs' George with his New York Marathon Medal (and no he didn't complete the race with his webbing on)

64 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)
Sqn Comd **Maj Andrew Smith**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Mick Rooney**

Now that the festive season and the millennium parties are well and truly behind us 64 Sqn are looking forward to a challenging and active year. Our first Squadron Weekend Training Session, Ex Spurn Adur began with our departure from the TAC at Manor Top on 21 January 2000 heading for Proteus Camp. On arrival at the NAAFI complex we were briefed and then split into groups of four in preparation for the weekend training.

Our Saturday training consisted of five individual stands set out on the Proteus training area: Detachment Sighting and Setting up drills, Ptarmigan Interest period, NBC, Medical and a Command Task. SSM, **WO2** 'Micky' **Rooney** was given the job of running the Comd Task, which he did to great effect. The groups were given respirators, which had black masking tape over the eyepieces so that no one could see what tasks they were about to be given. As the groups fumbled around on their hands and knees using a rope as a guide, **Mr Rooney** put all sorts of obstacles in their way. The look on the soldiers' faces was a picture when they took off the respirators and realised that they had taken so much time to cover a small clear area of no more than a few feet. The day's training came to a

close with the Squadron successfully completing the CFT (4 Miles or 6400 Metres). At 16.5p per meter they were all reminded that they had secured at total of £525 of their Bounty Money at the half way stage. This kept them in good spirits.

Saturday night the Squadron held its belated Christmas Party. The theme for the function was a Toga evening. Although **SQMS Dave Burton** had gone to the trouble of preparing the NAAFI and securing a large number of sheets only eight individuals had the nerve to attend in costume. The evening's entertainment was a great success and culminated in a Creswick Curry special prepared by our Chef, hairless hero **Cpl Roy Creswick** RLC. Our Sunday training consisted of a Radio Exercise, Camp clean-up and return to the TAC. Since our last *WIRE* Notes we have had to say a sad farewell to **2Lt R. Grieve** who joins the Regular Army, **2Lt T. Howes** who has taken eight months out and departed to Uganda but will return in September 2000 we hope.

New recruits at home in combat kit
(L-R): Sigs 'Goody' Goodrich, 'Dicky' Trigg, 'Legs' George, 'Hairy' Hawes, and 'Bob' Hoskin

87 (CITY OF NOTTINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)
Sqn Comd **Maj David Tomlinson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Vicky Hardy**

HANDING OVER THE STAFF OF POWER

We said farewell to another stalwart of the Squadron recently. **WO2 (SSM) Nigel** 'Avre' **Caldicott** handed over the SSM's Stick to **WO2 (SSM) Vickie Hardy** who returned to the Squadron after two years with the Brigade Specialist Training Team in Chilwell. **WO2 Caldicott**, who is a 'Scenes of Crimes' Officer with Notts Police was extremely sad to leave us but was extremely pleased for his successor, **Vickie** who he had recruited in 1985.

WO2 Caldicott has served for nearly 34 years with both the Regular Army and the TA, and has been very active in bringing in recruits to the Squadron. He has stated that he hoped to carry on doing so. A small ceremony was held on the 18 January to mark his departure. **John Leverton**, member of the local branch of the Royal Signals Association and a keen militaria collector brought along a vintage Austin K9. Dressed as an RMP WO1, he arrested the SSM and drove him away. However, the roles were quickly reversed as it transpired that **Nigel** had learned to drive in a K9! We wish him Good Luck and look forward to seeing him later in the year at his dining out.

WO2 (SSM) Hardy takes the reins

The new SSM then took over the helm. **WO2 (SSM) Vickie Hardy** is a resource manager for IBM and is looking forward to her latest challenge as the Regiment's first female SSM. **Vickie** is a keen footballer, who plays for Ilkeston Ladies FC. She has also taken part in many inter-Squadron matches in the past. She recently married **Barry**, who unfortunately is in the Royal Engineers TA, but we will not cast it up too often. Good luck in your new role.

BEWARE OFFICER CADETS ABOUT

The Squadron now has two new officer cadets. **Adrian** 'Cheetah Semen' **Matthews** and **Simon** 'Bolt Head' **Young** were both successful at a TCB just prior to Christmas. They have now unanimously been christened Boys 1 and 2. We are waiting to see what happens next (purely out of curiosity)!

CONGRATULATIONS, WHAT'S ON AND CHARITY NEWS

Congratulations to **Lt Amanda** 'La La' **Moody** and her husband **Nev** on the birth of their daughter **Amy**. We hope to see you soon. Members of the Squadron have commenced technical training at TCWs in Ripon. We look forward to the TA National Open Day on 25 March. The bright ideas Troop is on the task! The Squadron has started planning various charity events in support of the Regimental Charity 'Hope And Homes For Children'. Among the events being planned are:

A team in the Greater Notts Bike Ride - 50 miles around the County.
A team in the Robin Hood Marathon.
A sponsored Slim by the OC **Maj David Tomlinson**.

TAKING TURNS ON WATCH

Two Derby Territorials are praising their military bosses after they hit the perfect job-share plan. The couple were devestated when it looked like one of them would have to give up being a part-time soldier. When their unit called both felt duty bound to get on parade but it soon became impossible to find help to look after their two children. So the **Ryan-Gilbanks**, both Sergeants, were delighted when 46 Sig Sqn's Commanders said that they could take turns on watch. **Sgt Carolyn Ryan-Gilbank**, from Chaddesden, said, 'It's the perfect solution. Our Commanders know that they can always rely on one of us turning out. We even go on different two-week summer camps, so that we can make absolutely sure that one of us is at home looking after the children. The Territorial Army's solution to our problem was very enlightened. They have ensured that we are even more committed to soldiering than ever. Our unit has a lot of parents with busy home and work lives. The couple's children, **Dominic** and **Jessica**, are proud when their mum and dad put on their uniforms and know that their parents military role is important.

Taking turns on watch
Sgt Carolyn Ryan-Gilbank with children Dominic and Jessica

HIS TIMER'S RUNG AT LAST

Britain's oldest army chef is set to hang up his ladles after nearly 40 years with the Territorial Army (TA), in Nottinghamshire. **Roger Huckerby** was past peeling his millionth spud when he reached 62 years of age, on 14 December. He said that just as he was getting the hang of it the bosses at 38 Sig Regt (V) had told him that it was time to turn off the boiling pans for the last time. He added that he would be going into action for one last big event before he left Triumph Road-based 87 Sig Sqn. He said, 'I'll be keeping a very close eye on folks in the kitchen when they're cooking for my farewell do. I don't mind what they give me as long as it's British steak and it's done right. The hardest thing I'll have to do on the night is say goodbye to my friends in the TA. They're the best.'

SSgt Huckerby, a food industry worker from Newbold, began his military cooking career when he was called up for National Service in 1959. He joined the TA's Army Catering Corps in 1961 after being demobbed. Since then he has become one of the reserve force's finest chefs. He has helped show the way in catering for dozens of young soldiers. He has prepared some of the finest cuisine in some of the country's best equipped kitchens for up to 1,500 dinner guests at a time. He has kept hundreds of cold and hungry troops going, through miserable weather, cooking field rations on an open flame. **SSgt Huckerby**'s last military task will be to return to his unit next year to receive the fourth bar to his TA medal for outstanding and loyal service.

SSgt Roger Huckerby on his retirement at the age of 62

Leaving the Forces Shortly?

real com

Your Future In Communications

We specialise in placing ex-service personnel within the Telecommunication and Broadcast industry. We are interested in all trades with experience of Satellite and Trunk Systems maintenance & operations.

The company is directed by ex-Royal Signals staff currently working within the industry. We provide permanent positions with telecommunications companies in the UK or abroad.

Interested?

Please contact Ed Massey or Brian O'Connor.

Tel: 01962 841 838

Fax: 01962 841 839

PO Box 288

Winchester

SO22 4WW

Email: enquiries@realcom-recruitment.co.uk

39TH (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col J. Crackett TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) P. Anderson**

HORFIELD ANNUAL DINNER – 4 DECEMBER 1999

The Squadron continued with the pre-beat up to Christmas with the Annual dinner. RHQ, HQ and 57 Sqns all attended the event. The dinner passed by with much praise. However, the after dinner speeches thoroughly exhausted everyone's drinks so that the bar didn't know what hit it. The drill hall was soon transformed from dining hall to night-club, where everyone proceeded to imbibe in the Christmas spirit into the early hours.

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS (BRISTOL)

It was nearly an eventful New Year for the Regiment with preparation for Operation Surety ongoing over the build up to the Millennium. However events were to prove that 39 Sig Regt (V) was not going to deploy for the New Year so although a little disappointed most elected for the more traditional form of celebration. RHQ entered a period of mourning at the departure of the Adjutant **Capt Bobby Davis** (formerly Scott) to pastures new in Civ Div. However the new Adjutant **Capt Nick Peet** fresh from 30 Sig Regt and JCSC was given an extremely warm welcome on his arrival in the middle of Christmas Party week. It is with regret that Regimental Headquarters will soon bid farewell to **Margaret Harris** as she moves on as part of the SDR TA reshuffle. We will all miss her hard work and ready smile, thanks **Margaret**.

REGIMENTAL TRAINING WEEKEND 3
14-16 JANUARY 2000

Capt Peet had a busy start to his tenure with the task of organising the Young Officer Training weekend at Blandford as well as a Regimental Dinner on the Saturday night. The Training consisted of an Armd Bde HQ siting and defence TEWT running concurrently with a Radio CPX exercise in the RSS on Saturday. Sunday morning was filled with a situation exercise similar to the Tp Comd Cse, Ex Crowded Hour followed by an introduction and discussion group on Mission Command. All went well thanks to the efforts of all of the DS as well as the Regt YofS **WO2 (YofS) Mark Whiting**. The weekend was made all the better by the attendance of **Lts Weir M.** and **Weir E.** and **Yates** and **OCdt Velasco** from 32 Sig Regt and **Lt Andy Peploe** from 1 (SC) Sig Sqn, our thanks for their enthusiasm and effort.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON (BRISTOL)
Sqn Comd **Maj R. H. Belbin**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) P. Smith**

BOUNTY PICK UP WEEKEND – 27-28 NOVEMBER 1999

As the year ended it was the last opportunity for the members of the Squadron to qualify for their Bounty. The Squadron deployed to a cold and wet Yoxter Ranges on Saturday morning. Although the weather was not conducive for shooting those who fired managed to pass their APWT. That evening HQ and 57 Sqn came together to hold a joint Christmas dinner, where in true tradition the officers and seniors served the troops. This was followed by **Ken** the caretaker's excellent sound system (some should tell him that Elvis has died and went to Heaven). In the morning the Squadron dragged itself to Hallen under the supervision of the PTI's to carry out their CFT. There was a good proportion of the Squadron who started to regret the amount of food and drink consumed the previous evening.

REGIMENTAL TRAINING WEEKEND 3
EXERCISE BORDON APPROACHES
15 – 16 JANUARY 2000

The LAD organised a collective training weekend for all ES personnel within 43 (Wx) Bde. The Exercise was based at Bordon, Hampshire. The aim of the Exercise was to give the TA tradesman some practical and interesting tasks. On arrival at Longmoor Camp on Friday evening each of the Units was split up into composite teams under the control of a Corporal. The team leader was given a brief and left to prepare his team for the following days events. On Saturday the teams deployed to the Recovery Heath at Bordon where they undertook various recovery tasks

and a Warrior APC pack lift. The teams also were able to enjoy the historic vehicle museum and have a rare opportunity to shoot on the SAT range. On completion of the day's training everyone retired back to Longmoor to enjoy a hard earned beer or two whilst reminiscing on the days events. The training on Sunday changed tack from Trade to Military where everyone was tested on their basic ITD knowledge. The training culminated in a gun race over the assault course, where some amusing methods were seen on obstacle crossing. The weekend was rounded off with a prize giving where the SO2 ES, **Major P. Roach** presented the prizes.

EXERCISE BRONZE LYNX - 29 – 30 JANUARY 2000

Bronze Lynx was an Exercise where the Squadrons had an opportunity to practice the command and control of their Radio dets. HQ Sqn as always took on the anchor role for this Exercise, with elements based at Colerne and the TAC. During the Saturday three teams from the Squadron, travelled around the countryside receeing likely points for the radio/BATCO Exercise on the Sunday. Contrary to popular belief they did not visit every Pub that was a checkpoint, as that would have been physically impossible. On the Sunday a team from the LAD took part in the Exercise, unfortunately they were with 5 Sqn so this meant an hour and a half trip to their first checkpoint. Needless to say this did not detract from the enjoyment of the day.

5 (QUEEN'S OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (BANBURY)
Sqn Comd **Maj R. D. Stone**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) R. E. Phillips**

The Queen's Own Oxfordshire Hussars have returned to the City of Oxford when a detachment of 5 Sqn moved into Slade Park TAC on Tuesday, 8 February 2000, with **Capt Ruth Empson** as the Detachment Commander. The Officer Commanding 5 (QOOH) Squadron, **Maj Robert Stone** says that this is a real boost for Oxford and in particular the Squadron. This will enable us to widen our net for recruiting and fulfil our ever increasingly important role. Interested in Joining? Contact the PSAO, **Capt Bob Sheldon** on: 01295 262178 or 01865 780156.

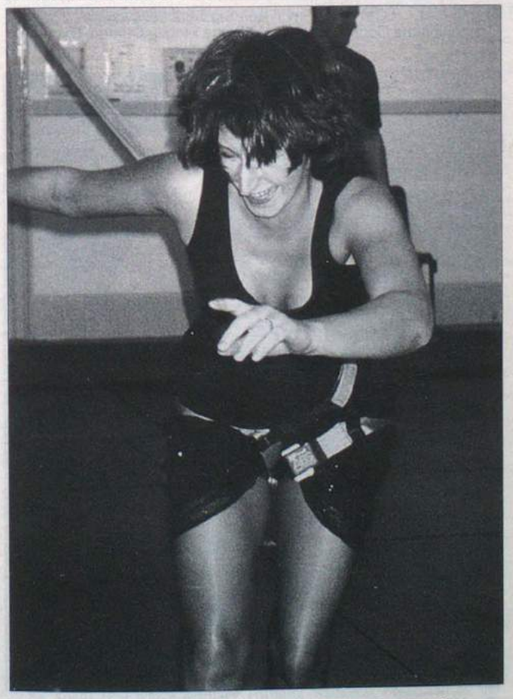
POSTING IN AND OUT

The Squadron bid a sad farewell to **Cpl Steve Oliver** on his posting to 33 (Lancashire & Cheshire) Sig Regt for duty with 42 Sig Sqn. We, however, welcome **LCpl Alan Gribben** from 34 (Northern) Sig Regt (V).

MOBILISATION AND FTRS

The Squadron welcomes **Cpl Nick Hawkins** our RLC Chef back from a tour of duty with the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers in Germany and Bosnia. **LCpl Sean Buckley** RLC Chef deployed on SFOR 1/00 on 23 January 2000. **Sgt** 'Paddy' **Ferguson,** Systems Technician, is currently on a twelve month FTRS with the Royal School of Signals.

THE MILLENNIUM PARTY



Cpl Sammy Durno (Nee Morgan) on the Bar Bungee Run

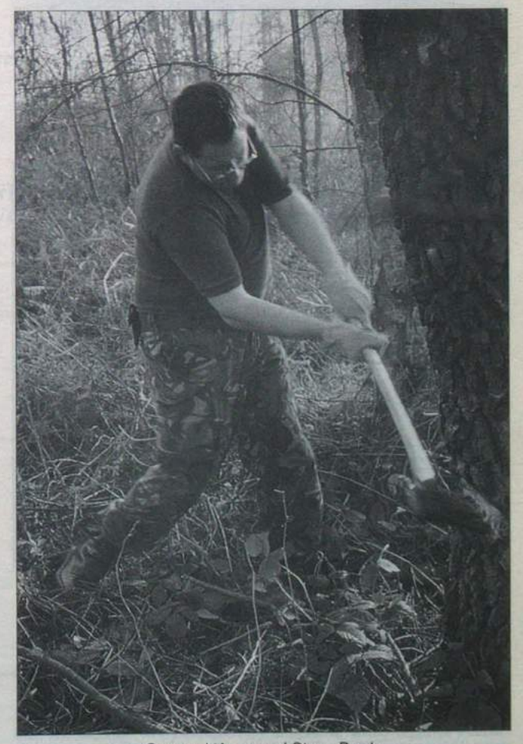
The long awaited Millennium Party planned for 2 January 2000 went ahead on the correct date, 31 December 1999, following the cancellation of Op Surety. **SSgt Paul Johnson** had spent the whole year coercing people to purchase draw tickets with the opportunity to win a substantial cash prize. Following an excellent night of games, drinking, dancing, lesser prize wining and fireworks the committee announced the name of the winner – **Capt Chuck Robertson** the Squadron 2IC won £814.00 cash and he was not there to ring the bell!

The Squadron would like to thank **SSgt Paul Johnson, Cpl Steve** 'Fireworks Man' **Brady, Kevin** 'Hoppalong' **Durno, LCpl Mark William, Danny Palmer , Dean Smithson** and **Sig Clare Goodwin** for an excellent year's entertainment culminating with the Millennium Party. The new Committee under the guidance and Chairmanship of **2Lt Simon Durtnal** have to work hard to do better!

COMMUNITY WORK

As part of our move into Oxford and an attempt at getting some free PR the Squadron Volunteered to assist the Oxfordshire Countryside Section clearing heath land at Shotover Park in Oxford. The plan was basic – cut down some trees and burn them!! There was no shortage of volunteers thinking they would be let loose with chain saws – no such luck – bow saws and axes with a great dollop of elbow grease. Sixteen eager men and women under the guidance of the management staff of the Countryside Section set to work at 1000 hours on a bright Saturday Morning. After two hours the elbow grease was getting thin and the eagerness failing, nevertheless after refreshments the promise of a visit to the local pub brought back a new lease of life. The event was covered by Central TV and the *Oxford Times*.

'Timber'
Captain Ruth Empson and Recruit Ruth Chilvers



Corporal 'Axe-man' Steve Brady

THIS YEAR'S WEDDING

The Squadron congratulates Cpl Kevin Durno and Cpl Sammy Morgan on their marriage

47 (MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Mike Lansdown**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Brent Copsey**

EXERCISE BRONZE LYNX

On a blustery weekend in January the bold cavalry of the Middlesex Yeomanry carried out a partial re-enactment of the Battle of Balaclava, including the Charge of the Light Brigade. The re-enactment was different insofar as the horses were present in a metaphysical sense only. Furthermore, the notoriously poor communications between commanders in the Crimea were replaced with Clansman HF, MOULD and DUST (nearly as old but usually slightly more trustworthy). The more things change, though, the more they stay the same. The Commander of the cavalry was one **Lord Lucan**, and for the purpose of the Exercise **SSgt Mark Gilfrin** took his place. **SSgt Gilfrin**, before he shaved off his moustache, was universally known within the Squadron as Lucan due to his resemblance to the more infamous peer. Another interesting coincidence is that the commander of the 1Infantry Division at Balaclava was the Duke of Cambridge, who was also the first Regimental Colonel of the Middlesex Yeomanry.

The Exercise was thoroughly successful, and the course of history was not changed. The blustery weather inspired the Commanding Officer to set a challenge for each detachment to construct a kite using locally available materials and to also use it to create a /wave antenna. The consequence of this task was a sequence reminiscent of the old TV show 'The Great Egg Race'. The only facet that the Squadron was without was the appearance of a slightly over-excited German Professor explaining the interaction of Gravity, Drag and Wind etc. The OC, **Maj Mike Lansdown**, decided that the results of this experiment would be made available on a need to know basis ie: you readers do not need to know. The Squadron is now gearing up for a busy spring season of exercises and a major recruiting drive (an effort to recruit more soldiers not more majors). More from the Middlesex Yeomanry in the next issue, Charge!

LCpl McRae beavers away on Exercise Bronze Lynx

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON (BRISTOL)

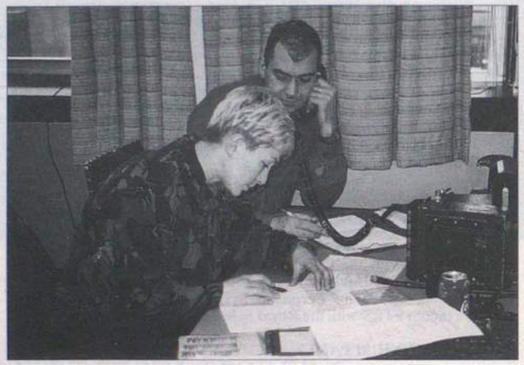
Sqn Comd	**Maj Rosemary Tuhey**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Phil Packer**

EXERCISE BRONZE LYNX - *by Sgt Dave Gresswell*

57 Squadron deployed to RAF Locking as part of 39 Sig Regts annual Bronze Lynx Exercise. This year the emphasis was on Data, HF and MOULD communications. The Saturday was to be mainly Data backed up by HF comms in the Sqn Comd Post. Deployment went smoothly on the Friday night, with 12m masts being erected in record time despite the gale force winds! This thankfully left plenty of time for a beer or two before breakfast!

Saturday - After a slow start the Data Communications were up and running and messages based on the Charge of The Light Brigade began flowing smoothly (although we are not sure how Lord Lucan managed to get in on the act). With all the troops fully employed in four COMCENS plus the SCP. Our CO, **Lt Col John Crackett** decided that the SNCOs needed something to keep them busy! Their task was to build a kite made out of stores available on site that not only would fly but was also required to support an HF antenna. Armed with plastic bags, mast sections, cable trunking, tape, staples and even the SSM's Gortex Trousers, our intrepid SNCOs set about constructing their kite, after six attempts it has to be said they failed miserably (I suppose the 'they' should be 'we'). Saturday night brought us a Squadron Social and Quiz Night, we were joined at this point by our DEs who had been working under the direction of **SSgt Dave Williams** back at Horfield. One of the hardest questions to be answered was 'To the nearest TEN years, when do you expect the refurbishment of Horfield TAC to commence?' needless to say it could not be answered. The prize of new Squadron T-Shirts went eventually to Gloucester Tp (no surprise of course).

Sunday morning bar stocks depleted and Squadron GPF much better off, found the squadron split into 5 Mobile Detachments that were to take part in a Treasure Hunt style Comms Ex. This was in the main a success, however, we suspect that most Det's were operating from the sea front car park in Weston-Super-Mare. Still home for tea on Sunday afternoon with two more Specified Days towards Bounty in the bank (so to speak)!



LCpl Dave Smith and Sig Sara Baldwin manning the Control Centre during the Mobile Comms Exercise on Exercise Bronze Lynx

Sgt Mike White with the sixth attempt (failure) at constructing a kite

It has been a busy time for the Squadron since the last edition. The TAC Annual Dinner took place at the end of November when the Squadron said farewell to **Maj Glynn Nash**, who served for 27 years, rising through the ranks to be commissioned in 1989. He finished as Squadron 2IC before assuming command of HQ Sqn. The dinner was also time to say farewell to our Honourary Colonel, **Col John Bryant**, who has been our Honourary Colonel since 1993. Both received our sincere thanks, best wishes and momentoes as befitted the occasion. Congratulations go to **Capt John Cullen,** our PSAO and **Cpl Sue Palfrey** on recieving the Lord Lieutenant's Award and **Cpl Kerri Hill** who received her Efficiency Medal at the same ceremony. Congratulations also go to **Sgt Richard Sharp, Cpl Kathy Ashley, Cpl Dave Jones, LCpl Paul Wylde** and **LCpl Helen Winters** on their recent promotions. The first member of our civilian staff to leave us, due to SDR, is **Johm Turkentine** who has been a great asset to our Cheltenham and recently also the Gloucester Detachment. Despite being ex-RAF the troops did not hold it against him, and he was accepted as one of the team from the beginning, we wish him all the best for the future.

Recipients of the Lord Lieutenants Certificate and TA Efficiency Medal pictured with the Lord Lieutenant for Bristol Mr J. N. Tidmarsh Esq MBE JP

Maj Glynn Nash and his portrait, presented by 57 Squadron on his retirement. The portrait is by Mr Ray Cresswell of Leicestershire

71 (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col C. H. Turner**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) M. Godwin**

REGIMENTAL NEWS

Lots of movement in the Warrant Officer Department: **WO2 Church** -SSM HQ, **WO2 Wrate** - MTT WO, **WO2 Mustoe** - RQMS(V), **WO2 McHenery** - SSM 265 on promotion. Congratulations. Welcome to **SSgt Andy Raynsford** who fills the slot as PSI Training. A warm welcome to all your family, hope your stay in the Regiment is long and pleasant. Congratulations to **RSM** 'Blod' **Godwin** who was recently selected for a commission in the Corps. Remember **Mandy** is still the boss.

70 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON CHELMSFORD AND HARLOW

Sqn Comd	**Maj C. J. Tallents**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) P. Humphreys**

CHANGE OF COMMAND

The Essex Yeomanry Signal Squadron bids farewell to **Maj Simon Paliner TD** and wish him well in his new appointment as Regimental Ops Officers at Bexleyheath. We thank him and **Lana** for their tireless work and support to the Squadron. We welcome **Maj Craig Tallents** and congratulate him on promotion from Squadron 2IC and wish him and **Kate** a rewarding tour with the Squadron.

EXERCISE SILENT BELL

Ex Silent Bell was a Military Training Weekend, organised by the SPSI, **SSgt Jace Barsley**, based on Colchester Ranges and included the various ITDs for Bounty Qualification. The Training facilities of 210 Sig Sqn were kindly made available to us for which we thank them.

WO2 Richard Pieper and SSgt Bryan Malyon decontaminate with a smile

VISIT OF LORD FREEMAN

Lord Freeman, Chairman of TAVRA Councils visited the TA Centre at Chelmsford. There he met representatives of the units who train at the Centre including C Coy East of England Bn, ACEATC and Sea Cadets. The Squadron was represented by the Squadron Commander, who briefed

Lord Freeman on the role of the Squadron and then introduced **Lord Freeman** to a Detachment comprised of **LCpl Jo Smith, Sig Mark Gatward** and **Sig Joe Stabler** who manned a display of Communications Equipment.

(L-R): Sig Mark Gatward, Sig Joe Stabler, LCpl Jo Smith, Lord Freeman, Maj Craig Tallents

LANCASTER HOUSE RECEPTION

A reception was held at Lancaster House, hosted by the Prime Minister, for members of the three services who had served in Bosnia and Kosovo. **Sig Mark Gatward** was selected from the Regiment to attend and was proud and privileged to meet the Prime Minister, **Mr Tony Blair**.

Sig Mark Gatward
speaks to another potential recruit – job permitting

265 (KCLY) SIGNAL SQUADRON
BEXLEYHEATH AND BRIGHTON

Sqn Comd **Maj H. J. Robertson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) McHenery**

REUNION

The second Annual Kent & County of London Yeomanry Reunion Dinner was held on 13 November. We managed to surpass last year's turnout with the grand sum of 147 attendees and ranks ranging from Signaller to Brigadier. The OC, **Maj Hugh** 'Long Words' **Robertson,** gave a rousing speech regarding the 'Kents' striding forth into the new Millennium with gusto and panache, which was well received by all and sundry. The dinner was followed by the rantings in the bar of too many 'old' soldiers. The question 'Do you remember?' could be heard from all four corners of the bar and many an old sweat was trying to convince serving members that the TA really was better in their day. Then with the necessary phone numbers exchanged the reunion had finished with everyone promising to return in the year 2000.

LONDON DISTRICT FOOTBALL COMPETITION

The KCLY football team had done it again, reaching the final of the London District Football Cup. This being the 13th time in the last 16 years. Our opponents were 562 Sqn, RLC. The venue was the Artillery Barracks at Woolwich on a cold and breezy morning, 19 December. The game was a fine tempered affair with us seemingly playing uphill for 90 minutes. We spent the whole time fighting to level the score, with a sterling effort from the Team Captain, **Cpl Mark** 'Gooner' **Pearce**. At the end of normal time the score was 4-4. After extra time the score remained the same, so it was the dreaded penalty shoot out. The outcome was that we lost 4-2 on penalties and so must launch another onslaught for the trophy next year. Thanks go to PSAO, **Capt Barry** 'I'm a Gooner as well' **James** for organising the whole competition, which ran extremely smoothly. A special thanks goes to **Capt Robert** 'Bobbeeee' **Andrews** who announced his retirement from the team at the beginning of the game after 18 years loyal service, having played in most positions from goalie to striker and umpteen London District Cup finals. Congratulations to the player of the Tournament, **RSM** 'Kinkladze' **Godwin**

APPOINTMENTS

A new era dawned on 11 January 2000 with the Squadron parading en masse for the OC, **Maj Hugh** 'Long Words' **Robertson** to say farewell to SSM, **WO2 Keith** 'Snoozy' **Wrate,** who has served with the Squadron for a little over 16 years. There was barely a dry eye in the house as he left the drill hall en route to his new employment as OC Regimental MTT. Then it was time to say hello to the newly promoted SSM, **WO2 Stuart** 'Ginge' **McHenery**, who joins the Squadron hierarchy after an extremely successful tour as Troop Staff Sergeant at 884 Sig Tp in Brighton. Congratulations go to **2Lt Alex** 'Where's my watch' **Downing** who takes command of 890 Support Tp, **2Lt Richie** 'Crome Dome' **Woodhams** who moves from 890 to take command of 887 Sig Tp and **Sgt Kev** 'What cap-badge?' **Hancock** who takes the role of Troop Sergeant at 884 Sig Tp.

LONDON DISTRICT CROSS COUNTRY

The Squadron entered a team into the London District Cross County Competition on Sunday 16 January. Unfortunately due to unforeseen circumstances one of the team members was unable to run so each of the team ran as individuals. Congratulations go to **Cpl Triss** 'Mr Magoo' **Swain** who came ninth overall.

EXERCISE AUTUMN BELL I -15-17 OCTOBER 1999

As part of the preparation for the Millennium's Operation Surety, elements of 2 Sig Bde were despatched to various locations around the country. 71 Sig Regt's, 887 Tp led by **Lt Penny Bulley**, with support from 890 Tp, was located at Horse Guards Parade in Central London. We set off for Chelsea Barracks on the Friday night ready to move directly to Horse Guards Parade at 6.00am on the Saturday. Our convoy skills were tested to the extreme as we negotiated the Friday night Central London traffic. Thanks to some magnificent work by **Sgt Dave Pryke**, we arrived at Chelsea in one piece. Saturday morning approached and members of the Troop headed off to Horse Guards Parade, under the watchful eyes of the Squadron 2IC, **Capt Keith Duffy-Penny** and PSI, **SSgt John Lynch,** in order to 'establish comms', before the public descended upon the area. Once comms were in place we were able to start our shift system. This proved a little more difficult than normal, as we had to transfer between Horse Guards Parade and Chelsea Barracks for meals. However, some fine driving by **LCpl Ian Liscoe** ensured that the disruption was kept to a minimum and the traffic (both signals and vehicular) flowed smoothly throughout Saturday. The checking of the antennas also proved a bit more problematical than normal, as they were located on the roof. Luckily there were no faulty coax cables to trace on this Exercise. Sunday morning arrived and again it was all hands to the pump to ensure that our NCRS trailers were fully laden with the kit with which we had arrived, before the public again mounted a full section attack on our location. Once again we planned our escape in the finest detail and were safely on our way back to Bexleyheath by the time the cameras were clicking. It was agreed that a successful time was had by all and we had achieved our objective. To dismount our NCRS kit, set up in a Central London location and communicate with other stations around the country.

Top of Horseguards Parade
(L-R): Lt Penny Builey, LCpl Ian Liscoe, Cpl Andy Wilton, LCpl Sharon Risley, LCpl Sean Eyers, LCpl Adrian Keeble, Sgt Dave Pryke

LOOK FORWARD

The Squadron will spend much of the next two months rehearsing for the Freedom of Croydon Parade in which we shall be participating as Sharpshooters, watch this space!

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

2 (CITY OF DUNDEE) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

Sqn Comd **Maj Eric Blyth TD**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Andy Waterston**

The past few months have been particularly busy with a wide range of training activities and social events occurring. With all the activity there is always going to be highs and lows. Sadly, the Squadron lost **Cpl Alec McLeod**, who fell to his death in a tragic climbing accident whilst abseiling with friends in Glen Doll near Dundee. On 23 October the Squadron bade farewell to **SSgt Phil Skene**, who had been employed as the SPSI Technician for the past three years and was dined out of the Squadron and Corps on completion of 22 years service. He is pictured below with **Capt Bill Naismith**, 2 Sig Sqn PSAO who recruited **SSgt Skene** into the Corps 22 years earlier in the Leven Recruiting Office.

We welcomed back **Sig Jason Honeyman** from his six month tour in BATUS Canada, he has already been seen badgering the training wing for yet another FTRS tour. At this time of year like many other units the Sqn is deep into the preparation phase of the Xmas and Millennium festivities, not to mention the preparation for the many visits due to the Sqn over the coming months. The following paragraphs are personal accounts from **LCpl Scott McDonald** and **LCpl Murray Sutcliffe** who were involved in activities outwith the normal ITD or Comms training weekends, proving that life with 2 Sig Sqn is anything but dull!

EXCHANGE WITH HMS *GRAFTON* – 18-20 SEPTEMBER 1999
by LCpl McDonald

Diary of Events

18/9/99 - Arrive at HMS *Grafton* at 2200hrs after an 11 hour journey from Dundee with only one wrong move on the London Underground and a slight hiccup trying to get the 100 yards from the station to the ship (turned left instead of right after coming out of the station). After signing in to the Hotel *Grafton* I was met by the Yeoman and was horrified to discover that the drinking party had already left. I had to console myself with finding a bunk in No.1 Mess, a quick tour of the vital parts of the ship (heads, dining hall, NAAFI) and finding the MCO where I would be working the next day. I was glad to discover that the MCO was bigger than a landrover, however, the same could not be said of the bunks, definitely a lot more headroom in the back of a GS rover.

19/9/99 - Early start for those involved in getting the ship underway, due to depart 0730hrs, a nice leisurely breakfast for me, then down to the MCO to get introduced to **RS Wilkinson, Garry Curtis** and **Stan Mathews**. After a quick briefing of how the day should go I was taken on a more in depth tour of the ship. The Ops Room was suitably dark with lots of impressive looking glowing screens, then up to the bridge to be introduced to the Captain and to get my only breath of fresh air for the next 24 hours. We were still in the Thames and were not due to reach open water until 1400hrs. Back down in the MCO I was shown the range of comms equipment that they had at their disposal and got suitably jealous over their push-button tuners and the fact that I wouldn't once need to trudge outside into the wind and rain to alter an antenna. However, I was looking forward to incorporating a lot of frequency changes throughout the exercise for the benefit of my colleagues in Dundee. The reason for my trip was as part of a Crosspol for a JOCOMEX which began with voice being established in 5 minutes and two-way secure RATT tested and 'Booming in 5's' within 45 minutes.

Stan started the comms with **Cpls Sally Purvis** and **Lesley Bruce**, leading to some reminiscing about good old Croydon as it was **Stan**'s home town and **Sally** had spent a couple of years down there. I finally managed to drag **Stan** away from his on-air affair with Sal and get a shot on the Tele-type. However my excitement was short-lived when I discovered that there was no message store and I would have to type on-line. After a few spelling mistakes and typing errors I was soon bashing away at the keyboard like an old pro – all be it an old pro with failing vision, dyslexia and arthritis in both hands. However my colleagues at the TAC were very understanding .

1200hrs already and time for a lunch break, so I left **Stan** and **Sally** to continue their reminiscing.
1230 hrs and the weather report comes in warning of severe gales and a sea state of 8, which didn't sound that bad until we were also advised to take our sea-sick pills now.
1235hrs quick trip to Doc's office to pick up my dose of sea-sickness pills.
1400hrs Ship pushes out into open water, not rolling about too much, but the moving keyboard does little to improve my typing. Shift change has taken place and it is now **Johnny** on the keyboard, comms are still up and going well.
1600hrs The ship is starting to roll around a bit more, but the pills seem to be working.
1800hrs Back in comms after frequency hopping for 45 minutes, however I've missed tea, but a kind young WREN offers me her pot noodle and a cup of tea!
2000hrs I knock off for the day while another shift change occurs both at the TAC and on board ship. Manage to get a quick report from **SSgt Bob Tasker** and **LCpl Murray Sutcliffe** about the Squadron's weekend at Whitburn before I retire to the mess. Watch a few Videos and down just enough beers to ensure a good night's sleep no matter what the weather.

20/9/99 -

0700hrs Up and ready to catch the transfer boat to Portsmouth, due at 0800hrs. Call in to MCO to see how the Exercise is going, everything seems under control.
0800hrs Transfer boat going to be late so I have time to snap a couple of photos before departure.
0900hrs Back on solid ground, caught the train back to London with my supply of sea-sick pills at the ready for the next time. Definitely a worthwhile and interesting experience which I would do again if given the chance.

THE ANTHONY NOLAN BONE MARROW TRUST

Recently members of 2 Sig Sqn (V) deployed to assist The Antony Nolan Bone Marrow Trust in their annual Perthshire Marrowthon. This is a 28 mile sponsored bike ride in and around the Perthshire area. Thirteen members of the Squadron deployed to provide HF safety communications and marshalling cover for the duration of the race, using a variation of the Squadron's High Tech Communications equipment. A good day was had by all and the event was a success raising some £2000 for the Trust.

If responding to an advert in *The Wire* please mention that you saw it in your Corps Magazine

4th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

Sqn Comd **Maj A. H. Campbell-Black**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D. W. Craig**

PAPA TROOP - *by Sigs Fraiser Anderson and Glyn Hayes*
Tp Comd **2Lt Dave Hill**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Paul Davis**

As ever there are a lot of comings and goings. Firstly, we offer a warm welcome to **SSgt Paul Davis**, his wife **Tracy** and family, **Cpl Charlie Henson**, **Sig Andy Yates** and **Sig Lucy Corlett** we hope you enjoy your time in Papa Tp. Unfortunately there are some goodbyes too. Farewells go to **SSgt Norm Finnegan**, his wife **Heike** and son **Jason**, **Cpl Vinnie Walsh** and **Cpl** 'Woz' **Wright** congratulations to you and your wife **Denise** on the birth of your daughter **Megan**. Best of luck to you all in your new units. The Troop has had a few promotions too, six altogether you know who you are lads a big well done. A BIG congratulations to **Cpl Henson** and his new wife **Debbie** and **to LCpl Scott Rose** and his new wife **Kelly**.

After a well deserved Christmas and New Years leave Papa Tp was hard at work with preparations for 2nd Line and RSIT inspections in February. The OC Squadron has given the troops the incentive to get a good RSIT report by granting the detachment with the best report a long weekend. There is a very competitive atmosphere in the garages with the odds favouring one of the systems vehicles. Congratulations and well done to **LCpl** 'Polly' **Pollitt**, **Sig Dunc Excell** and **Sig** 'General Jackson' **Eden** on their recent promotion. Also, well done to **Sigs Glyn Hayes**, **Steve King**, **Andy Yates** and **Scott Roberton** for coming off the board.

CORPS SKI TRAINING ZELL-AM-SEE AUSTRIA
by Cpl Rowles

This year's Corps championships for Giant Slalom and Slalom, was awarded the honour of 4 Bde Sig Sqn's presence - although 1Div did try to steal our thunder on the apres-ski slopes. **Lt Paul** 'Racing Snowplough' **McTurk** was team OC with **Cpl Stu** 'Shakespeare' **Rowles, Cpl Nigel** 'The Eyes' **Stiff, Sig Gus** 'The Buckle' **Crawford** and **Sig Dan** 'How young!?' **Tooke.** Of all the prestigious awards that the Squadron won the most valued was for 'best wipe out' (take a bow **Cpl Rowles**). **Cpl Stiff** was unlucky in crashing out on a few of his slalom runs but still managed fourth place. The cold weather must have affected our kit because 16 Sig Regt, with their 'Gucci' kit managed to win overall but watch out next year 16!

OSCAR TROOP - *by LCpl 'Dinny' Dinsdale*
Tp Comd **Lt Paul Mcturk**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Sean Oliver**

This month I would like to start *The WIRE* notes by congratulating the following people on promotion to Lance Corporal. **Sigs Glen Hislop, Sean Brierley, Dinny Dinsdale** and **John Ritchie**. However commiserations to **Sig Brierley** who only managed eighteen working days before losing his new stripe. Many Congratulations to **LCpl Lee Peacock** on the birth of his daughter in November. After a long and well deserved Christmas leave it was straight into the thick of things with inspections, exercise planning and preparation for an uncertain length Bosnia tour starting in June. During the recent CGS's visit **Sgt** 'Stavros' **Wood** arrived to collect his COMBRITFOR Commendation in the wrong kit and in the rush to get changed he picked up a speeding ticket which he threatened to give to the General since it was obviously his fault!

Sgt 'Spike' Hughes receives the COMBRITFOR Commendation for his work on the initial deployment into Kosovo

Luckily he didn't but well done to him and to **Sgt** 'Spike' **Hughes** and **Cpl Steve Gill** for their Kosovo Commendations. That just about concludes *The WIRE* notes for this month all we have to do now is stop the lads from hiding under their panzers while we get the second line results so that they can prepare for RSIT.

LS & GC Presentations
Back Row (L-R): SSgt Kimber REME, SSgt Patrick R SIGNALS, Sgt Quigley REME
Front Row (L-R): Brig Rollo, Mrs Kimber, Mrs Patrick, Mrs Quigley and Maj Campbell-Black

Best wishes to **Cpl Neil Shillito** for his posting to 7 Sig Regt, **Sig Dave Gould** to 249 AMF(L) Sig Sqn and **Sgt** 'Scouse' **Delaney** now at 19 Regt RA in Colchester.

Brig Rollo tells Cpl 'Scouse' Delaney to get properly dressed or get out of the Sgts' Mess

SUPPORT TROOP
QM **Capt Martin Smith MBE**
RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Doz Day**

The year has started for the QM's Dept as fast and as furious as the end of last year finished with every one busy preparing for the Squadron's next adventure abroad. (The Squadron's next tour to the Balkans is in June of this year.) At present the RQMS is busy on his RQ's course, with which the Department wish him all the best and are looking forward to the RQ arriving back and saying, 'That's alright I am qualified now.' **Cpl Stu Rowles** is busy at Blandford on his Corporals course and the department hope that everything is going well for him. Finally, congratulations to **LCpl Jase Hawksworth** and **Sig Fiona Francis** on their recent selection for promotion - you both deserve the promotion for the hard work that you have given to the Squadron.

MOTOR TRANSPORT - *by Sgt Mick Pryce*

Many man-hours have been spent to ensure that the vehicles and equipment are all up to standard, ready and waiting for the next exercise or deployment. Despite the heavy workload the department still manages to do various sports with **Sig** 'Dumb and Dumber' **Humphreys** playing football (well spending half the game in the goal mouth waiting for the ball) and **Cpl** 'Sillydago' **Sirignano** and **Sig** 'Butch' **Slingsby** playing rugby.

Cpl Rob Sirignano hard at it as usual!

There was even time for the **Cpl** 'Magoo' **Maguire** to get away (yet again) and compete in skiing and preparing for the Lanyard Trophy. However, the heavy workload leading up to Christmas did not stop the MT from taking part in the festive session. The MT would like to welcome **Sig** (now **LCpl**) **Molyneux, Sig Shirkey** from 3 Div and **Sig Reason** from Blandford.

Farewells go to **LCpl** (now **Cpl**) **George Callander** and family on their new posting and **Sig** 'Morgs' **Morgan** to Civ Div.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE
Tech SSgt **SSgt Dave Patrick**
Tech Sgt **Sgt Mick Hanson**

The Tech workshops would like to welcome **Cpl Daz Offord** from 1 Div and **Sig's** 'Mong' **Armstrong** and 'Morph' **Murphy** who have joined the workshops from 216 Sig Sqn, we hope that you all enjoy your stay. Farewell goes to **Cpl Shaun Middleton** who at present is in Blandford on his Corporals' course before starting his T1. The problem that **Shaun** leaves is who is going to keep an eye on **Cpl Guy Keyworth**, there is a strong rumour that **Shaun** has handed this task to **Cpl Dan Taylor**. The Department awaits the return of **Sgt Mick Hanson** who has taken over from **Sgt** (now Staff Sergeant) **Dave Covey** not only in the workshop, but also as the person who must spend his time on a course.

7 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

Sqn Comd **Maj Andy Bristow**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Colin Milne**

Following the re-organisation of the squadron into our operational ORBAT, a series of reports this issue from the new troops immediately prior to our deployment and re-rolling as HQ MNB(C) and Signal Squadron (207).

HEADQUARTERS COMMUNICATIONS TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Adam Corkery**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Dave Sloane**

The beginning of the new millennium has dawned on 207 Sig Sqn but before looking forward to the next year, let's look back on the last two months in the illustrious Bravo Tp. First of all we would like to welcome a few people to the Bravo Clan. First of all **LCpl** 'Brummie' **Hines** who has just arrived for his final year in the Corps; **LCpl** 'Jonno' **Johnston** from 1 Div, **Sig** 'Nigel' **Smith** from 30 Sig Regt and a welcome back into the Corps to **Sig Daz Jardine**. Just prior to Christmas, the Troop was recognised on the sporting scene firstly in canoeing at the BFG championships where **Sig Matt Epton** and **LCpl** 'Glenda' **Dick** achieved first and second in the intermediate single race and, aided by the OC, **Maj Bristow**, achieved Gold in the team event. And more . . . The Corps Ski Championships where a great success with good results for the team of **Lt** 'I've got an Audi TT' **Corkery, Lt** 'A Tp Andy' **Hill** and **Sig Paul Wraight**. The countdown is now almost at an end before our deployment to Kosovo and with it, a chance for a bit of relaxation with no vehicles left to look after. Finally congratulations to **Sig Stevie Sharman** and **LCpl Paul Hines** on their respective engagements, and farewells to **LCpl Pete Ashcroft** - the very best of luck in civilian life, and to **Cpl Adam Harvey** on posting to Tac P.

ROVER TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Andy Hill**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Andy Buckle**

The new millennium started for the majority of us on UNTAT in Sennelager with the second UNTAT to follow a week later. Our preparation for deployment was a swift, intensive and cold one with everything the Squadron owned being packed into boxes, vehicles and ISO's. With vehicles from units all over Germany pooled to Hohne, the pressure mounted as the date of the vehicle move to Emden drew closer. With the old Alpha Tp now re-rolled and renamed Rover Tp, we all bundled into cars and headed for Celle for a day out 'Go-Karting'. It was good to see that there are a few budding Michael Schumachers and also worrying that these were outnumbered by Ayrton Sennas! Ask Sig 'Lurch' **Wilson** what a hairpin is and he'll say it has something to do with girls! We would like to welcome **LCpl Stu Codack** and **Sig Lee** 'I'm off to where?' **Holt** to the Troop - we hope you like hilltops! Finally congratulations to **Cpl** 'Pants' **Underwood** and **LCpl** 'Keanu' **Ross** on them now wearing their new ranks.

SUPPORT TROOP
QM **Capt (QM) Dave Wilson**
RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Eric Udell**

Due to our impending operational deployment, the Department, along with the remainder of the Squadron stood down for the festive period from 10 December until 10 January, following the usual round of celebrations and bashes. An occasion worthy of note was the department's sherry and mince pies event when our newest boys, **Sigs Tug Wilson** and **Ross Ardley** carried off their outstanding performances as both Santa and his Pixie helper respectively - nice tights **Ross**! On return from Christmas leave, the Squadron had restructured and the QM department is now split under the new ORBAT into Technical Support Troop on the QM(T) side and QM(A) has been engulfed by HQ Support Troop.

Millennium bug faults appear only to have affected personal bathroom scales - all sets, both mechanical and digital, appear to be reading about 4lbs heavier than before Christmas! Return to work was closely followed on 12 January by deployment to Sennelager for UNTAT training- this was welcomed by all who attended and a big thank you to 1RHF who not only took on the admin support but also the training support with some excellently orchestrated scenarios combining comedy and information.

Congratulations go to **Sig Bart** and **Shirley Simpson** on the birth of their son in February. A final and special mention must go to **Sgt Al** 'final leg of career' **English** who, as always has overseen the preparation of accounts, paperwork transactions, rewrite of the ET and preparation of the MCCP with the same fine detail as always. **Al** unfortunately leaves the department, Squadron and Army on completion of his colour service shortly after our deployment - we wish you and your family the very best for the future and thanks for all your hard work.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS
ALPINE SKIING CHAMPIONSHIPS 1999
by Sig Paul Wraight

7 Armd Bde made their presence felt at this years alpine ski championships held in Zell-Am-See in Austria. The weather had its say on the first day of racing with almost white-out conditions and minus 15 degrees Celsius temperatures which resulted in cancelling all races that day. The rest of the racing days were clear but still had sub-zero conditions which everyone felt; nevertheless high spirits and enthusiasm made it an enjoyable event in everyone's eyes. The team did quite well, particularly only having three racers and only two days of training prior to racing. **Lt Andy Hill** started us on a winning streak with a bronze in the Individual Men's Giant Slalom and then to follow was **Lt Adam Corkery** who gained a Silver in the Individual Men's Slalom. The team also won Silver in the Team Giant Slalom. At the end of the competition the final Corps seedings were announced with **Lt Adam Corkery** in third place, **Sig Paul Wraight** in sixth and **Lt Andy Hill** in nineteenth.

DON'T BE DISAPPOINTED

Copy for June's issue must be received by 15 April - LATEST

1 MECHANIZED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS & SIGNAL SQUADRON (215)

BENGAL TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Muir**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Storey**

Bengal Tp arrived back at work after a refreshing leave bright eyed and bushy tailed for a new millennium. **Sigs Colling** and **Lindley** were sent on a 432 Commanders Course, and passed with flying colours. Well done to them. Meanwhile all eyes were down in the Troop, as preparation began in earnest for the annual RSIT inspection. Hard work and dedication paid-off as we walked away with an impressive array of gleaming reports. A big pat on the back and congratulations to the whole Troop for such a significant success.

The end of January saw the beginning of a phase of exercises, aimed at ensuring the units battle readiness. Ex Black Swan, Black Triangle, and First Try, all went extremely well, with the exception of Ex Black Triangle, where, due to mechanical failure and bad luck, half of the 432 fleet was VOR'd. Hard work and perseverance saw most of the vehicles back on exercise shortly, and many thanks to all those involved. A tough three weeks on exercise paved the way to a hard-earned week's leave, ready for a brigade exercise in February/March.

Congratulations to **Sigs Angus, Clarke, Dickie, Green** and **Murray** on their promotion to Lance Corporal. Also to **Cpl Scott** on promotion to Sergeant, **Lt Muir** on promotion to Captain and on his engagement to his lovely girlfriend, **Deb,** and to **LCpl** 'Grandad' **Renwick** on passing his course - second time lucky! We also say goodbye to **Capt Muir, SSgt Gosney, Cpl Bird, Cpl Mace, Sig Murray, Sig Griffith, Sig Cattell** and **LCpl Monger** as they are all posted out shortly. Goodbye to **Sig Wilson**, who has been on attachment to us from Blandford for four weeks, before starting his radio systems trade training. Rumour has it that this will be his first choice posting. Welcome to **Sigs Lindley** and **Podesta**, having recently joined the Troop. Goodluck to **Sig Giroux** on his PTI's course. He has been training hard in front of his mirror, on the sun-bed, and apparently now has shares in Brylcreem.

Also in November 1999, a few members of the Troop were lucky enough to catch a week's sailing, Ex Baltic Dragon, aimed at novice sailors to develop team building skills and cohesion within members of the Squadron. The first day consisted of the obligatory safety briefs and basic crew instruction below and on the upper deck, followed by some practice `bumps and grinds`. With all going well we headed off to our first port of call at Cowes for the introduction sail and to leave behind the kind but ever watchful eye of JSASTC Gosport. With the days being short of light at this time of year we started at 0530hrs finishing at around 1600hrs when last light fell. Sailing took place around the whole Solent areas and covered the whole syllabus of the competent crew course with all the members coping with the not so nice weather we had thrown at us ending the week with a severe Gale Force 9. The highlight of the week was **Ricky** 'It's rough as ten t****' **Kinsella**'s nerves rattling louder than the wind every time the boat heeled past ten degrees. Week Two the skipper and mate swapped over, the only drama was leaving Portsmouth harbour when we made a turn to windward and the mainsail ripped right through the third reef stitching. We limped back to Gosport, fitted a new one and stayed the first night there. **LCpl Andy** 'Stugeron' **Cathro** was the only real casualty as he spent most of the day overboard feeding the fish and **Sig** 'Chippie 'Oh my god we are going over' **Pomfret** took the nervousness award for the week, with much the same weather as the week before, severe Gale Force 8 - oh the days of winter sailing.

SABRE TROOP
NORMANDY BATTLEFIELD TOUR

In November 1999 ten Junior NCOs from across the Squadron spent the weekend in Normandy on a battlefield tour of the D Day landings. The tour began with an early start on Saturday morning followed by a minibus drive to Portsmouth to catch the ferry to Le Havre. Whilst on board we made use of the conference room facilities to do some study prior to walking the ground itself. The topics included the Pegasus bridge landings, the 3 Div landings on Sword beach, and the Omaha beach landings as depicted in 'Saving Private Ryan'.

Once in France we drove to Caen to visit the Memorial Museum and to book into our accommodation. The evening was spent enjoying the night life of Caen, with **LCpl Dave Cathro** and **LCpl Phil Chadwick** doing their bit to revenge the beef ban by inflicting themselves on the local women. The following morning we visited Omaha beach itself, walking the ground shown in Saving Private Ryan, and also saw the American war cemetery also shown in the film. At the British cemetery in Bayeaux, **LCpl Andy Campbell** visited the grave of his great uncle who was killed during the landings.

The ferry crossing home on the Sunday night was eventful with **LCpls Andy Hill** and **Neil Smith** performing in the children's dancing competition to the bemusement of the onlooking civilians. At the end of a busy weekend everyone had learnt more about the Normandy landing and are busy planning the next battlefield tour location.

12 MECHANIZED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218) REAR PARTY

by LCpl Nairn
OC Rear Party **Capt Wilson**

With the Squadron on deployment to the sunny Balkans, it was up to the rear party to ensure that the transition from an Airborne Squadron to a Mechanised Squadron was as painless as possible. The first job that ensued was the redecoration of Squadron Headquarters for which we enlisted the help of **Cpl** 'Where's my Zimmer Frame?' **Griffiths** as his extensive knowledge of painting dated back a few years. By the end of the job, more paint was on the floor than on the walls, much to the delight of **Capt Richards**. As soon as we thought our work was finished for the six months, we were then tasked with the immediate removal of the squadron from Arnhem Barracks to the old Logistic Battalion barracks, just 300m's down the road. To top this off we only had two weeks for this task, with just six or seven of us capable of lifting and carrying equipment we sent a SOS to the School of Signals.

'Please send us 25 willing volunteers.'
'To Blandford and the men that were sent a big thanks.'

Anything that was not glued, nailed or screwed down was rapidly moved to our new home in the old Log Bn site. Shortly after moving, two of our new buildings decided to flood due to the plumbing being so old! Making it more appropriate for the Marines to be based there, thankfully for us there wasn't too much damage so the clear up was easily dealt with, if still a bit smelly.

Due to quite a few months having passed there have been some postings in and out. Therefore, we would like to say hello to **2Lt Maskell-Pederson** who has already managed to get a grip on things. **Cpl Jo Biddle** who being heavily pregnant at the time still managed to help out in the Squadron office which allowed **Cpl Richie Symes** to relax even more than normal! Hello also to **LCpl Dale Petty** who has brought with him the knowledge of ASV 432's (so he keeps telling everybody). **Sig Dave Hammond** who has joined the MT and has yet to fill in an FMT 3 much to our surprise. Finally, to **Sig** 'Taz' **Swindells** who was overjoyed to hear that he was going straight out to Banja Luka from training. Unfortunately, we also have to say goodbye to **Capt Wong** who joins the AAC (Air taxi service) and also to our QM, **Capt Burrows**. We would also like to say congratulations to **Cpl** 'Where's my lump gone?' **Biddle** on the birth of her baby boy **Christopher**. We would also like to congratulate **LCpl** 'I must have left my uniform in Bosnia' **Robertson** who has had a baby boy **Joshua**. Also a big slap on the back for **Cpl Paul Starkey** on his recent promotion. I hope that things will begin to settle down now and we can look forward to a well-deserved break over Easter.

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 photographs which cannot be replaced.

238 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS
Sqn Comd **Maj Steve Hunt**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Ewan Hall**

The Squadron has entered the new millennium with the future of Chelsea Bks, a little uncertain. The prominent and distinctive Chelsea flats still stand empty awaiting their fate whilst speculation surrounding the remainder of the barracks continues. All said, the Squadron should remain in Chelsea for at least the foreseeable future unless, of course, we go full circle and return to the delights of Hounslow where those with a passion for aircraft spotting can satisfy their hobby until their hearts are content.

After an uneventful Y2K, over the New Year, the Squadron returned in energetic mood after the long Christmas stand down. There were a number of the Squadron who stayed in London for the millennium celebrations down by the River Thames and from all accounts it was a sight worth seeing

The Deputy Commander London District, **Brig D. R. d'A Willis CBE** paid his initial visit to the Squadron on Thursday 20 January 2000. The aim of the visit was to provide the Brigadier with an initial brief on the role of the Squadron within the Army Communications and Information Systems Group (ACISG), the Squadron's State and ceremonial commitments and the presentation of a GOC 2 Div commendation. **SSgt Andy** 'No problem' **Cannadine** was presented with the GOC's commendation by **Brig d'A Willis** in the Squadron function room immediately after the Camp Commandant's brief. The GOC 2 Div commendation was presented to **SSgt Andy Cannadine** in recognition of his selfless act following an explosion on the *'Lord Trenchard'*, a Joint Services Sailing Centre yacht, berthed in Poole Harbour. **SSgt Andy Cannadine**'s prompt action and disregard for his own safety was instrumental in helping to save the life of the yacht's skipper, who had been badly injured in the explosion.

SSgt Andy Cannadine being presented with the GOCs Commendation from Brig D R d' A Willis CBE

The Squadron, as a whole, got off to a good start on the sporting front in 2000. Led by **Maj (Tfc) Dave** 'Never stop till you drop' **Gilchrist** the Squadron won the LONDIST Badminton Competition and now entered the Army Champs on 21 February 2000. It looks like the Squadron team has regained its rightful place in LONDIST but our thanks do go out to 36 Sig Regt (V) who have helped us out over the recent months. Our Cross Country team paired up with 31 Sig Regt (V) PSIs to gain a very respectable and somewhat unexpected third place in the LONDIST Cross Country Champs held in early December. **Capt Dave Thomas** (31 Sig Regt) and much of the team, still reeling from the surprise of qualifying, set out on a rigorous training programme and despite the interruption of the festive season managed to perform extremely well at the Army Champs - well done. The Squadron said farewell to an extraordinary JNCO in Jan - **LCpl Mick** 'DIY' **Breydin**. **LCpl Breydin** was one of those individuals who was capable of preventing Chelsea Bks from falling down with a couple of planks of wood and some nails. His contribution to the Squadron Bruno Bar, the SHQ rogues gallery and many other matters will long be remembered. The Squadron extends a genuine 'thanks' to **LCpl Mick Breydin** for all his efforts.

MIKE TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt (TOT) Bob Nicol**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Andy Cannadine**

The start of December saw the TOT, **Capt Bob Nicol**, having the odd heart murmur due to the Y2K deadline being almost upon us. **Sgt Chris Jacob's** reply of, 'Don't worry, only 40 more units to check for compliance - shouldn't take more than a day' was wearing a bit thin with the TOT. Well done to **LCpl's Bull, Ford** and **Sig McGuire** for just about finishing on time. The rest of the ACISG section under the watchful gaze of **Sgt Chris** 'whip cracking' **Jacobs**, were again rushed off their feet trying to clear the countless number of computer faults that kept cropping up.

The PA team were again off to Sandhurst for the Sovereigns Parade. This time, however, things didn't run quite as smoothly as usual. The generator used to power the PA system decided to pack in halfway through the inspecting officers speech. Luckily the PA team consisting of **Mr John Aked, Del Tyrrell,** 'Mac' **MacArthur,** 'J-J' **Johnson** and with the able assistance of **LCpl Bull** (such a jack of all trades but...) were well prepared and had alternative sources ready and waiting in the wings. To say that the PA crew are stretched to the limits is an understatement. They even have duties of gardeners at RMA Sandhurst. Mind you the tyre ruts in the Academy's grounds were their own fault.

Finally births, deaths, marriages and promotions. Congratulations go out to **Cpl Dean** 'have your cake and wear it' **Spiers** and wife **Tracy** on the birth of their son **Nathan**. Also to **Cpl Mick Ambler** and **LCpl Keith** 'Sorry I can't do it then, I'm playing cricket for the Army' **Ford** on their well deserved promotions. On a sadder note, **Cpl Gordon McNeillie** has left us for a sunnier climate in Cyprus. The block just won't be the same without ABBA blasting out at 4 o'clock in the morning. Finally, congratulations (and thanks for the beers) go to **SSgt Andy Cannadine** for recently being awarded his GOC 2 Division commendation.

RADIO TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Andy Wilson**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Simon Schofield**

Radio Tp welcomed the new Troop Commander after his extended leave from his last unit. Life in Chelsea Barracks has been quiet and we have had time to bull our boots and press our No 1 Dress for the upcoming season. We even had time to say farewell to **LCpl Mick** 'Del Boy' **Breydin** as he goes back to the real Army in NI. **Mick**'s farewell speech will be remembered by all for some time to come. The Millennium, in London, was something to see especially for those with quarters at Victoria as it was not too far for them to get home at 6.00am!

RECRUITING, ARMY COMPETITION 2000

For those who don't know and have been living in a hole in the ground or in a box during Jan, the Army has launched a recruiting campaign to entice civilians into the fold. We have had many requests for assistance like acting as Rent a Crowd for AFCO Norwich where we all had to look like civvies interested in joining the Army, whilst the recruiters dished out Operation Kenya Competition applications for the press. The ruse did not fool anyone as the press' first question to **Sig Mags** 'Sniper' **West** was 'So, how long have you been in the Army then,' and this was after **Cpl** 'Steptoe' **Storey** gave a brilliant account of how his son, **Sig Toby** 'What's a long wait then' **Green,** had done a Duke of Edinburgh award and wanted to join the nations finest. We also assisted AFCO Croydon with providing a stand of interesting Signals memorabilia, where interested persons could come and see what the Corps do for a living. You can guess that was far too easy. After a couple of hours waiting we saw only one person. **Sig** '006 1/2' **Parker** was then dispatched in his No1 dress to the town centre. His mission was to drum up some business but sadly, after a few phone numbers and wolf whistles from appreciative girls, he was unable to sign any one up. **LCpl Daz** 'love handles' **Pond** had even less luck. All he could do was chat up **Sgt Schofield**'s wife and get her to enter the Operation Kenya competition. No £250 this year then!

4 DIV BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS 2000

'What on earth were we thinking' went across every ones mind as we arrived for the 4 Div Basketball Championships at Aldershot. Here was our Radio Tp team with blue vests borrowed by **LCpl Lee** ' White men definitely can't jump' **Lester**, with various forms of Bermuda shorts and issued trainers. All the other teams had first and second team basketball kits and Gucci Basketball trainers. We thought we would dazzle them with our skill and panache especially with **SSgt Si** 'Stick Boy' **Hadley** coming out of retirement, yet again, for one more match. We were, of course, grossly over rating our potential, however, it was like the Harlem Globe Trotters against Eastbourne under 11s - and we were Eastbourne!

OSCAR TROOP

Tp Comd **Maj (Tfc) Dave Gilchrist**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Karen Ripley**

Now that the silly season is over and the last remains of mince pies and sherry have been consumed on night shift, mostly, it has to be said, by **Cpl Chris Vallance (Val),** we can all look forward to the new year with interoperation. After what the last couple of year's have thrown up for us, then no hurdle should be too hard to overcome.

The first hurdle to overcome was the introduction of a new shift pattern (of sorts). This mainly affected the civilian CO4'S and was introduced on 5 January 2000. The change was brought about by the reorganisation of the COMCENs and the loss, over the next calendar year, of all five Sergeants within the Troop either through end of service, natural wastage and in the case of **Sgt Karen Ellams**, a change of CEQ. The Tp OC, **Maj Dave Gilchrist** and his ever faithful sidekick CO2 **Mr Tony Davis,** along with their personal bodyguards, gave a very thorough brief to the civilian staff and union officials in December regarding the changes and how it would affect the civilian staff. The constraints of leave, courses and illnesses will put a strain on the civilian element especially as there will be no military personnel to cover. This did not seem to go down too well but when the probability of rather large amounts of overtime cropped up, the atmosphere changed instantly. **Mr Ray Cooney** started doing cartwheels over the GOC'S desk. His chief ally, **Mr** 'Dutch' **Holland,** rang his wife immediately to tell her that they could now go on holiday to America, Africa, Australia, Bahamas and Bali. All Dutch has to do now is sort out his leave for the next 18 months - in advance.

Since the introduction of the new shift pattern the CO3, **Miss Donna Wilson** has been inundated with leave applications from everyone trying to get their leave in first. Some people are now looking as far ahead as 2002. She is currently on R + R in the Chelsea and Westminster hospital on the advice of her doctor. The sporting year got off to a flyer for the Troop when they won the Inter Troop badminton competition. The sportsmen and women of the Troop are very eager to get their hands on the trophy this year.

HELLO'S AND GOODBYE'S

The Troop would like to say a fond farewell to **Mr Kevin Osborne**, more affectionately known as OZ, after almost two years here. His home made cooking will be sorely missed by **Sgt** 'Chalky' **White** who is also proving after the Christmas period that you can wear Bergen's on your belly as well as your back. A warm welcome from the Troop goes out to **Cpl Annette McChesney** who has recently arrived from 16 Sig Regt. Finally, all the military members of the Troop would like to take this opportunity to wish all remaining TELE OP DATA'S around the world all the best for the New Year and good luck in the future, as this time next year there will probably be no more of us left.

243 SIGNAL SQUADRON

ACISG BATTLECAMP – *by Sgt Jim Robertson*

Kneeling (L-R): Cpl Stu Powney, Sgt Jim Robertson, LCpl 'Geordie' Gray and Sig John Denyer take time out from the CQB range to pose for the camera.

Exercise Bruno Warrior was the name given to the annual ACISG Battlecamp which this year was organised by members of 238 Sig Sqn (**SSgt Si Hadley** and **Sgt Si Scoffield**). The Camp took the form of a comprehensive range package at Hythe and Lydd range complex. The troops were accommodated at St Martins Plain Camp on the outskirts of Folkestone. The training programme began by refreshing and testing the troops on their basic weapon handling skills leading onto some more advanced techniques on the use of the pistol. Also included was some Bayonet work which was an unforgettable experience for all involved. As the week progressed the Exercise troops moved onto the more unusual ranges which Hythe and Lydd have to offer, such as the Street close quarter battle range and the car ambush.

On the Thursday evening the troops carried out a number of leadership tasks on the watermanship area of the Lydd complex, this was followed by a barbecue and a few skits laid on by the Sections. On the Friday morning the Exercise concluded with a round-robin which included the attack on the Skills House, the assault course followed by a pistol shoot and a presentation of trophies and certificates for best fire team and top shots. To all involved, the Exercise was a great success and our thanks go to 238 Sig Sqn for putting together a great two weeks. See you all at Sennybridge in May.

T TROOP NEWS – *by Sig Ronaldo Warwick*

On Wednesday 19 January 2000 the unit took part in a friendly 5-a-side football match against the Chefs from Tidworth, we managed to field two teams of players **Foreman** 'Fat Controller' **Sanderson, WO2** 'No Uniform' **Smith, Sgt Allwork** 'except on Friday afternoons', **Cpl Andy** 'No Uniform' **Shepherd, LCpl Ian** 'Maccum' **Pearce, LCpl Oliver** 'Never sober' **Gray, LCpl Mike** 'Gringo Geek' **Joyce, LCpl Claire Sheehan, LCpl Ian** 'Froggy' **Welsh, Sig** 'Ronaldo' **Warwick** and **Geraint** 'Civvy' **Jones**. The matches consisted of two seven minute halves. Everyone gave their best with great enthusiasm and good fun was had by all. Of the four games played we did manage to win at least one but we had to admit the Chefs had the better of the day.

ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES

The Squadron would like to welcome four new members **SSgt (FofS) Epps, Cpl Daz Dales, LCpl Ian Pearce** and last but not least **Sig Simon Sydney Hill**. We bid farewell to **WO2 (FofS) Ty Sanderson** who has left the Squadron and the Army for civvy street. Good luck **Ty**.

CHANGED YOUR ADDRESS?

DON'T FORGET TO LET US KNOW, SO YOU CAN STILL RECEIVE YOUR COPY OF *THE WIRE*

249 SIGNAL SQUADRON (AMF(L))

Sqn Comd **Maj D. B. Hudson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) K. Marsh**

Since the last time that the Sqn appeared on its own page in *The WIRE* we have completed a tour of Bosnia, squeezed in some well-earned leave, before re-deploying to Norway on Ex Hardfall 2000. There have been many promotions and postings in and out, of particular note are the selections for promotion of **Sgt Phil Render** and **Cpl (Local Sgt) Mick Hatton** - both unexpected, but hoped for, and well deserved. Other promotions are: To Corporal, **LCpls Jones, Samuel** and **Noviss**. To Lance Corporal, **Sigs Ellis, Welburn, Tierney, Rutherford, Vallance, Sustins, Huggett** and **Dudley**. Congratulations to you all.

THE SQUADRON CHRISTMAS PARTY - *by Cpl Clarke*

'Got a lot of Moneypenny, fancy a bit of Pussy Galore' So read the orders, following the Rugby, for Bond and his fellow agents to gather at the exclusive XL club. There was gathered a fine array of Secret Agents and Bond 'Girls??' for an evening of fun and frivolity. The cloakroom experienced the first problems - trying to find place for **Agent Stokoe**'s flippers and **Agent Samuel**'s Oxygen tank.

A lot of effort had gone into the costumes, of particular note was **Agent** 'Austin Powers' **Botwright**, whose costumes was only eclipsed by his arch enemy **Anti-Agent** 'Mini-me' **Bailey** who won best costume, only to be disqualified when he admitted to not dressing up and that he was only there for the free food.

The evening continued to go well and was finished off in fine style (polite cough) by **Agent Berry**'s off the cuff strip - which went a long way towards helping the XL staff clear the dance floor and the rest of the club. Finally, an array of female underwear was found by the club staff. Names inside were **Tones, Berry** and **Scott**. Please re-claim at your convenience.

IMPERIAL CANCER RESEARCH - *by LCpl Douglas*

In the February edition of *'The Wire'* we reported on a 24hr fund-raising event for the Imperial Cancer Research Fund that had taken place whilst the Squadron was deployed with 20 Armd Bde in Bosnia. The event involving 36 people (from a variety of units) using step, cycling and rowing machines was well supported by all based in HQ MND(SW). On completion of the event the, normally, hard work of collecting money from those who had pledged it proved remarkably easy.

We returned to UK with a sizeable amount of Deutschmarks which was quickly translated into £2091.53. The next step was to take our 'wedge' and present it to the nearest Imperial Cancer Research Fund Office in Tolworth. For obvious reasons not all of the 36 team could be there to present the cheque. So four members of the Squadron, who had taken part in the event, sallied forth to hand it over. In Tolworth we were met by **Mr Simon Pugh**, who runs that particular office, and after he had been given a short description of the event we gave him the cheque.

It was by no means the largest or smallest amount ever raised, but every penny was appreciated and extremely well received. The work of charities such as these often goes unnoticed, unless you are unfortunate enough ever to need them. I would seriously consider organising another event after the success of this one. For anybody considering such a thing, it is very easy to organise and extremely worthwhile. Finally, two further cheques arrived in the New Year which brought the final total raised to £2231.55. Thank you to all those involved in the event and those who remained true to their pledges and handed over the cash.

(L-R): LCpl Douglas, Capt Stokoe, Mr Pugh, LCpl Ellis, LCpl Bury and the cheque

NOVICE SKI AND SURVIVAL COURSE - *by Cpl 'Loddy' Jones*

On arriving in Norway for the first time my worst fears were realised. There was snow everywhere, it was freezing and I really was going to need the mountain of equipment I had been issued on joining the Squadron. Thoughts like 'It can't be too cold can it?' soon dispersed as I found myself severely underdressed in just a smock and T-shirt. Well you live and learn.

On arrival at Mjolfjell Camp, our home for the foreseeable future, we were issued with yet more kit and these very long items I now know to be skis. The next day myself and my fellow non-skiers met our Military Ski Instructors (MSI). **Cpl** 'See its easy' **Samuel** gave us an excellent demonstration which had me thinking 'Well, that doesn't look too hard'. WRONG! I soon wondered why I was sat on my butt in the snow after trying the seemingly simple manoeuvre of standing up.

Sgt 'Tony' McBean - On the skis, now try moving

It was not a total disaster and as the week progressed our skiing ability improved - well sort of. We could now stand up for a short period of time anyway. Moving on from that to a night out was a step up again. Deployed in four man tents, or should I say very small man tents. It was here that we came to understand the phrase 'tent Rhino'. Four people dressed as Michelin men trying to do their admin in a tent designed for pygmies would test the most organised of field soldier. Following our cramped accommodation we moved to the comparative luxury of a ten-man tent. This mini-deployment was topped off by the ice-breaking drills the next day. Cold doesn't even get close.

Cpl Si Upcraft feels the shock of the cold

Redeployment, back to camp and night out in Voss followed. Sunday brought the issue of yet more kit and preparation for the second deployment phase. A night in the pygmy tents was followed by a night in snow-holes. Basically digging all day and all night to sleep in, if you don't mind enclosed spaces. Then, in order to qualify for the second S in NSSC, we moved onto the survival night. We had everything demonstrated from fire starting and brushwood shelters to sheep slaughtering - not popular with me as I'm a Welshman. Essentially all the skills required to survive in the Arctic. It was not that cold as building the brushwood shelters and cutting the wood to keep the very large fire going was enough to keep anybody warm. No sleep and little food meant that everybody was pretty tired by the time we returned to Mjolfjell on Friday morning, as if that wasn't enough we had to take part in a 12km ski race on Saturday, 6km uphill, followed by a mad 6km descent, it was not for the faint-hearted. This was followed by an apparently obligatory toga party at Mjolfjell on

Saturday evening. As I write the course has not finished as we are deployed on the Winter Warfare phase of it. I can say that the course has been immensely enjoyable and a worthwhile experience for all.

COLD WEATHER WARFARE INSTRUCTORS COURSE
by Sgt Raybould

The CWWI course is the highest cold weather qualification that any rank can attain whilst serving with 249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L)); and for our sins (or are we just lucky?) myself and **Sgt Pete Lawn** were put forward to be the chosen ones. Once qualified we would be expected to advise the OC Sqn on all matters of cold weather operations and training. It also allows us to run the Sqn's Novice Ski and Survival Course (NSSC) which is required by all members of the Squadron to enable them to deploy to the Arctic and carry out their role. Having been brought back from Bosnia early to attend this course, it had already got a big tick in the box from **Pete** and myself. That initial euphoria was short lived, as when we arrived in Norway there was no snow and things didn't look promising for our course. After ten days of struggling by the D/S to stick to the programme, they decided to move us to a glacier near Jondal where we would be guaranteed snow and therefore be able to achieve the training objectives to gain the qualification. Once there we had more snow than you could wish for, however, we then had to put up with winds sometimes in excess of 60 knots. It all seemed a bit like out of the frying pan and into the fire. However, after spending many nights out and every possible chance on skis we had not achieved all the objectives, which left everyone concerned in a bit of a dilemma. It was therefore decided to bring the whole course back on 9 January 2000 to complete the remaining objectives such as ice breaking and snow holes and I'm pleased to say everything went very well. **Sgt Pete Lawn** and myself are now qualified CWWI's and looking forward to our first challenge, which will be the Sqn's NSSC in February 2000.

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj John Oakes**
SSM **WO2 (SSM)** 'Smudge' **Smith**

FAREWELLS

The Squadron says a farewell to the following people **SSgt Dave Whiting** who now leaves the Army after completing 22 years Service good luck with your new career and **LCpl Nikki Dean** who is posted to Arborfield as a 'Gym Queen' congratulations also on passing your PTI Class 2.

PROMOTIONS

Congratulations go to the following Squadron personnel for their recent promotions **Cpl Julie Bateman, Cpl Mark Sheath, LCpl Ruth Harkness** and **LCpl Dave Hunter**.

NVQ PRESENTATION TO THE SQUADRON

NVQ Presentation to 251 Signal Squadron at Bicester (L–R): Maj John Oakes, Mr Robert Boreland, Mr Ian Mathews, Brig Foxton, Mr Alan Westgarth, Mr Ernest Spears, Mr Derek Keen

Brig Foxton, Bicester Garrison Commander, visited Bicester COMMCEN (a Detachment of 251 Sig Sqn) on the 25 October 1999 to present four members of staff with their National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) certificates. Bicester is a very busy COMMCEN whose main customer is the new Defence Logistics Organisation. It has taken the recipients of the award over six months to compile and prepare their submissions for assessment and accreditation. The four COMMCEN staff who received their certificates were **Mr Robert Borland, Mr Ian Matthews, Mr Alan Westgarth** and **Mr Ernest Spear.** The recipients who are all communication officers are the first in the Squadron to obtain NVQ qualifications in Operating and Maintaining Telecommunication Equipment at Level 3.

GOSPORT HALF MARATHON
IN SUPPORT OF THE BABY TINA APPEAL
by Cpl Sheath

Whilst on night shift in the COMMCEN one Saturday which is not renowned for being the most exciting place in the world I decided after reading an article in *Women's Own* about the plight of a baby called **Tina** who had survived a tragic house fire with horrific burns to the body, (in fact over 80%) to raise some money for her treatment which was only available in America. For a while her life was in the balance as her lungs were severely damaged by smoke. With the Gosport Marathon approaching I decided to participate and to get sponsors for the race. The day of the race arrived and I completed the race in a time of 1 hour 45 minutes. Even though at the end of the race I had cramp in both of my legs I felt some achievement knowing the money which had been raised was going to such a worthy cause.

259 SIGNAL SQUADRON

SIGNALS TAKE TO THE SADDLES

11 Soldiers and Officers from 259 Sig Sqn saddled up to take children and adults from a local disabled home horse riding for a day. 20 children and young disabled adults from the Margarita Liasidou Home in Paphos travelled to Happy Valley with their helpers for a fun packed day horse riding with a BBQ lunch at the 259 Signals Jimmy Club to follow. 'This is a wonderful opportunity for the children and adults to do something different and made for a very special day.' said **Mrs Ismini Liasidou Saul** who runs the care centre, 'They have all had a wonderful time.' **2nd Lt Sarah Covey-Crump** organised the event as part of an on going local community relation's project adopted by the Unit. The hugely successful day was made possible thanks to the expertise from the Riding for the Disabled Association who provided instructors and two ponies. Volunteers from the Episkopi Saddle Club also assisted and provided one of their horses. The other members of the team from 259 Sig Sqn were **Capt Katie Caie, SSgt Jim Duncan, SSgt Rachel Kidby, Sgt Dave Street, Sigs Wil Le Cras, Andrew Wells, Guy Thomson, Nick Kervell, Sue Taylor** and **Ronald Fletcher**.

If you're visiting Bournemouth or Poole,
why not combine it with a visit to
The Royal Signals Museum, Blandford Camp
01258 482248 for opening times

101 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS & SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

Sqn Comd **Maj Mark Baines**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Paul Brown**

BACKGROUND

101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (261) was formed while deployed on Op Agricola during the summer of 1999 as a result of the Strategic Defence Review. The Brigade traces its history back to the D-Day Landing, in Normandy, where 101 Beach Sub Area supported the 3rd British Division landings over 'Roger' and 'Queen' beaches in the Sword Sector. The new communications unit evolved from 604 Sig Tp and was designated as 261 Sig Sqn, which re-activates that Squadron number previously used in Cyprus in the early 1960s. The distinctive Blackadder badge previously worn by 604 Sig Tp is now worn throughout 101 Log Bde. It originated from a logistic base set up during the Gulf War named after the Blackadder TV series.

ROLE

This new independent Signal Squadron supports HQ 101 Logistic Brigade which itself has evolved from the Combat Service Support Group (UK). The formation provides third line logistic support throughout operational deployments and also provides the basis of a Joint Force Logistic Component or a UK National Support Element (NSE) HQ. At present the Brigade includes 9 Sup Regt, 10 and 27 Tpt Regts, 22 and 33 Fd Hosp, 4 Fd Amb and 84 FMed.

ORGANISATION

The new Squadron is currently organised into an SHQ, Radio and Support Tps and will also have a Trunk Tp when new CORMORANT equipment comes into service. The full establishment includes five officers and 135 other ranks and those excellent people in the R SIGNALS MCM Div are now busy filling many of these posts - so get your preference postings in now! Equipped with Landrover mounted VHF and HF radio (including WOTAN equipment for passing data), the unit is already busy taking on exercise, RAAT and sporting commitments.

RECENT ACTIVITY

The Squadron returned from a successful tour on Op Agricola in September 1999. The unit had detachments in Greece, Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo and had a very busy tour, particularly during the refugee crises when great efforts were devoted to building a series of tented camps eg Stenkovic 1 shown on photograph. The Brigade open day in November provided an opportunity for **Sgt Pete Mullen** and **Sigs John Bromhead** and **Sam Yardley** to be presented with some of the first Kosovo medals by DCinC LAND.

Sigs John Bromhead and Sam Yardley with Sgt Pete Mullen showing their Kosovo medals alongside the TAC HQ and the 101 Log Bde Open Day

101 Log Bde TAC HQ in Albania

101 Log Bde RRB site enjoying the Macedonian winter!

101 Log Bde RRB site on the KRIVOLAC training area in Macedonia

Over the next few weeks the Aldershot bars were frequented by most of the squadron, fresh with all of their war stories, not least the mention of **Cpl Tim** 'Woodlouse' **Bishop's** new idea of Arctic Warfare.

Cpl Bishop gripping his personal 'weapon'

EXERCISE QUANTUM STRIDE 1999

After a months welcome leave, the squadron returned to work sporting new found beer bellies and empty bank accounts, only to learn that the SSM had organised a Battle Camp for the following week. This kicked off with a 24 hour survival phase, which was enjoyed by one and all,

especially **Sig John** 'the firebug' **Bromhead** setting his boots on fire, and having to spend the rest of the week with his 'Mark 1' Matterhorn held together with Cam string. (Next year **John**, take a spare pair of boots.) Onto the next phase, and the unit was split into three sections, which is where the problems began! After being issued with their six-shooters and Stetsons, the three Sections made their way to their harbour locations, with the notable exception of Section 2, who were last seen heading for the M3 under the expert direction of **LCpl Tony** 'tin-ribs' **Willis** (Where were you going Tony?)

Over the next three days, each Section was asked to perform various tasks, like moving from one location to another and digging holes! Some of the better Sections were allowed to conduct COP and re-sup tasks, however this caused more problems than solutions, with Section 1 failing miserably to collect their rations on several occasions! After three days of low morale and admin grenades, the three sections met for the final assault. Section 1, led by **LCpl Graham Chambers** were doing well, up to the point where the enemy opened fire, where it all went pear-shaped - again! Better luck next year lads, see you for the debrief in the pub!

Cpl Steve Francis models the new 'tortoise' pattern helmet!

WOTAN DATA RADIO SYSTEM

The unit has been issued with the WOTAN DRS, which has provided many an opportunity for various members of the troop to be sent on the Harris training course. Fat lot of good that did, as our **Tech Sgt Col** 'The Beer Monster' **Bentley** and **Cpl Ian** 'Who?' **Galloway** have both been prominent by their absence since September! Now, after several attempts to bluff our way through it, we have been tasked to train the RLC and Medic units from 101 Log Bde! (Suppose we better learn how to use it ourselves before March). After a small lesson in the classroom, ably conducted by **LCpl Dave** 'What's this?' **Howie** and hindered by 'The Beer Monster', the members of the Troop were deployed on the local training area to test the system. Unsurprisingly, it all went Pete Tong, with **Sig John** 'the firebug' **Bromhead** setting fire to one of the PC's, and not one data message being passed. No change there, then! The main effort of the training deployment of the system was to see how quickly the operators could break the kit! Having proved that civvy kit is definitely not 'Squaddie-proof' WOTAN has been left dormant since Christmas but, after a quick dusting off, it returns with a vengeance later this month to educate the RLC, medics and engineers in the fine art of losing comms on HF, an art which, until now, has been the exclusive right of the Corps. No longer will Sporadic E and Sun spots be accepted as an excuse!

EXERCISE WESSEX WARRIOR

Ex Wessex Warrior supporting 1 BW on their TESEX on Salisbury Plain was the next mission for the former fighting 604th. The Exercise started with the Troop's own Tiger Woods demonstrating his ability to swerve a golf ball around his body and knock himself out leading to an entertaining afternoon in the local hospital, well done **Sig Lee** 'Tiger' **Mason**. The week progressed with the operators being used as chauffeurs for the staff officers who seemed to expect our Land Rovers to keep up with Challenger 2 racing over the plain at 60kph (nice try **Sig Andy** 'Wah man' **Holden**).

OTHER NEWS

As the Squadron grows the OC is entering sports competitions whenever a team can be raised. This began with the Corps Cross Country where **Maj Baines**, **SSgt Dave Wright** RLC, **Cpl** 'Taff' **Lean**, **Sigs Dale Richardson**, 'Chopper' **Harris** and **Paddy Grierson** achieved a creditable fourth place in the Minor Unit Competion. The girls team press-ganged every available female in the unit including **Cpl** 'Titch' **Gorstridge** RLC and **Sigs Emma Redfearn** and **Ruth Kennedy** who ran bravely to put the unit on the scoreboard. Congratulations to **Sig Gav Holloway** getting his first and **LCpl** 'Simmo' **Simpson** getting his second. A quick hello to **WO2 (RQMS) Jim Alger**, **Sgt Jim Turnbull**, **Cpl Taff Lean**, **LCpl Ronnie Cuthbert**, and **Sig Carl Conley**. Also Goodbye to **LCpl John Abbot** on promotion and posting to Blandford as SOinC's driver!

As this goes to press **Lt Lucy Thirsk** is leading an intrepid bunch of skiers in Bavaria and **Cpl Bishop** is preparing a different set of bold explorers for some seriously wet adventure training in Wales. The Squadron has a series of exercises throughout this year leading up to the Cambrian Patrol in October and a deployment to OMAN scheduled next year.

81 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

CHANGE OF COMMAND

As a result of SDR, 81 Sig Sqn (V) left the command of 21 Sig Regt (Air Support) on 1 September 1999 after seven years as part of the Regiment. This was a unique unit with 21/2 regular Squadrons and 21/2 TA Squadrons which had worked effectively embracing the 'one concept army', what a pity to go backwards once more. This also ended a long association with the Regiment having supported them in BAOR, on the four clutch airfields since the late sixties. Thank you 21 Sig Regt for your help and friendship over these years.

The Squadron is now under 2 (NC) Sig Bde as part of the Army Communications Systems Group (ACISG). We moved over the short distance to Corsham on 27 September 1999, and we have been made most welcome. As well as continuing our current role, exciting new avenues are opening up and we look forward to them with increased enthusiasm.

CO 21 Signal Regiment (AS) hands over the Squadron flag to the CO ACIS

During our annual planning weekend, we held a small parade on Sunday 28 November 1999, to mark the occasion of our move to 2 (NC) Sig Bde. The parade was held on the square at Basil Hill Barracks, Corsham. **Brig S. G. Hughes**, Commander 2 (NC) Sig Bde took the salute and presented **SSgt Bob Maxted**, the Sqn PSI, with his LS&GC medal. He also oversaw Commanding Officer 21 Sig Regt (AS), **Lt Col John Terrington**, hand over the Squadron flag to Commanding Officer ACISG **Lt Col Carsy**. The Garrison Padre, **Rev M. McKnight**, held a short service after the presentation.

SSgt Bob Maxted receives his LS&GC Medal from Brig Hughes

The Squadron's first deployment since the move was 854 Tp deploying to the Falkland Islands to work on a number of projects on Mount Pleasant Airfield (MPA). This was part of an ongoing task to improve and replace the ageing communications infrastructure on MPA. Exercise Falkland Sound was the final deployment of the year for the Squadron, which has already completed valuable work in Germany, Cyprus, Ascension Islands and Gibraltar. The Exercise involved elements of 854 Tp deploying to MPA between 26 October and 18 November 1999. During the exercise the Master of Signals, **Maj Gen Sprackling** visited both the Squadron and the Joint Communications Unit Falkland Islands (JCUFI). He met two detachments of the Troop that were involved in installing 7.5km of fibre cable around the north of the airfield and took time to talk to all members of the Squadron.

Each day, the Tp SSgt, **SSgt Paul Masheter**, would ask for a list of predicaments and highlights from the previous day. Labelled as 'Magic Moments' here are a selection: The medical centre staff were overworked taking care of an unexpected ailment. Explanations had to be made in letters home as to how we had packed and worn our thermal underwear, yet managed to get mild sunburn. A new member of the Troop, inexperienced in laying fibre cable was on the fibre cable drum, feeding 2000m of cable into the duct. After 20mins, the det comd asked how much cable had gone into the duct. Reading the scale on the cable itself can identify this. The reply was 'one thousand nine hundred and ninety nine metres'. Laughter followed, as 1999 was actually the date the cable had been manufactured and not the remaining cable length! It wasn't all hard work and a number of trips known as BFT (Beveridge Falkland Tours), were organised by **SSgt Beveridge,** our Falklands Liaison Officer (FLO). Party 1 followed in the footsteps of the Scots Guards to Mount Tumbledown, not satisfied with the 8km walk they decided to walk to Stanley and finished the trip by visiting the war memorial.

On a trip to Martha's Beach our CTR (Close Target Recce) skills were used to crawl up to the penguins, one of the team narrowly missed getting covered in excrement from a similarity inquisitive penguin with better CTR skills. Party 2 took a trip to Darwin, Goose Green, and then on to San Carlos with a gruelling four hour round trip in the back of a four tonner along potholed and bumpy roads. However, the journey was well worth it for the panoramic views and the visit to the war memorial at San Carlos where so many of our young soldiers lost their lives. When the Troop was leaving there was a presentation to FLO who was overcome by the engraved tankard given in appreciation for all of the stimulating event's organised by BFT plc. Unfortunately, the tankard was dropped during the presentation. However, **SSgt Beverage** said that he would treasure the dent forever.

Members of 854 Tp and JCUFI, with the Master of Signals during his visit to the Falklands last year

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT FALKLAND ISLANDS

UNIT HEADQUARTERS

OC **Maj C. J. McIntosh**
USM **WO2 D. Rook**

With the Army Element nearing the end of its roulement, we would like to thank the purple efforts of the RAF and Navy for a most enjoyable tour of these barren lands. Even with our imminent departure, there are several welcomes to be made. Firstly to the new Ops Offr, **Capt Phil Day** and then to Asst Ops, **Lt** 'Tour Dodger' **Gunson**, filling in for **Capt** 'Can't Hack It' **Nichols** who has returned early to Herford. A special welcome is reserved for the most popular man on the islands, **2Lt Bill Calderhead**. I am sure his popularity has nothing to do with the fact that Burns Night has just gone and he is one of only two bagpipers on the Island. The past months have seen a scorchingly hot Christmas and Millennium pass with more leave than we knew what to do with. Two whole days is an awful lot down here!

EXERCISE WANDERING ATOM 2
ROLL-OF-HONOUR

SSgt Mal Pavier, Sgt Shaun Arundel, PO Russ Ashmore, Sgt Karen Baker, Sgt 'Kitch' **Kitchener, Sgt Chris Leader, JT Tony McLoughlin, JT Paul Keating, Sig Matt Rees, LCpl Lenny Lenagen.** At 0815hrs on Saturday morning ten members of JCUFI gathered at Heli-ops to take part in the second of the Wandering Atom Walks (aka Wandering/Bimbling Idiots). The purpose of this little walk in the mountains was to reach the summit of Mt Usbourne (the highest peak in the Falkland Islands) and visit the remains of aircraft and vehicles abandoned during the Falklands War. Before leaving **SSgt Pavier**, told us that the second leg of the walk wouldn't be possible due to an unfortunately early Heli-pickup on Sunday, but this didn't dampen our spirits. We took off at 0900hrs for our base camp on the lower slopes of Mt Usborne, arriving at 0930hrs. We quickly offloaded the bergens and put up the tents then set off on the first leg of our walk. We hadn't even begun when **Sgt Chris Leader** managed to find a hole to bury his leg in less than 5m from the tents! After the obligatory mickey take we began our climb. From the bottom it didn't look too bad or too far a walk to the summit but we were soon going to find out how wrong we were. The entire trip to the top of Mt Usborne was uphill and not a gentle climb but in most places a 60 to 70 degree slope, which made it murder on the old calves and lungs of those less fit! To make matters worse no sooner had we reached what we thought was the top, we saw another mountain had grown in front of us and we had another section to climb. After the third false peak we finally saw the top which couldn't have come sooner, we had climbed the 2500 feet in an hour and twenty minutes which wasn't bad going. We all signed the book to say that we had survived the climb and joined the list of people to have already done so. From here it was just a case of walking along the ridgeline and admiring the view, that was until we came across a small lake just below the ridge. A number of the more adventurous party members shot off down the hill (literally) backsides to the ground, for a spot of skinny-dipping. The rest of us followed them down with myself and a few of the others eager to follow suit. After recovering from the shock we quickly got out and dressed just in time before **Sgt Karen Baker** turned up. She quickly disappeared around the corner and went for her own solitary swim before we set off back towards camp.

We reached the valley floor and decided to try and do the second days walk seeing as we had completed the first part in four hours (which included a kip on the side of the mountain for 20 mins) and headed off in search of the wrecks. The first we saw of them was the remains of an aircraft in the distance. After looking around at several rusty remains, posing for photographs and a good rummage around we made our way back to the campsite. For the rest of the evening we sat around our

imaginary campfire (no trees here!) telling war stories before we got our heads down for the night. Endex was at 1100hrs on the Sunday which let us have a bit of a lie in before we struck camp and got ready for the taxi (sorry Sikorsky) to come and take us back to MPA and a much looked forward to spell in our beds.

ALPHA TROOP
Tp Comd **Flt Lt C. Hamilton** (RAF)
Tp SSgt **SSgt S. Dewar**

RADCON - *by Sig 'CockaRocha' Roche*

Firstly, I would like to say a big hello to the new members of the Radcon crew from all the 'Rocketeers'. Their names are **Cpl** 'Wilf' **Williams** and **Flt** 'Joe Pesci' **Hamilton**, also the 'Rocketeers' would like to say good luck to **Cpl** 'Austin' **Dawson,** who has now left us to pursue his career at Blandford. Well it's about half way through the tour with the joint 'All Arms' and the 'Signals', and everything is running as smooth as can be. Since being seen in the eyes of the hierarchy as one of the fittest troops in JCUFI, Radcon decided to enter a team into the 'Pembrook Half Marathon' which was on the Sunday 5 December. It consisted of **LCpl** 'Lenny' **Lenaghen, Tpr** 'Nelly' **Porter** and last of all me, **Sig** 'CockaRocha' **Roche.** The day was a standard Falklands day, consisting of high winds, lots of rain and altogether very cold. To show how fit Radcon really was 'Nelly' and I decided to run in boots and combats. The going was tough but everyone finished within two hours with the exception of a certain individual who finished in an ambulance (the author). Although the team came last, I think, Radcon proved that they had the most 'bottle'. It was an exhausting but enjoyable day out.

As you all know when the festive season arrives everyone starts to get silly (even the seniors) and on 21 December the seniors challenged the juniors to a game of football, in which three of the 'Rocketeers' participated. These were **Cpl** 'Austin' **Dawson, Tpr** 'Madjock' **McCue** and **Tpr** 'Soon-to-be-civvy' **Williams**. Because Radcon were playing the juniors won the day with a 2-0 score, where both goals were scored by 'Madjock' **McCue,** or so he says. Christmas Eve saw the next instalment of the football extravaganza with the 'Combined 5-a-side football tournament'. A team was entered from Radcon which consisted of **Cpl** 'Austin' **Dawson, Sig** 'Brickybutt' **Burrell, Cpl** 'OddBall' **Collier, Sig** 'Ginge' **Turner** and **Tpr** 'Soon-to-be-civvy' **Williams.** Four games were played as a qualifier with the top two teams going through to a final draw. Radcon faced the 'RIC'(0-5 win), 'JSSU'(0-7 win), 'MRS'(0-11 win) and 'Clerks'(0-27 win). With 'Austin' **Dawson** on form with his Demon right foot and 'OddBall' **Collier** unstoppable in goal the 'Rocketeers' were on for a dead-cert trophy. Radcon were not allowed to go into the finals because the scores above were made up and Radcon actually got hammered in all four games. Christmas day was next to become a day full of fun. In the morning there was 'It's a knockout' and in the afternoon there was a get together for all JCUFI, which involved a barbecue and lots of beer. The 'Rocketeers' were only able to supply two people for the 'It's a knockout' which were **Sig** 'St. Helenian' **Brydon** and **LCpl** 'Mini-me' **Hutchinson.** Unfortunately the team that they were in, had trouble getting to grips with the game or so they say, what with 'St. Helenian' **Brydon** hitting another player's head with a dustbin and some other crazy things happening it was a great competition. After the 'It's a knockout' there was a 'Tug of war' competition and while this was going on the barbecue got underway. There were two teams in the competition, the seniors verses the juniors (seniors were feeling brave again). Two of the junior team members were on loan from the 'Rocketeers'; they were **Sig** 'St. Helenian' **Brydon** and **Gnr** 'Action man' **Stevenson**. They were tough and ready for the challenge, but unfortunately they weren't quite up to it because the seniors beat the juniors with two straight pulls. After all the fun and games there was lots of food and beer to be drunk with lots of socialising.

On Wednesday 29 December, there was an event that the 'Resident Rapier Squadron' (RRS) had organised called the 'Rockhopper Challenge'. They invited everyone to participate and so the 'Rocketeers' entered a four-man team, which consisted of **LCpl** 'Cowman' **Cowley, Sig** 'Ginge' **Turner, Tpr** 'Nelly' **Porter** and **Gnr** 'Vasquez' **Boyle**. The day was hot and this made the 12km hike hard work for the four 'Rockateers' but they tried their hardest. There were four stands beginning with a First Aid scenario where 'Ginge' had trouble applying the KY jelly to the unsuspecting, injured female (or so his team mates said). The second stand was a falling plate competition where all the team members had to shoot down ten plates in as little time as possible and with as little ammo as possible. Setting the standard the **'Rocketeers'** pulled off an excellent score. The third stand was an observation stand and the team had to look in a certain area and locate as many items as possible in a certain time. Unfortunately due to the 'Cowman's' old age he was as blind as a bat and spotted almost nothing. After all the running and all the stands were finished the scores and places were told and the 'Rocketeers' came first (again according to the author who, at best, has an unreliable ability to remember the truth).

On Wednesday night a group from Radcon had the chance to go Go-Carting at the MPA course. There were six of us in total; they were **Sgt.** 'Bowser' **Lawson, Cpl** 'Austin' **Dawson, Sig** 'Brickybutt' **Burrell, Sig** 'CockaRocha' **Roche, Sig** 'St. Helenian' **Brydon** and **Tpr** 'Soon-to-be-civvy' **Williams.** The races all started well with the exception of the last qualifier (which happened to have three 'Rocketeers' in it) which was stopped on the first lap due to dangerous driving. After a few qualifiers the top drivers went through to the semi-finals and due to a poor draw the three people that went through were all in the same race. After a flying start Radcon had the first three places and were looking set to get into the final, but because of no team orders the three drivers were not satisfied and started to get competitive. On Lap 4 of a 7 Lap race 'St. Helenian' got a little over excited and forgot to turn the wheel. Because of this she went flying through the tyres and along the grass. Also being a women driver didn't help because she decided to keep accelerating instead of braking. At this stage the other two drivers were laughing that much that they were overtaken by the last place driver. The final eventually started and unfortunately Radcon's hopes were resting on the only player that got through and that was **'Bowser',** but after ten laps of racing Radcon were able to keep proud with 'Bowser' coming in Second. There was a podium with a bubbly award and 'Bowser' (being heavy handed) tried to open the bottle using an unconventional method and a wall. The evening was really good and appreciated by everyone. The millennium was the next thing to turn up and unfortunately because I had to work I'm not going to talk about it.

The last thing I am going to talk about is the final senior challenge, feeling brave again they decided to take the juniors on at basketball. The start was drawn out and both teams were unable to score against each other, but after 13mins 'Rocketeer Roche' decided to play for the other team and put it in the juniors basket. After the 0-0 score line was broken it seemed easy to score and at the end of 40 minutes the score was 22-18 to the juniors, so once again the seniors had to settle for first losers.

THE RAFT RACE
ROLL OF HONOUR
SSgt Mal Pavier Sig Ali Moore Potter SAC Paul Redford
Sgt Shaun Arundel Sig Martyn Sig Claire Brydon

Where else to start than at the beginning, so here we go. It was a normal day in the COMMCEN (normal as can be for C Watch) when **Sgt Shaun Arundel** entered our boudoir to see if anyone was interested in the Stanley Raft Race, so as the old saying 'never volunteer' goes, we volunteered - Dur! The first thing we had to do was decide what we where going to use to build the Raft. After a few ideas bouncing around, it was decided to get in touch with 1435 Flt to see if we could scrounge an old Tip Tank from a Tornado. With the many thanks to 1435 Flt this was acquired, all we had to do then was to get the Tip Tank from 1435 Flt to Gull Pond for a test run, easier said than done!

It took a four tonner and the brute force of the raft crew and **Cpl Kev Woodcock** along with **WOM Louise Evans** to complete this little mission. Once at Gull Pond and the Tip Tank was in the water we gave her the name of TITANIC II. We all know the tragic end of the TITANIC, which of course, yes you know what's coming, after much fun trying to get on it and falling off, it sprung a leak, so that was that, back to the drawing board. It was with the hard work of **SSgt Mal Pavier** and **Sgt Shaun Arundel** who made and put together a new raft called the 'Unsinkable I' (just classic names we come up with). So back to Gull Pond for Test Two, which was a great success. It was then back to the workshop to put a few final touches to the raft, including a paint job, which **Sig Martyn Potter** and **SAC Paul Redford** offered their artistic skills.

The big day arrived. We got to Stanley and were in the water by 1330hrs. Once in the oggin (just for you naval lovers) the fun started, we had a few eggs and a bag of flour, for defence purposes only, then the gun was fired and it was off. We stormed ahead, with the help of **SSgt Mal Pavier** shouting 'STROKE 1 2 3', which got very boring after the third time, so we came up with a more fitting pace keeping chant, which unfortunately I can't mention. We left all the other rafts sinking or in our wake as we crossed the finishing line. Unfortunately we where disqualified by the judge for having a twin hull raft, which I must add there was nothing in the rules about how many hulls you could or could not have. We didn't let that spoil our fun and celebrating our win.

BRAVO TROOP
Tp Comd **WO (RS) P. Jackson**

JCUFI AND B TROOP – A NAVAL VIEW
by WO (Radio Supervisor) Phil Jackson Royal Navy

I arrived here after a four year sentence in COMMCEN Whitehall, where the mundane life of a City commuter was instantly cast aside. As the resident 'Matelot' for the past six months, it has been refreshing to remember that there is still a discipline only the Army can instill in a military environment. Teamwork, comradeship and getting the job done. I cannot help but smile when I hear the USM (**WO2 Dave Rook**) taking charge of the situation of the moment in the Unit Headquarters. Having lived in combat clothing for the duration of the tour it will seem odd (for about a minute) returning to Naval uniform from April 2000 when I join HMS *Invincible*. I will have a job explaining the only time is 'one two three one' to my new Commanding Officer. The words 'weak and unmilitary' or 'lightweight' will never be the same!

JCUFI Bravo Tp is Tri-Service to the core, with RN, RAF and Army communicators working side by side and, more importantly, learning of each other's procedures. It has had **Cpl Cathy McDonald** working as DSO of her shift, a job she has carried out exceptionally well**; Sigs** 'Red' **Stables** and 'Taff' **Evans** (who could not keep the secret that they got engaged on Millennium Night), 'Potts' **Potter** and **Ali Moore** all getting to grips with the Naval Shore Telecommunications Network message handling system, and, eventually liking it. 'Red' managed a spot of sea time on HMS *Dumbarton Castle*, affectionately known as 'Bouncy Castle' - something to do with the weather. She even profited by a trip to Montevideo - more time off…. 'Potts' spent more time running up mountains or around Stanley than in work. Can't say I blame him! COMMCEN life in the Falklands can be fairly quiet at the best of times as the system is predominantly accessed by the end user. There are relatively few addressees that require a paper copy. It speaks for itself when a MINIMIZE was enforced for the duration of Exercise Cape Petrel - only 12 signals were passed to the COMMCEN for onward relay!! The

COMMCEN also acts as a relay station for HM Ships and Royal Fleet Auxiliaries at sea, so the RN operators have taught the Royal Signals (and the RAF) personnel how to cope with maritime traffic. 'Jointery' was a reasonably new term to me, but we have proved it can and does work. Each service has its whim, but it is without doubt that jointery is here to stay. Notwithstanding the principal tasks we are here to carry out, it was a pleasure to see all ranks of all three Services ***enjoying*** themselves on a 32-mile sponsored event from Goose Green to MPA last November in aid of Children in Need. We didn't get a mention on TV, but it didn't really matter because we all knew that we had achieved a never-to-be-repeated fun event that raised a substantial amount of dosh.

In honesty, and on a personal note I will not miss the land mass of the Falklands. I will, however, miss the people from the top down, that made JCUFI August 1999 - February 2000 what it was. Bearable and enjoyable. My personal thanks goes to those SNCOs (they know who they are) who turned an unfit, ageing Warrant into someone who could eventually say 'I feel better for that'. Fingers crossed, finance permitting and the strike of a pen from the CO, a few members of 1(UK) ADSR will be able to join HMS *Invincible* later in the year, helping out with the comms during an Exercise - I can't say where - some of you might get jealous. That's JOINTERY!!!

CHARLIE TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt L. J. Henderson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt M. Pavier**

Since getting to the Falkland Islands, Charlie Tp has participated in many morale boosting social events. These included the Charlie Tp tour meal at the local restaurant, Ronokes, on 14 December. Most of the Troop attended as well as a few waifs and strays from the rest of JCUFI. The smokers were anti-socially separated at one end of the table. The meal began with much rejoicing from the fat boys, who knew that it was an 'all you could eat' affair and everyone ate heartily. Yet another successful night! Another outing took place at the new XL bowling alley on 23 December due to a power outage at JCUFI lines. The joint efforts of UHQ and Charlie Tp comprised of four teams of varying numbers. The quality of the contenders was of such a wide ability that the scores ranged from the high to the unbelievably low. Each team was given two games in which to prove their skills, and most improved with practice. Special mention goes out to **Cpl Loates** on his fine winning total, and also **SSgt Mal** 'Can I use the kiddies gutter rails?' **Pavier** on his gallant attempts to hit those elusive pins. A fun time was had by all. Thanks to all those concerned, who arranged and organised all the aforementioned events, and lets hope Charlie Tp can organise a few more in the Millennium, so more tales can be revealed in the next copy of *The WIRE…*

STANLEY RELAY RACE 9 JANUARY 2000
by Sig Chris Beazley

It was on Sunday 9 January that we all gathered outside the MPA guardroom ready for the start of the MPA to Stanley Relay Race. It seemed that luck was on our side as the weather had come to our assistance. The sun was shining and the wind was behind us all the way. Plus we were going to get a top three place due to there only being three teams. Our JCUFI B team consisted of **WO2 (USM) Dave Rook, SSgt (UQMS)** 'Chalky' **White, Sgt Andy Collins, Sgt** 'Kitch' **Kitchener, Cpl Louis Cleary, Sig Chris Beazley** and **Sig Matt Rees.**

We were a little worried about the task ahead of us. 35 miles is a long way! Not to mention getting over the night before. Our team Strategy was easy, run for 10 min and then change over to the next mug. The dubious honour of starting came down to **Sgt** 'Kitch' **Kitchener**. He had the job of at least keeping in touch with the other two 'racing snake' teams. All the changes went along very smoothly with some really good times being put in by all. The miles were steadily being eaten up but the gap was still quite a large one. Stanley was getting closer by the minute. We all managed to fit in three legs each before the finish. It was decided to cross the line together in true 'Team Spirit' fashion finishing with a time of 3hrs 34min, that is an average of 6min 5sec per mile. It looked a bit like 'The Magnificent Seven Run Again'. Just in time for beer and birthday cake provided by the Stanley Running Club. A great effort was put in and a great day was had by all. We can all now say that we had the third fastest time ever in the MPA to Stanley Road Race.

Congratulations are due to the JCUFI A team consisting of **Maj Chris McIntosh, SSgt Mal Pavier, FSgt Wiseman, Cpl** 'Woody' **Woodcock, LCpl** 'Lenny' **Lenaghen, Sig Martyn Potter** and **Sig** 'Murf' **Murphy**, who won the race in an earth shattering time of 3hr 7min.

COMSEC MONITORING TEAM (UNITED KINGDOM)

ARMY

OC **Capt Kenny Kendrick**
YofS **SSgt (YofS) Al Campbell**

'IT'S GOOD TO TALK, EVEN BETTER TO LISTEN'

The Team is based in Warminster and is made up of an OC, Yeoman and six operators. The Team's mission is to provide COMSEC training and support to Land based units, this is achieved by monitoring insecure communications and back-briefing on exercises, courses and presentations. The Team is just completing a three month UK road-show. If you were not one of the lucky ones to receive the presentation then give us a call, it can be arranged. The Team are fortunate enough to do a fair bit of travelling and get involved with some strange people doing some strange work.

Read on ...

BRITISH ARMY TRAINING UNIT SUFFIELD CANADA
by Cpl 'Scotty' Hoffman

The luxurious location of BATUS was visited four times throughout 1999 by various members of the Team. The 4-man team which deployed on the August 1999 exercise comprised of **Capt Kenny Kendrick, Sig** 'Colonel' **Krikorian, Sig Kurt Muller** (not German - honest!) and myself. After enduring the long 9-hour flight to Calgary and the equally laborious 3-hour drive to Suffield the Team was ready for action. It started with a PT session at half six in the morning conducted by the Boss, (he has lost his marbles). A couple of days were spent getting the obsolete equipment working and scrounging for a generator that could not only be lifted by only two men but also that actually worked, and of course more running and PT. This was then followed by seven days of communications monitoring which proved both successful and beneficial for both the training Battle Group and ourselves. Life on the Canadian prairie was made bearable with all of our creature comforts, however, one member of the team preferred the front of the Landrover to the tent. (He is the oldest member of the deployed team but no names - no running). After completion of the exercise, whilst the boss did his de-briefs, we all cleaned and packed the kit ready for the next deployment in May 2000. A couple of days in Calgary visiting the local attractions preceded a 9-hour flight back to rainy UK. Another deployment successfully completed. Roll on Medman 2000.

HER MAJESTY'S SHIP *OCEAN* - *by LCpl 'Renne' Stuart*

Late September 1999 I began my two month cruise (deployment) around the Mediterranean sea with the Fleet Electronic Warfare Support Group (the Royal Navy COMSEC Team). The first leg of the trip was somewhat strange for the Navy in that it was a 36-hour drive to meet the Navy's newest Troop Carrier, HMS *Ocean*, which was docked in Marseilles. After a few days exploring the public houses of the city the ship set sail (a nautical term) for Alexandria in Egypt to take part in a multinational exercise 'Bright Star 1999'. This involved 40 Commando Royal Marines doing various things nautical and indeed saw the Commandos doing various things on land. They also practised procedures with forces from Greece, Egypt and the old favourite the US of A. Monitoring was conducted of HF, VHF and UHF nets, this was to determine how much exploitable information was given away in clear. After four weeks at anchor in Egypt working 12-hour days it was off to Marmaris in Turkey for some well earned R&R in a 4 star hotel. One week and a huge hangover later it was time to set sail for Istanbul and take part in a short exercise. This again involved elements of the Royal Marines doing nautical operations with the COMSEC monitoring team listening for any breaches of security. At Endex the Team deployed to Istanbul for three days shore leave to see the sights. It was then on to the final destination of the cruise (deployment), Piraeus in Greece. The journey involved the practising of Action Stations and the defence against air attacks. Finally all the exercises of the trip had finished we were let loose in Greece. With Athens only ten minutes away a good night was had by all. The cruise (deployment) came to an end and in good Navy travelling tradition I flew back to UK courtesy of the RAF. Back to reality in Warminster. My thanks to the Royal Navy for a good cruise (deployment) and the Team look forward to more in the future.
(Boss's note: This was the third deployment onto a Royal Navy ship of a Team member since February).

COMMUNICATIONS ELECTRONIC SECURITY GROUP (CESG)
by Sig 'Colonel' Krikorian

In recent months the Team has supported CESG on a number of tasks. This has involved members of the team living in hotels in large towns and cities around the country, it's also meant living in the field as well. (Why do CESG don black woolly hats in the field'?). The nature of the work is unmentionable but like any COMSEC task it involves round the clock monitoring of communications. The tasks can sometimes be outside the normal scope of work of the team and have been and no doubt will continue to be interesting and challenging,

EXERCISE WESSEX WARRIOR - *by Cpl Iain Duncan*

The Team are committed to supporting the Battle Group Training Unit which in turn conducts Ex Wessex Warrior at least eight times a year. The Exercise is a free play battle of wits between the resident Combined Arms Training Centre Battle-group and the Battle-group being tested on the Exercise. The Team monitor a number of missions and any information gained is debriefed to the SO1 BGTU, who in turn debriefs the BG Comd. This has meant the Team becoming very adept at analysis and tracking the passage of information across the BG. A recent development was the Team deployment in support of the Coy Battle-runs which take place prior to Ex Wessex Warrior. One chilly night in early December the three Team members deployed, **Capt Kenny Kendrick, Cpl** 'Scotty' **Hoffman** and **LCpl** 'Renne' **Stuart** were either in bed sleeping or on shift. The OPFOR arrived and mistook the Team vehicles for BG Main HQ. After a rather one sided fire fight which involved **Cpl** 'Scotty' **Hoffman** leaping around the inside of the tent in a rather animated fashion whilst still in his sleeping bag (dodging thunder-flashes apparently), a rather menacing voice politely asked the Team to step outside the tent. **Cpl** 'Scotty' **Hoffman** duly ordered **LCpl** 'Renne' **Stuart** to go outside and find out what was happening, meanwhile the Boss was still in his sleeping bag in fits of laughter as 'Renne' piled down the stairs out of the vehicle. **LCpl** 'Renne' **Stuart** opened the tent flap and disappeared at a great rate of knots before he had chance to explain who he was. The Boss by this time had regained his composure and a few words reverberating from his sleeping bag had the enemy retreating to find the exact location they were meant to be at. Needless to say all three of them survived albeit with a few injuries. The Boss with aching ribs, **Cpl** 'Scotty' **Hoffman** with aching dancing feet and **LCpl** 'Renne' **Stuart** with aching pride. The Coy Battle-runs and Ex Wessex Warrior continue to produce some enlightening results, continue to give the younger operators a valuable insight to Combined Arms Operations and keeps the equally young OC on his toes!

EXERCISE ULU RAJAH - BRUNEI - *by SSgt (YofS) Al Campbell*

The Team were tasked to provide COMSEC support to 2 RGR on Ex Ulu Rajah, nothing exceptional in that except that it was in Brunei, Yahoo. After suffering the usual round of injections three members of the Team deployed to Brunei in November. Accommodated in Medicena Lines, Seria, the home of the Training Team Brunei proved to be a lot more comfortable that being in Sittang Camp with open sided buildings with no air conditioning and mutant mosquitoes. The Team passed the first few days doing admin and conducting a COMSEC awareness presentation, it also involved being taught how to play volleyball to a Gurkha standard and drinking Tiger beer, not to mention devouring vast amounts of Aludam (spiced potatoes). **Cpl Iain Duncan** enlarging his ever expanding waist line some more. Phases 1 and 2 passed off without incident and then came the time to deploy into the jungle. We were duly dropped off courtesy of the AAC onto one of the highest features of the Labi Jungle. The AAC informed us that they would be back later to drop off the Gurkha RRB. We set about building bashas and erecting hammocks. **Cpl Iain Duncan** having to set his hammock six feet above the ground, by the time he got in it, it cleared the deck by all of six inches. Evening came and still no sign of the Gurkha RRB. Mid-morning came and still no sign of the RRB, this called for drastic action. **Yeoman** 'Magellan' **Campbell** and **Sig** 'Colonel' **Krikorlan** set off for the OPFOR RRB which was about 2kms down a well established track. Anyway after a message was sent back to the HQ the RRB arrived some hours later, complete with the crew and five very bedraggled chickens. You've guessed it, this was going to he dinner for the next five nights. The Team were well located to monitor 2 RGR using an improvised antenna called the 'Hutan'. The Gurkhas use this extensively during any jungle deployment and it proved to be an excellent receive antenna during our deployment, needless to say I have fetched one back to UK to have a fiddle. Ex Ulu Rajah was a productive and enjoyable deployment for members of the Team and we hope this has proved the flexibility of the Team, always ready to deploy anywhere around the world the more exotic the better of course and I may even let the Boss do the next one, if he is still young enough to travel!!! Many thanks to all in Brunei for their hospitality especially the QM, **Capt Campbell** (no he is not my dad).

BOSS'S FOOTNOTE - *by The Boss*

As you will appreciate the Team get up to many adventures, some involving military agencies and some civilian, I know that very few of you Operators out there know of our existence. It is a worthwhile job, you get face-to-face with many varied audiences and get to put in some air miles at various times of the year. I have three soldiers who are due postings in the coming year, volunteer to join us you will enjoy it, but please get a C+E licence first. Interested? Call on 943812232.

JOINT SERVICE SIGNALS UNIT
RAF DIGBY

SITUATION GENERAL

Life continues at its usual frenetic pace here at Digby. We have just had the pleasure of undergoing a Unit-wide Reorganisation, and although the cynics amongst us may consider it re-inventing the wheel things seemed to have settled to some level of normality. We are now also in the proud possession of a new Army head honcho as well. **Lt Col Stu Sharman** arrived from 14 Sig Regt and has taken up the post of Chief of Staff. He has swiftly dropped into the Digby routine by ensuring he is never in his Executive suite office, but leaves an impressive mess on his desk to give the impression he is at least in the building.

1 SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Calum Clark**
Sqn CoOrd **SSgt Richie Maddock**

The Squadron has changed significantly due to the Unit reorganisation, with lots of coming and goings. Congratulations go to **Sgts Jon Simpson, Paul Waters** and **Allan Martin** on their selection for Supervisor Radio training. Though there is a general feeling that **Sgt Simpson** will have to seriously improve his social (drinking) skills if he is to successfully pass the course ! The most important outcome of the re-org was the creation of the most Gucci office in the world EVER! The 1 Sqn Flight Commanders office now rivals the CO's for its sheer level of plushness. The reasoning behind such a lavish work environment (plastic plants are en route I'm assured) is still unclear. The duty rumour is that **WO2 Phil** 'Old git' **Sandford** recently returned from overseas, is feeling his age and couldn't possibly work in a normal office. Apparently he honestly requires an ergonomically designed desk the size of a tennis court and a reclining leather chair with built in massage function for his bad back, hmmm yes and you also have lots of hair left as well...

Last but obviously-not least, a loud sigh of relief was heard when the Sqn finally got rid of **Lt Stu** 'Lord Lucan' **Whittley,** who is posted to 2 Sig Regt. He did manage to squeeze in a few goodbye drinks (and even bought a few) between returning from another dodgy trip abroad and disappearing off to play yet more Corps rugby.

A FLIGHT - by *LCpl Dale*

OC **WO2 Phil Sandford**
Shift Relief **SSgt Daz Winfield**
A Watch **SSgt** 'Scan 'Nobby' **Clark**
C Watch **SSgt Rob Hare**

The reorganisation of the Unit resulted in the Watches coming under the umbrella of two Flights, with A Flt looking after A and C Watch. No sooner had the reorganisation taken place and before individuals had a chance to get to know each other, the festive season descended and various functions were hastily organised. A Watch descended on the Sheriff's Lodge in Nottingham and had a superb evening drinking mead, impersonating Robin Hood and basically celebrating Christmas in true medieval fashion. C Watch opted for a more sedate function at Sleaford Golf Course, courtesy of **SSgt Rob Hare,** who is a member of the Club. He assures us that no discounts were offered. Needless to say, the 19th hole was incredibly well used

3 SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Sqn Ldr Bray**

TRAINING FLIGHT - by *Cpl Dusty Miller*

OC **WO1 Paul Skeith**

It's been a long time since this department submitted any *WIRE* notes, and as is typical of the Army, the 'New Boy' in the department has been lumbered with the job. So who are the personalities that make up the Trg Flt. **WO1 Paul Skeith** is still in overall charge, but is away skiing (RAF Skiing Championships ... Hrmphh!) The perks of being the man in charge eh? **Flt Sgt Phil Curtis,** constantly busy, sorting out NVQs for the lads and lasses within the unit. **SSgt Frank Dalton** can always be seen at his computer (trying to find out how to turn it on, and when he does, who's got the record at pinball). **PO Jeff** 'Yank' **Harrison** looks after the colonials at Digby (when he tears himself away from Solitaire) and **Sgt Mark** 'Chad' **Chadwick** is currently away penguin spotting. A quick mention to **CT Clive Stevens, Sgt Sim Morley** and **Cpl Pete Best** who are much in demand instructing the various computer systems here at Digby. **Flt Sgt Martin Tomlinson** (now a ripe old age of 52) **Sgt Neil McQuoid** and **Sgt Sue Wright** are making sure the various trades at JSSU keep up their skills. A fond farewell goes to **Cpl Eric Herron** on his promotion, and posting to 2 Sqn. I'm pretty sure that **Sgt Sim Morely** is missing **Eric**'s vocabulary. In the form of a replacement, the department welcomes **Cpl** 'Dusty' **Miller** from GDT.

4 SQUADRON – *by WO2 Mark 'Squirrel' Jordan*

Sqn Comd **Maj Denis Weir**

4 Sqn has also fallen under the Unit reorganisation, leaving us with a cadre of nine people in UK, with 60 plus deployed on Operations at any one time. The OC has been gallivanting about, visiting 'his' detachments allegedly spreading wellbeing and bonhomie. However, his most recent 'visit' resulted in him sunning himself on a beach for two days, while the guys he was supposed to be visiting were snow-bound. The 2IC, **Capt Sam Harrild,** is busy preparing for her JCSC (and meeting dashing Cavalry Officers) along with running ops and the wives club, though not necessarily in that order. Anyone good at essays? Our Squadron action man, **Cpl Matt Collins,** is impressing 'madamoiselles' in Val d'Isere with his skiing and snowboarding prowess, having escaped the confines of Digby yet again.

We all enjoyed our Xmas 'do' in Lincoln at which **Cpl Paul Randle** played the part of 'Widow Twankey' at the Chinese restaurant he had booked for us. **SSgt Danny O'Brien,** between bouts of resettlement, has been manfully administrating all nine of us, aided and abetted by **LCpl Gary Zelnis,** who has recently been making a bid for stardom by representing his AGC at Basketball.

The Training element of the Squadron headed up by **SSgt Mark Finch** and **Sgt Tas Wake** have been very busy assisting our latest arrival **Capt Charlie Roberts,** who is heading up a quick reaction team, ready to be deployed anywhere world-wide at a few days notice. At the moment, the team is moving vehicles in foreign countries for repatriation to UK. We welcome **WO1** 'Bear' **Kelly** to our select gathering.

LOGISTIC SUPPORT GROUP (LSG)

QM **Capt (QM) J M Standen**
RQMS **WO2 (RQMS)** 'Fluffy Teddy' **Dalton**

The LSG is a department combining the QM's dept, MT and RAF stores, which provides the total logistical support to a Joint Service Operational unit. The key word is flexibility, an attribute that soon becomes second nature and the phrase improvise, adapt, overcome takes new meaning. We have gone through much turmoil and changes in the 18 months since the unit was formed; a formation of a jointship, move of squadrons and numerous last minute notice Operations. However, we the 'loyal' of the LSG battle on, ably led by **Capt** 'I'm just off on another exotic holiday, lads' **Standen.** In recent months there has been much to celebrate, the arrival of **Sigs** 'Arfa' **Daley** and 'Sicknote' **Hinchliffe**, from our School of Excellence, along with the arrival of **Sgt** 'Bill em' **Ellis** our RLC attached from BOD Donnington, the posting of **LCpl** 'BAOR Champion' **Sherriff** and subsequent promotion and the promotion of **LCpl (now Cpl)** 'RQ's son' **Edment.**

Now that we are all refreshed from our Christmas break and that the only Millennium bug that was encountered was of the flu variety, we can look forward with glee to what the year has to offer. With deployment, exercises and adventurous training in the offing, many questions have to be asked, for instance will **Cpl** 'Charlie' **Chaplin** be able to make it through the year without setting fire to himself? Can **Cpl Kev Johnson**'s jalopy make it through the six months he has got left in the Army? Will **Cpl Craig Edment**'s arms grow longer, or his pockets shorter, so he can get a round in? Can **WO2 (RQMS) Russ Dalton** get yet another medal by instalments? How many exotic holidays will the QM, **Capt John Standen,** be able to fit in? The most burning question of them all, will **Sig** 'Arthur' **Daley** go anywhere without getting lost? We will have to wait for the answers. We welcome back **Sig** 'Arthur' **Daley** from his detachment in Bosnia, that is if he manages to find us, **Cpl Dave Ellis** from his detachment in the sun and say 'have a good one' to **SAC** 'Clippo' **Clipson** on his forthcoming detachment to Turkey.

Group Photo of LSG
Back Row (L-R): Cpl Edment, SAC Mayor (RAF), LCpl Campbell (Int), LCpl O'Halloran, SAC Clipson (RAF), Cpl Johnson
Centre Row (L-R): LCpl Fife, Cpl Bird (RAF), Cpl Chaplin, Cpl Walker (RAF), Sig Hinchcliffe
Front Row (L-R): Sgt Ellis (RLC), Sgt Hancock (RAF), WO2 (RQMS) Dalton, Capt (QM) Standen, Sgt Sutton, Sgt Sugden (REME)

SRRC 3

OC **Capt Charlie Roberts**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Maria Lester**

On arrival at JSSU (D) in October, **Capt Charlie Roberts** was faced with the prospect of forming a new tri-service mobile contingency force. The emphasis was to be on military and driver training, as many of the operators may not have worked with Landrovers and 9 x 9 tents. All this was to be achieved in three weeks, but fortunately a lot of work had been completed by the Training CoOrd team led by **SSgt Mark Finch**. The new team formed up on the first of November to under go two months of intensive training. The team was a model of 'jointery' with a full range of beret colours. The package was kicked off with a week's military training, covering the basic Det skills required. This was an eye opener for some that had not had to leave the confines of the office since completing basic training. Most learnt a lot and it was a chance for others to brush up on their field skills. December provided a chance for the team to deploy to theatre to pick up some now redundant vehicles. In addition, the team got involved in 'lending a hand' to the Troop, including the installation of six new port-a-loos and a new rubbish pit. We were also able to help out when the main generator failed in the middle of the night during a snow blizzard - not something I really wanted to get out of bed for! Other than that it provided an opportunity for **SSgt Maria Lester** and **JT David Mowbray** to shop at every EFI and PX in theatre. On our safe return to JSSU (D) we then had to start the planning for collecting the vehicles from Marchwood. The training period has now finished and the members of the team have returned to their parent Squadrons, leaving **Capt Charlie Roberts** behind, with a small team to plan the new and improved training package for the next team which forms up in March.

THE SPORTING SCENE

SKELETON BOBSLEIGH

Sgt Clash, featured in the February issue, is now Army Novice Female Champion, British Novice Female Champion and British Intermediate Champion. We have high hopes that she will be selected for the British Team next season

ROYAL SIGNALS ALPINE SKI CAMP

The ski season has again started early for members of the Royal Signals and the British Army Ladies Ski Team (BLAST). Approximately 40 skiers and 24 snowboarders gathered at Zell am See, Austria, for the eleventh Royal Signals Alpine Ski Training Camp and Championships over the period 20 November - 17 December 1999. Despite the heavy operational commitments over recent months, it was pleasing to see such a healthy turnout with nine units being represented. It was a particularly commendable effort by the team from 20 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200) who attended the Camp despite only having returned from Bosnia four days previously!

Under the organisation of **Sgt Dom Graham,** the snowboarders joined the Camp for the first time this year. After a short training phase, they held the inaugural Royal Signals Snowboarding Championships on the slopes of the Kitzsteinhorn Glacier. The Kitzsteinhorn Glacier offers the guarantee of snow and skiing but with the penalty of some severe winter weather conditions. Temperatures as low as -20°C and strong winds were regularly encountered, nevertheless enthusiasm and high spirits ensured that trainers and trainees enjoyed the challenge.

The now well established Ski Training Camp and Championships were run very smoothly by **SSgt Andy Brown** and his team of trainers. The three week Training Camp allowed all the skiers to substantially improve their skiing techniques. The fourth and final week was taken up with the Corps Championships with racers competing in both Slalom and Giant

Slalom disciplines. Congratulations to **Cpl Tony Orange** of 16 Sig Regt for winning the Men's Alpine Combination title, **Lt Fiona Stewart** of 14 Sig Regt (EW) for winning the Ladies Alpine Combination title and 16 Sig Regt for winning all the team awards.

Capt 'Shakespeare' Rowles of 4 Armd Bde & Sig Sqn (204) preparing to enter the start-gate of the Slalom Race

(L-R): Cpl Tony Orange, LCpl Graham Rennie and Capt Richie Turnbull
Members of the Winning 16 Sig Regt Team

Finally a special mention to **SSgt Andy Brown** who is currently in his last few months in the Army. He has been a dedicated winter sports athlete within the Royal Signals for many seasons and during his career has been the Army Alpine Champion twice. The Corps and the Army ski scene will lose a great character and competitor when he leaves the Army in February 2000. However, as a second career he plans to coach aspiring ski racers professionally, so if we want his expertise next year we may need to pay him! Many thanks **SSgt Andy Brown** for all your hard work, over the years many skiers have benefited from your knowledge, experience and talent. The Royal Signals Alpine Ski Camp will be held next year in Zell am See over the period 20 November - 15 December 2000. Skiers and Boarders are welcome at any time over that period and those who are interested in attending should contact:

UK: **Maj Jon Dakin**
Brawdy Mil 5816
(Email: jon.dakin@mallcity.com)
Germany: **Sgt Dean MacKenzie**
JHQ Mil 3556

SNOWBOARDING

SIGNALS SNOWBOARDING CHAMPIONSHIPS ZELL AM SEE, AUSTRIA 3-11 DECEMBER 1999

The first ever Royal Signals Snowboarding Championships were held at the Austrian resort of Zell am See on the 3-11 December 1999. This year the competition attracted 25 competitors from the Corps. It was the first time that snowboarding had been introduced into the Royal Signals Alpine calendar, a year after the first Army Snowboard Championships. As snowboarding is a new sport within the Army, it was important to encourage new soldiers to take up the sport. The amount of first time snowboarders at this year's camp was 15. The rest of the competitors were made up of people who had either been on holiday to snowboard, or had done a few days dry slope tuition.

The journey to Austria started with a dreaded P&O crossing from Dover to Calais in Force 9 winds. Most of the competitors felt a little worse for wear once they arrived in Calais. All minibuses then made their way to Zell am See where they were met by camp organisers **Maj John Dakin** and **SSgt Andy Brown**. The teams arrived some 21 hours after setting off from the UK. The week of training for the snowboarders involved novices completing four full day's tuition. Rip Star Snowboard School in Kaprun supplied tuition. Race Day was to be on Thursday at the Glacier in Kaprun. Course designer was none other than the British and Austrian team snowboard coach.

Having a breather – Zell am See

Some of the natural novices during the first few days included **Sig** ' I like wearing ladies boarding jackets' **Buyers** 37 Inf Bde, **Sig Thomas** 11 Sig Regt and **Sgt** 'Tibsy' **Tibbetts** JCU (NI). Most of the novices were quick to pick up the moves through some excellent tuition by instructors **Sven** and **Michael**. The hardest part of the week for some individuals was learning all the snowboarding terminology. Crashing was mandatory for the first few days while people were getting used to the basics of turning and stopping, Many having trouble with the latter. After Day Two, all the competitors were bruised and battered but the spirit in the camp was still high.

Day Three of training saw the group venture from Zell am See to the Kaprun Glacier for their first introduction to the dreaded T-Bar, reported to be one of Europe's biggest and longest. It proved to be a real tester for the novices and some intermediates. **Sgt** 'Cindy' **Mellor**, 37 Sig Regt, found this T-Bar just too long becoming one of its victims just ten metres from the top on more than one occasion. Due to censorship her words cannot be published. For many people it was the first time they had been on a glacier above 12000ft and from the top the views were outstanding. Day Five was race day and conditions were not in our favour, winds threatened to cancel the race and it was decided to get the first run underway as soon as possible. First person to tackle the course was **Sgt** 'Dede' **Watts** 233 Sig Sqn; his first run time of 35.32 was the benchmark for the rest of the competitors to beat. After the first run some of the novices looked like they might spoil the party **Sig Elston** and **Cpl Pritchard** both 222 Sig Sqn placing high up the order with excellent first run times. Leader after the first run was **LCpl** 'Ros' **Pierson** 21 Sig Regt closely followed by **Sgt** 'Dom' **Graham** 11 Sig Regt. **Sgt** 'Pam' **Mitchell** 11 Sig Regt leading the female novice category.

Sig Johnson in action

By now, the weather was setting in and the winds were picking up. This caused problems with the electronic timing system by setting it off all the time; this slowed proceedings up a little with people having to run again. All competitors managed to improve on their first time runs, this was pleasing as it showed personal improvement. The battle for First place was all but over, when; **LCpl** 'Ros' **Pierson** managed an outstanding time of 27.35 for the second run. The battle for second and third was now a three way battle between **Sgt** 'Dom' **Graham, Lt** 'Beer monster' **Kemp** 259 Sig Sqn and **Sig** 'Johno' **Johnson** 3 (UK) Armd Div. In the end, it was only two seconds splitting the three of them over two runs with **Sgt Graham** taking Second and **Lt Kemp** Third.

Novice honours went to **Sig Elston**, with **Cpl Pritchard** in Second and **LCpl Perrin** Third, all three having excellent first and second run times. All proved that after a week's tuition they could compete well with the intermediate snowboarders. In the afternoon, a Dual Slalom course was designed for people to go head to head against each other.

This proved a good way to settle some grudge matches between individuals. One of the best matches was between **Cpl** 'Burton' **Cattle** 11 Sig Regt and **Sgt** '007' **Doak** 264 Sig Sqn. The final score was 2-1 to **Cpl Cattle** but we all feel this rivalry has a long way to go before things are fully settled between the two. The Dual Slalom races have now been introduced into the World Cup Snowboard events and it is planned to introduce this type of event in time for next year's competition.

All snowboarders thoroughly enjoyed the week, and all thought the training on offer was well put together by the snowboard school. All competitors have requested to be entered into next year's camp to improve skills they have already learnt. If this is so then snowboarding within the Royal Signals looks like blooming. The next step, for those who were selected, was to represent the Royal Signals at the Army Championships on 22-27 January 2000. Selection for the Army snowboard team took place at this competition. Overall the week was a great success and judging by the sport's popularity it looks like snowboarding within the Royal Signals will only grow from this. It is planned to run the competition at next year's Royal Signals Alpine Championships. If anyone is interested in learning how to snowboard or would like information about Royal Signals Snowboarding they should contact **Sgt Graham** at Blandford Camp Ext. 2585.

Lt 'Gaz' Kemp in action

BRITISH ARMY SNOWBOARD CHAMPIONSHIPS STUBAI GLACIER AUSTRIA 22-29 JANUARY 2000

The annual British Army Snowboard Championships were held at the resort of Stubai, Austria over the above dates. This year saw nearly 80 competitors competing at both intermediate and novice level in both Inter Corps and unit competitions. After a very successful competition in Zell am See, the Royal Signals entered two teams to participate in the Inter Corps event. Each team consisting of four people. Expectations and team spirit were high at the beginning of the week with good conditions for racing. Wind was a real problem on top of the glacier and coupled with the cold air caused many people to experience just how cold temperatures can get in the depths of winter. By the middle of the afternoon the weather had turned so bad all slopes were closed, and people were advised to get off the mountain.

The competition started early on the Tuesday morning with the Army top 15 boarders being seeded. **Sgt** 'Dom' **Graham** (11 Sig Regt) was first name out the hat and promptly made his way to the toilet for a severe bout of nerves. (Nothing like the captain leading by example.) Conditions in the morning favoured the lower seeds, as the course was well prepared. **Sgt** 'Dom' **Graham** making full use of the conditions to finish the first run in Eighth place. His time seemed to settle the rest of the team as both **LCpl** 'Sicknote' **Pierson** (21 Sig Regt) and **LCpl** 'Goaty' **Crawshaw** (4 Armd Bde) had excellent runs finishing Third and Seventh respectively. This was good news for the Corps Team as they finished the day in second place behind the Royal Engineer A Team.

Day Three the weather surprised us all, especially **LCpl** 'John Ketley' **Perrin** who had predicted more snow and wind (this proved to the team that he should stick to his day job). As the weather lifted it enabled racing to commence in earnest. The Giant Slalom was next event with the course moving onto a more difficult slope. The Royal Signals A Team faired well with **LCpl Pierson** finishing both runs in Third Place. The rest of the first team did well with **Capt** 'Stu' **Boyne** (1 Sig Bde) placing Thirteenth and **Sgt** 'Dom' **Graham** placing in Twelfth. **Capt Boyne** produced one of the best starts of the week by rolling a complete 360 out of the start gate; this did have no effect with the judges and scored no extra points for style. While the main competition was being held there was the opportunity for the up and coming stars to shine in the novice race. Two of the favourites for this event both came from the Royal Signals, **Sgt** 'Pam' **Mitchell** (11 Sig Regt) and **Sgt** 'Jelly' **Smith** (204 Sig Sqn). Both had excellent runs with **Sgt Mitchell** becoming the Army Ladies Champion and **Sgt Smith** becoming the Army Novice Champion. A great achievement for both, after a week's snowboarding

The final day saw the competition move onto the much awaited Boarder X event. This race works like a BMX race with four competitors going flat out on a prepared course of jumps, banks and turns. First two boarders to the bottom progress to the next round. Small amounts of contact are permitted (no crowbars allowed), but to protect individuals for nasty knocks individuals have to wear safety helmets. **LCpl Pierson** was now recognised as a real threat to the Royal Engineers team winning the trophy and now had the extra pressure of a wanted bounty on his elimination from the competition. The rest of the team were not living up to the form books with only **Capt Boyne** and **Cpl Pritchard** making it into the quarterfinals. **Sgt Graham** accepted defeat at around 1400hrs, as the Royal Engineers won the Overall Corps Championship. The Corps flag was being flown in the final with **LCpl Pierson** a favourite, having beaten the current Army Champion in the semi-final. The final was fiercely contested with all four competitors going flat out for victory, so much so that **Cpl Moore** (RMC) dislocated his shoulder and was air lifted off the course. This misfortune allowed **LCpl Pierson** to finish in second place, thus boosting his overall-finishing place to Second.

ARMY CHAMPIONSHIPS INTER CORPS TROPHY RESULTS

1st	Royal Engineers	A Team
2nd	Royal Signals	A Team
3rd	Royal Artillery	A Team

INDIVIDUAL OVERALL SNOWBOARD CHAMPION

1st	**Cpl Dyche**	(AAC Arborfield)
2nd	**LCpl Pierson**	(21 Signal Regiment)
3rd	**Cpl Reid**	(RMP)

SAILING

EXERCISE CENTURY SAIL - *By Sgt Jo Richmond*

When someone asked me if I wanted to go on exercise over Xmas/New Year I thought the Army had gone totally off its head. On further investigation, however, the exercise was to be a Joint Service Sail Training Expedition taking place in the Canary Islands. After much grovelling, the Boss said I could go, due to the lack of jobs the team had on over that period. The crew of 12 was picked from applications from all three services. I was to be the only Royal Signals body on the boat. I hadn't met any of the crew before, so when **SSgt Nick Perkovic** AGC rang to ask if I would like to meet up in the Union Jack Club, the night before we were due to fly, I agreed. So four of the crew met up in the Union Jack bar on Sunday 19 December. After a couple of Cokes and a few salty sea dog tales, we had an early night (not) as we were due to drive down to Gatwick at six in the morning.

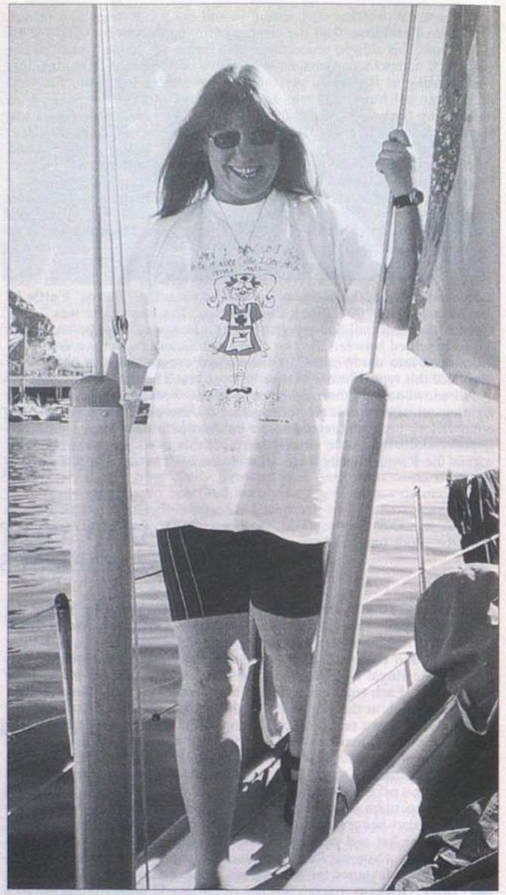
We met up with the Skipper (**Sgt** 'Boggy' **Marsh** REME) and the rest of the crew at Gatwick and headed off for breakfast in the bar as the flight was delayed by two hours. We eventually arrived at Arrecife, Lanzerote early evening and met the off going skipper who told us where the boat was moored. After a short taxi ride we arrived at Puerto Calero and our home for the next three weeks - HMSTC *Sabre*, a 55 foot Nic. The other two girls, both RAF, and myself were 'stowed' into the fore peak, along with the bloke crab (honorary girl for the trip). After a crew meal and a few 'get to know each other' drinks we retired for the night to our bunks.

Tuesday 21 December was spent alongside preparing the boat and getting rations in. We finally set sail on Wednesday 22 December for the island of Fuerteventura, not much wind but a good chance to start on the suntan. Next day it was off to Grand Canaria, sailing overnight, still no wind, unfortunately the engine failed but as we had two REME VM's on

board it didn't take too long to fix. Xmas Eve and Xmas Day were spent alongside. Some of the crew spent time sitting in the sea quaffing champagne as Xmas Day was very hot, although one of the guys went one better and drank champagne whilst underwater, yes it is possible in diving gear! Sunday 26 December saw an early start for a 60 mile passage. For once we had decent winds, so the sails were up and down like a....? Arrived at Santa Cruz on Mon for a bit of ship maintenance. Tuesday 28 December - a long 130 miles uphill slog back to Lanzerote, arrived there on Wednesday afternoon. Another recce for hot showers, to no avail, so a swift 'shower in a can' followed by a few in the local Irish bar. Left early on Thursday back to Puerto Calero so half the crew could return to Blighty! The watch personnel were reallocated, with only three per watch, not many for a 55 footer. Red Watch consisted of Watch leader **WO1 John** 'Herr Flick' **Bransom** REME, **SSgt Nick Perkovic** AGC and myself.

We spent New Years Eve in Puerto del Carmen, after a great crew meal at what had become our local scran platz. The crew arrived back on New Years Day in dribs and drabs, the last two returning at 10.00am rounding off their festivities with a swim in the sea. The crew slept until 1700hrs, then tea and prep the boat for sailing. We left at last light with mega-hangovers for a 250 mile passage. Sunday 2 January was spent at sea, with a 'no duff' hat overboard (the skipper's Xmas pressie), trying to turn the boat and drop the spinnaker with only three on watch proved very interesting. The mate tried out his diving skills to retrieve a rope wrapped round the prop. The day continued in the same vein with a big rip accidentally put into the spinnaker, so with the spinny put to bed for the rest of the trip, it was time to adapt and overcome. Monday 3 January - arrived at Santa Cruz, La Palma, three out of the five guys on board got whistled at by a very dodgy local in a black car. Me and the other girl felt exceedingly safe at this location and ended up doing CP for the male members of the crew. Tuesday was spent on a long passage over to Tenerife, destination Playa de Las America's (of 'Tenerife Uncovered' fame). We had been warned that the local marina had a downer on Brits, so the mate in his best 'Herr Flick' German accent managed to get us a berth for the night. A riotous run ashore visiting all the tourist spots. Wednesday 5 January – and we were off to Gran Canaria. There was no wind, so the engine was on again. We arrived late evening so a quick shower, hot for the first time all trip, then a quick night cap and bed. Thursday saw us with 24 hours alongside. The weather closed in forcing us to spend the afternoon sat in a bar holding on to the fixtures and fittings whilst the owner battened down the hatches. A great night out at a local hotel, this place won the best 'heads' of the tour.

Our departure on Friday was delayed due to a heavy depression sitting over Gran Canaria. We eventually left at last light with very heavy seas and Force 7 winds. Sleeping between watches was very interesting, having to try and jam yourself into your bunk to stop rolling around. We eventually got into Puerto Calero, Lanzerote at 2300hrs on Saturday 8 January. Sunday 9 January saw the big degunge of Sabre. I spent a happy couple of hours up to my elbows in grease servicing two of the winches. This was after exhaustive attempts by the male shipmates to get me doing 'girlie' clean up jobs below decks, not very PC guys! By 1830 everything was shipshape, kit packed, cold showers and the last sun-downers onboard. After a great crew meal at the local we all went down town for the last beer session, Endex called. Monday 10 January - The crew had problems getting up, luckily the taxis to the airport weren't due until 1200hrs. The flight was delayed, again, but we eventually arrived at Gatwick at 2000hrs. We had sailed a total of 943 miles in three weeks, a long slog. With much swapping of phone numbers and promises to sail together again as soon as possible we all disappeared into the night back to our various units. It was hard to get back into the swing of work again on Tue, not least trying to stop talking 'Nautical Speak, but hopefully the next sailing session isn't to far away - Boss any chance of some time off over Easter?



Sgt Jo Richmond – roughing it whilst on Exercise

ROYAL SIGNALS OPEN SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIPS 1999

Blandford was again the venue for the 1999 Royal Signals Squash Championships and although the attendance was down on the previous year the standard of play was higher than ever. The competition, was played over three days, 16 -18 November 1999 and was organised by **WO2 SSM Richardson.**

The Open Competition went according to the seedings up until the semi-finals, **SSgt Dave Gallagher** again met **WO1 FofS Steve Bason** in what was to be another familiar semi-final bout – **WO1 Bason** lost 9/7 9/4 9/0 for a change, he is the semi-final king. The other semi-final was between **WO2 SSM Dean Richardson** and **Lt Olly Gardner. WO2 Dean Richardson** made easy work of **Lt Gardner** 9/5 9/1 9/3 to set up a very interesting final. The Men's Over 35 competition went, once again, according to seedings and **WO1 Bason** and **WO2 Richardson** had comfortable games to reach the final. The over 35s was like re-newing old encounters from the past, and the match was initially a close fought battle, however in the fourth game, **WO1 Bason** felt slightly older **than WO2 Richardson** and lost 9/1. The final results being 9/3 1/9 1018 9/1. Having just had the hardest game of his life (of course) and with only 30 minutes rest, **WO2 Richardson** then had to play his Open final match against **SSgt Gallagher**, and a betting man would have put his money on the No 1 seed **SSgt Gallagher** to win. Stranger things have happened, and **WO2 Richardson** making very few mistakes finally won in three straight games over a more lethargic **SSgt Gallagher** 9/4 9/4 9/2 to become the Open Champion, for the first time, so a clean sweep for **WO2 Richardson** in both competitions.

WO2 Dean Richardson
receiving the Royal Signals Open Squash Championship trophy
from Tom Pollard

The final of the Plate Competition was between the only Gurkha entry this year (How old is he?) **Hari** and **Sgt** 'Taff' **Williams** from 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt, with **Sgt Williams** winning 5/9 6/9 4/9. The Unit Competition was played as a league system with the runners-up being 11 Sig Regt. The Inter Unit winners were 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt. An excellent three days of squash and all player are congratulated for taking part and playing well.

INTER CORPS SQUASH

The Corps team selected to play in the Inter Corps Championships at Winchester this year were:

No 1	**SSgt Dave Gallagher**
No2	**WO2 SSM Dean Richardson**
No3	**Sgt** 'Scan' **Humphries**
No4	**Lt Olly Gardner**
M	**WO1 (FofS) Steve Bason**
M	**SSgt Ian Piears**

The competition was over three days, 22 - 24 November 1999 and having gained promotion to Division 1 last year, the standard of play was going to be extremely high and that much tougher with some Corps teams fielding up to three Army players. However, the Team's main aim was to remain in Division 1, especially as the gossip on the ground was that the Royal Signals was the Team to go down. The arrival of **Sgt** 'Scan' **Humphries** was an added bonus and bolstered up the middle order. **Sgt Humphries**, normally the Corps No2 was handicapped with a knee injury but fitted in nicely at No3, not quite being up to the same form as the in form **Dean Richardson**. Things did not get off to a good start on Day One, however, and the only Officer in the team decided to nip into work for two minutes at Bulford and was late for the first match. We then went on to lose that 5-0 against the RLC, not that **Olly Gardner** was to blame of course. The RLC are the current Inter Corps Champions and were again to be the 1999 winners. Later on we played our second match against the REME 'A' team winning 4-1 which was a satisfactory result as REME 'A' eventually came Third overall. The team went from strength to strength on Day Two beating both the Army Air Corps and the Royal Engineers 'A', 3-2 and 4-1 respectively. **SSgt Gallagher** had an epic against the Army Air Corps No 1 finally losing 3-2 and 10/8 in the fifth. **WO1 Bason** also had a five setter against the Royal Engineers No5 winning 9/1 in the final game. This set the team up well for the final days play against the AGC 'A' team. The AGC were fighting to remain in Division 1 and all matches went to four games except for **SSgt Ian Piears** who won in straight games. Inevitably the AGCs fate was confirmed and Royal Signals won 4-1 sending them down to Division 2. The Royal Signals were Runners-up in Division 1, which was last achieved some 12 years ago and all the players performed extremely well and must be congratulated on their excellent performance.

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. Cornick — **Administrative Officer: Mr. P. J. Cuckow (Membership & Records)**

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. Internet: www.royalsignals.army.org.uk/museum/rsa.htm

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.*

NOTES FROM THE AO's DESK

Branch News: After 20 year in office, 'Chippy' **Wood** has stood down as Secretary of the Harrogate Branch. Elected at the Branch AGM to succeed 'Chippy' was **Bruce Graham**, who can be contacted at; 5 Meadow Way, Harrogate HG1 3LG. The Australia Sub Branch has closed in its present form. In its place is a trial 'get together' of members at the annual ANZAC Day Parade in Sydney in April. Life Member, **Gerald Lee** plans to write to all members in Australia inviting those who propose to attend the parade, to contact him regarding an informal get together. Anyone who is interested, but does not receive **Gerald**'s letter, should write to him at: 20 Cairncross Place, Port MacQuarie, NSW 2444. Unfortunately, ill health has forced **Jimmy Logan** to hand over secretarial duties of the Poole Branch to **Tony Curnow**. We wish **Jimmy** all the very best and thank him for his time in office. **Tony** can be contacted at: 61 Creekmoor Lane, Poole BH17 7BW. **Frank Robinson** has stood down after serving the past 18 years as Hon Secretary of the Lincoln Branch. Thank you **Frank** for your hard work and cheerfulness, hope we shall still see you at the annual Reunion at Blandford. We welcome **Maj (Retd) Derek Wood MBE** as the new secretary. Anyone requiring details of the Lincoln Branch should contact **Derek** at; 'Woodlands', 38 Arden Moor Way, North Hykeham, Lincoln LN6 9PP, tel: 01522-800607. **Frank Dempster** is trying to get a new branch started in Berwick upon Tweed. Anyone interested in joining should contact **Frank** at; Jireh Low Cocklaw, Berwick upon Tweed TD15 1UY, Tel: 01289-386687.

Royal Hospital Chelsea: This years Founder's Day will be held on Thursday 8 June. The In-Pensioners of the Royal Hospital will be revewed by **HM Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother,** who will be accompanied by **HRH The Duke of Kent KG.** Attendance is by ticket only and the few we have been allocated are with those Branches in and around London. The Governor's Review, a full dress rehearsal for Founder's Day will take place on Tuesday 6 June. Any member may attend and no ticket is necessary although there will be no parking facilities. Those attending should enter the Royal Hospital by the Chelsea Gate and be seated by 0930 hours. For security reasons, those intending to attend the Governor's Review are asked to inform this office. No medals should be worn at either event.

Calling **LCpl Jan Halsall**. Please contact us in order that we can send you your Life Membership card.

New Life Members. The following were recently enrolled as new Life Members of the RSA:-

Rank & name	*Branch*	*Served*
Sig Lee Stenning	RHQ	1992-99
Cpl Bernard Gilbert	Beverley Ex-Boys	1953-64
Cpl David Valentine	Middx Yeomanry	1990-date
WO2 Ken Sykes	RHQ	1976-00
Cpl Jack Quigg	Beverley Ex-Boys	1952-64
Sig Alec Wardell	Winchester	1949-54
Sgt Tom Manthorpe	South London	1946-48
Sgt Tony Smith	RHQ	1983-99
Pte Jillian Hurst	RHQ	1960-62
Cpl Stephen Cator	RHQ	1989-99
SSgt Jimmy Johnston	RHQ	1976-99
WO2 Peter Huzzey	RHQ	1976-00
WO1 Frank Evans	RHQ	1974-99
LCpl Tony Mortimer	Sale	1952-55
Sig B. A. MacDonald	Sale	1958-60
Sig Edward Smith	Sale	1954-56
Sig Peter Witt	East Kent	1959-68
Sig E.V. Ball	Dorset	1942-47
WO1 Terry Taylor	Dorset	1962-88
Cpl Will Rogers	RHQ	1990-00
WO2 Steve Rofe	RHQ	1976-99
SSgt Richard Plummer	RHQ	1976-00
LCpl Mark Williams	RHQ	1993-99
WO2 Victor Shillingford	RHQ	1964-00
LCpl Sean Kelly	RHQ	1991-99

Sgt Chris Gleadow	RHQ	1977-99
Cpl Glynn Evans	Swindon	1966-88
Sig John Bucklow	RHQ	1957-59
LCpl Joyce Boast	Norfolk	1942-46
Cpl F W Panther	Sheffield	1972-87
Cpl Stuart Crossman	Dorset	1993-99
LCpl Jan Halsall	RHQ	1993-date
Sgt Jeffrey Suckling	East London	1995-date
Cpl R Pulbrook	East London	1961-93
Sig Leonard James	RHQ	1945-48
LCpl John Garner	Rotherham	1950-52
Sgt Leslie Fields	Rotherham	1952-74
Sig Stan Crowther	Rotherham	1943-47
Dvr Rodney Jenkins	RHQ	1952-55
WO2 A. Austin	Sheffield	1991-99
Sig David Murray	Aberdeen	1947-49
Sig Arthur Singer	Cornwall	1942-46
Sgt George Brown	31 Sig Regt Assn	1969-83
Sig Terry O'Shea	Beverley Ex-Boys	1950-59
SSgt Ken Beale	RHQ	1952-91
Sig Fred Squires	Norfolk	1952-54

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Our Autumm Luncheon was also the occasion of our AGM. This had been postponed owing to our Dinner to celebrate our 50th Anniversary having been held in April. The Luncheon brought a record attendance. It always is an enjoyable affair as we are joined by so many friends and members of neighbouring Branches. For the use of his Mess, newly and most tastefully refurbished, we have to thank **Joe Fairbairn**, Garrison Sergeant Major and Serving Member of our Committee. He and his able and willing Staff made the day.

More than a dozen Members, including our President, **Gen Henry Hild MBE** and his wife **Janet**, attended the Corps Carol Service in London, afterwards enjoying the hospitality of RHQ in the form of sherry and mince pies in the Church Hall. Having travelled considerable distances, a number of the party then retired to enjoy a congenial supper at a local restaurant.

Our February gathering was a fitting introduction to the Millennium when nearly 30 Members and guests met in a Surrey village for lunch at a traditional English hostelry. There was much merriment. The venue was arranged by **Col** 'Paddy' **Verdon OBE**, Membership Secretary and a stalwart of our Committee. 'Paddy' and **Barbara** recently moved to a village which, though north of 'The Bull', at Gerrards Cross, is still south of Watford, so we anticipate that they will continue to cheer us with their company at Branch events.

Following a Music Night and our Spring Luncheon, our Annual Quiz Night will be held on Wednesday 17 May. There will be a small charge to cover the cost of the buffet. Our Treasurer, **Peter Sharpe** (tel: 01252 333643), or Secretary **Jane Knight** (tel: 01628 626468) will be pleased to furnish details. We usually have a large gathering and welcome both individuals and teams of four from other Branches and serving units near enough to attend. The Quiz is held at the Aldershot Garrison's Sergeants' Mess under the expert arrangements of **Jo Fair bairn**, (Signalmen and Subalterns afraid of Sergeants Major should not be deterred). This is a fun night. You don't have to be a genius!

BRADFORD BRANCH

We are still ticking over with a small attendance, our members enjoy coming to the meetings. We now have a new member, **Terence Clayton**, who served in the Royal Signals from January 1959 to 1965, we are pleased to see him at the meetings. We regret to announce the death of **Eric Lorriman** on 10 December .

The next celebration will be the Golden Wedding of our Secretary **Norah Houldsworth** and her husband **Jack**, which took place on 18 March. They both served in the Royal Signals during the war. **Jack** was a militia man who was called up in July 1939 for six months. However, it stretched to nearly seven years, most of which was served abroad. After being evacuated from Dunkirk, he was posted to the Middle East before the 8th Army was formed. After Alamein he went on to Sicily and Italy, landing unopposed at Calabria. He then went on to Monte Casino. He spent the last winter of the war in the Apennine mountains and finally finished the war in Trieste returning home overland, having served with 13 Corps as a Corporal/Linesman.

Nora volunteered for the ATS with her twin sister **Mary** in February 1942. After training as Telephone Switchboard Operators they were posted to a small village in North Yorkshire called Well for thirteen months. The next three years were spent on the HQ Northern Command Switchboard. At York they were billeted in the Infantry Barracks at Fulford.

Having known each other before the war **Jack** and **Nora** met again when they were de-mobbed. They have retraced their steps through Egypt-Alamein, Sicily, Monte Casino and numerous other places. **Jack** is Treasurer for the Dunkirk Veterans Association and **Nora** is Treasurer of the WRAC Association (ATS) and is a very active member. Fifty happy years.

BRISTOL BRANCH

We are pleased to say that Bristol Branch still thrives, with 44 'paid up' Branch members, and an average of 16 members attending our monthly Branch meetings. These are held on the last Thursday of every month, except December when we hold our Annual Christmas Dinner on the first Thursday of the month. We have maintained a fairly full programme of activities during the year, including visits to a local brewery, and to the local RAC Control Centre. Recently we have retired to a local hostelry for an informal game of skittles, and paid a visit to the Police Officers Association, also for an evening of skittles. On one evening, after our formal Branch meeting, members and wives were given a most interesting talk by the local Community Beat Constable on the subject of crime prevention in the home and car, and this was followed by a Scenes of Crime Officer (SOCO to television addicts) who described the ways in which 'clues' are left by criminals, and how they are detected by the SOCO teams. Interest was so high, that on this occasion absolutely no one left early!.

Two day trips were included in our programme, including a day in Windsor Castle to view the absolutely fabulous restoration that has been carried out since the 'Great Fire'. We timed our visit to witness the 'Changing of the Guard' ceremony - a spectacle enjoyed by all. The most outstanding visit however, was a Branch visit to RHQ at Blandford. We hired a minibus and took a party of 16 members and wives, and I can only say that our reception was outstanding. A programme of visits to various departments was laid on for us, including of course a guided visit to the Museum - a must for any ex Signaller! We finished with an excellent lunch in the Sergeants Mess, followed by a tour of the whole site. I know that this visit involved a great deal of organisation, and our thanks are due to a number of people, but especially to the Commanding Officer 11 Signals Regiment and to the Association Admin Officer, **Mr Peter Cuckow**.

Our year ended with an excellent Christmas Dinner, attended by 36 members and guests, and at which we were delighted to welcome as our principal guest **Lt Col (Retd) Bob Peake BEM**, our Area Rep. Below is a copy of a photo showing **Lt Col Bob** deep in earnest conversation with Branch Chairman, 'Chick' **Cheetham**.

DORSET BRANCH

Once again our AGM was held on Blandford Camp on Sunday 21 November 1999. Breaking away from tradition, the venue was held at the Gurkha Restaurant, Humph Bahadur's, where we were all treated to some fine and I am sure all would say, very delicious food. A big thank-you goes to **Capt (Retd) Mick Nevill** for his organisation and very good choice of venue. The meeting itself was productive and a few major changes have taken place. Due to the untimely death of our president **Col John Francis**, who will be sadly missed by all, the Chair was passed over to **Maj (Retd) Pat Lafferty** and in stepped **Maj (Retd) Tom Friend MBE** to take over from **Pat** as Branch Chairman. The Secretary remains in the capable hands of **Dave Walker BEM,** and the Treasurer remains with spend thrift **Maj (Retd) Dick Hougton.** As one point of order during the meeting, I suggested that why don't we have a group photo for the next AGM and publicise the Branch more in *The WIRE*. Yes, I got the job as spokes person and news editor (Fleet Street here I come), but I don't mind, it's the only way I will get my name in *The WIRE*; (**Kev Falconer**). Whilst the meeting was going on, the ladies were entertained in the bar area with a demonstration of Aromatherapy and all the wonderful bits that go with it. The meeting was followed by the plentiful buffet style Gurkha curries and kormas washed down with very reasonable drink prices in the bar. After the meal had been eaten it was the turn of the new president, **Pat Lafferty,** to welcome everyone and to mark a very special occasion for **Jimmy Wilde,** our Standard Bearer. After 30 years of loyal service, **Jimmy** has decided finally to lay down the colours and retire from the post. The occasion was marked with the presentation by **Brig P. J. Evans CBE**, the Area 5 Vice-Chairman, of a bronze statuette of the 'Jimmy' to **Jimmy**, who for once, was lost for words. On behalf of all the Dorset Branch and I am sure all standard bearers, we wish you, **Jimmy,** all the best in your well earned rest and a huge thank-you for the dedication and loyal service to the association, long may it continue. The post now remains vacant and is in need of filling, should there be anyone willing to take up the standard then please get in contact with **Dave Walker** care of the Royal Signals Museum. The last of the thanks go to **Lin Falconer** and **Liz Garside** for their persuasive talents in raising a staggering £100 for the Branch funds through selling raffle tickets. Should any ex-member wish to join the Branch, then we meet in the Sergeants' Mess Blandford Camp on the third Tuesday of the month.

Jimmy Wilde
being presented by Brig P. J. Evans of the bronze 'Jimmy',
in attendance is the President, Maj (Retd) Pat Lafferty

EASTBOURNE BRANCH

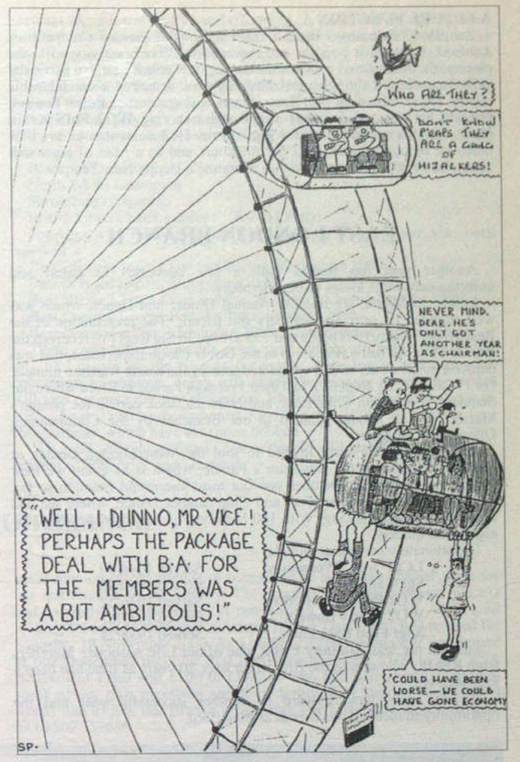
The Branch held its Annual Dinner in the Royal Engineers Club in Eastbourne on 23 October 1999. Some 45 members and guests attended. Our official guests were **Col Andrew Carter** and his wife, **Debbie**, from RHQ and **Maj Brian Howe** and his wife **Sue. Brian** commands 56 Sig Sqn (V) which is based in Eastbourne. The Dinner went very well indeed and everyone enjoyed themselves.

Eastbourne Annual Dinner
Standing: Chris Deadman (Chairman),
the late Brig Frank Clarkson, Col Andrew Carter, Brian Howe,
Lt Col Ron Brodie (Secretrary)
Sitting: Debbie Carter, Gwen Field (nee York) (Treasurer),
Sue Howe

On a sadder note, less than two weeks after he presided at the Dinner, our President, **Brig Frank Clarkson**, passed away. The Branch was well represented at his funeral at Hailsham. The Branch Standard together with the Royal British Legion Standard from Hailsham were paraded. He will be sadly missed by all members of the Branch.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Despite **Donald Crisp**'s cartoon no member was seen amongst the VIP Guests on TV at the Millennium Dome Celebration, but we are sure that most will have organised an enjoyable and less hyped up way of their own to see in the New Year. Since then the days have been drawing out a bit but the flu bug (if not the Millennium Bug) has been at work.



There should have been over 60 members sitting down to lunch in the County Hotel after the AGM but **Jean Saunders**, the **Dickasons** and **John Raymond** were all prevented from coming as a result. Never the less there were over 60 at the meeting, though some had planned not to have lunch. The chief guest was **WO1 (Corps RSM) Geoffrey Hodgson**, who after the AGM gave a very informative address on present Corps matters.

The Corps RSM was heard to say,
'It's a new post gentlemen but you don't have to bow.'
(L-R): Vincent de Rose, Marion de Rose, John Ballantyne,
RSM Hodgson, Donald Crisp (Chairman),
Maj Gen (Retd) John Badcock (Hon Sec),
Bill Lovett (Hon Treasurer), Lt.Col (Retd) Mike Barrett OBE

The Corps RSM post had only been established for a month and so we were very lucky to have him with us. The Branch has now had two new Master of Signals, two SOinCs, and now the Corps RSM to its Xmas Lunch or AGMs. A delicious meal followed by another successful raffle making over £73 thanks to **Marion** and **Vincent de Rose**, finished off a very enjoyable event.

NEW MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome **John** and **Gail Batty** of Aylesford. **John** served in the TA from 1959 to 1972 in 872 Locating Battery (two years), 329 Sig Sqn for six years and 44 Sig Sqn for the last five years. We shall look forward to seeing them at a future function.

A FUTURE FUNCTION

Sunday 13 February - Branch Ten Pin Bowling Annual Competition, Ashford, Kent. This popular and therapeutic Branch activity will take place at the AMF Bowl which is the same place as last year. No particular skills are needed though most have by now acquired a considerable talent. Those attending our Xmas lunch will remember **Peter Foakes,** brought his son and daughter-in-law and a serving **WO2 FofS Kevin Moir**. He was presented with a Branch tie. He has written to say how much he enjoyed meeting all the members and as a Man of Kent will wear .the tie with pride, and wishes everyone a Happy New Year.

EAST LONDON BRANCH

Another year has passed with a few successes to report and unfortunately some losses of our Members.

Firstly, in March, we had our Annual Dinner and Dance, which was well attended by over 80 Members and friends. The presentation of the Best Troop Trophy took place and 755 Troop, 36 Sig Regt (V) received the cup. In May, we had a coach trip to the Dover Castle Experience, this was enjoyed by all of us, with a conducted tour of the secret wartime tunnels. On 17 July, 36 Sig Regt (V), had their Freedom Parade in Ilford where our Standard, along with Cambridge and Norwich, took part in the parade's March Past, an honour granted to our Branches by the Commanding Officer, **Lt Col Allan.**

In September we were invited to join the West London Branch at Chelsea Hospital on the Governor's Parade, which is an event we look forward to every year. October saw our most successful function so far, when we held our Annual Fish and Chip Supper Dance, where we had live-music for the dancing. With 140 Members and friends attending, the night went quickly.

Unfortunately our losses include:

LCpl 'Jock' Wornham	Served 1946/49
Sgt Gabbitas	Served 1940/46
WO2 Peter Gunn MM	Served 1926/52
WO2 Harry Bowers	Served 1937/67
SSgt Fred Backhiuse	Served 1938/74

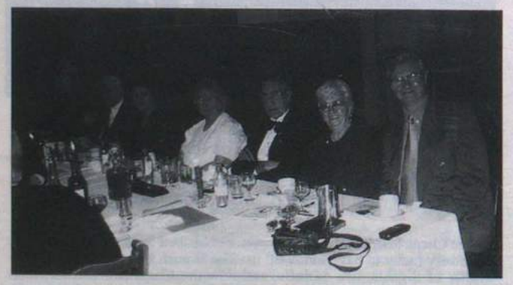
Last but not least, **Johnny Cubit**, one of our Life Associate Members from REME, who served the Branch for over 20 years as if he had been a Full Member.

We can now look forward to another successful year and the opportunity to meet all our friends at Blandford.

GLASGOW BRANCH

The Branch held a social evening (no business discussed), on Tuesday 14 December 1999, attended by members, their families and friends. A very enjoyable event with a number of items donated for the raffle. It is amazing where the members and friends manage to find so many items to donate. 'Big John' was having fun with his asides, that no prizes were coming his way, or his colour tickets were not forthcoming. To his astonishment his numbers then came up thick and fast. He then, with shouts of encouragement from the Members, generously declined to accept more prizes, and had them put back into the draw, to the cheers of the assembled Members. This was the last meeting of 1999, our next will be in the new Millennium, when we hope to increase the membership, having put our Branch on the Teletext Association list. We are again indebted to the ladies of the Branch, **Betty**, **Pat**, **Ivana**, **Annice** and **Isobel**, who provided the buffet.

Saturday 22 January 2000 was the night of the Burns Supper held in the TAC Jardine Street, attended by 37 Members and friends, **Bill Taylor** the Branch Chairman presiding.



The Top Table at our Burn's Night Supper

Bill opened the proceedings by welcoming everyone and then said the Selkirk Grace. The Haggis was then carried into the room by Branch Member **Jim McMillan** accompanied by **Brian Warren** the Piper, but **Jim** forgot the knife, and had to make a mad dash to the kitchen to retrieve one. The Fairin' was Scotch Broth, Chieftain o' the Puddin' race Wi' Neeps and Tatties, Tipsy Laird and Bannocks and Kebbuck. John Barleycorn in decanters, and as there were ladies present, wine was also on the table. **Bill MacNamara** gave the 'Address to The Haggis' waving the large kitchen knife. Those sitting close by, ducking their heads unless they wanted to risk losing an ear.

In the absence of **Capt Lynch**, who was to propose 'The Immortal Memory', **Bill MacNamara**, a fervent Burns fan, stepped into the breach, to give a potted version of the life of the Bard. **Ann Warren** gave us a fine rendering of songs without musical accompaniment and occasional chorus by the company. 'The Twa Dogs' with **Jim McMillan** as Narrator, 'Lush' by **John McNab** and 'Caesar' by **George MacFarlane** who waved a model dog, and barked every time his turn came to recite his piece of the narrative, between two dogs discussing their masters. 'The Toast Tae the Lassies' was given by **Jim Prentice**, it raised a few laughs and although English, having been a domiciled Scot for over 52 years, his rendition was accepted and applauded. **Brian** then gave a few well known tunes on the Pipes being rewarded with the quaich of whisky from the Chairman and applause from the company. **Ivana Muir**, Branch Secretary, gave the response to the 'Toast Tae the Lassies'. This she did with aplomb, and a good deal of giving the male population a few feminine thoughts, having a few digs at Members of the Branch, all done 'tongue in cheek' with a grin, and was of course being encouraged by the females in the company. **Bill McNamara** recited 'Tam o' Shanter' being applauded for his efforts, as it is quite something to memorise in its entirety. **Wendy McNab** then gave a rendition of Robert Burns 'To A Mouse', 'Yee, sleekit, tim'rous beastie……' surprising her husband by stroking his hair, as 'Big John' who is over 6ft 6ins slid down in his chair. He had no idea his ever loving was going to do this party piece. Can you imagine **John** who was a WO2 RQMS being timorous? Has **Wendy** really tamed him? **Bill Taylor** then thanked everyone for contributing to an excellent evening, and for those attending. He also wished to thank **Jim McMillan, Jim**'s sister **Elizabeth** and her daughter **Irene**, for their help in the kitchen and as table waiters, also all those who helped in any way to make the evening a success. After singing Auld Lang Syne the company adjourned to the WO's and Sgt's Mess for further refreshment before calling it a day. The Chairman and Members wish to thank **Lt Col J. K. McKee MBE** and **WO1 RSM A. B. Hilborn** for use of the Officers and WO & Sgts Mess for the night, it was much appreciated as the numbers attending were too small to fill the large drill hall.

HULL BRANCH

The year started with our AGM and the usual silence fell as the Election of Officers approached. The Treasurer, **Ernie Glover**, had to step down due to illness and our thanks go to **Ernie** for his work over the years. A new Treasurer was elected and our thanks go to Chairman - **Mr Roy Drewery,** Hon Secretary - **Jim Brown** and our newly elected Treasurer - **Mr Bill James**, for steering us through 1999.

We had a varied year with members heading off to Arnhem during June. Those members who attended the Blandford Reunion wish to thank **Peter Cuckow** and all at RHQ for making it the best yet. July saw us heading to the 'Kohima Weekend' at 2 Div York. (The 2000 Event promises to be one to remember.) Our monthly luncheons have been well supported and the various hostelries we have visited have ranged from Five Star to best forgotten. We would like to thank **Bill** and **Peggy James** for inviting members and partners to their home for a very enjoyable buffet (five stars). The luncheons serve to bring together members who for various reasons cannot attend our evening meetings which keeps them up to date on RSA Events. In November members attended the Hull Remembrance Parade, the Standard was paraded by **Mr Walter Raywood** and a wreath was laid at the Cenotaph by **Mr Jim Brown.**

At the end of November the Annual Regimental Dinner was held at the Halifax Barracks and our thanks go to **Sgt Stuart Keys** and his staff who served us with a first class four course meal with wine. Also to **WO2 Alan James** our grateful thanks once again for his hard work and support of the Branch. Unfortunately the OC (49WR) Sig Sqn (V) **Maj David Sixsmith** was unable to join us as our guest due to carrying out operational duties. We wish him a safe and happy tour and hope he will be able to join us in 2000.

Thanks to all members for their support during 1999. If you live in or around the Hull Area and are a retired or serving member of the Corps, you are welcome to join us at the Halifax Barracks on the first Thursday of each month at 2000hrs. For more information contact the Branch Secretary, **Jim Brown** on 01482 655963.

LINCOLN BRANCH

Born in Boston, Lincolnshire in 1946, **Terry Stubbings** was educated at Boston Grammar School. He joined the Army in January 1962, serving in the Royal Signals, starting at the Army Apprentice College, Harrogate for the first three years. (Intake 62A) He served in 3 Div HQ at Bulford Camp, and 222 Signal Squadron in Sharjah. In 1970 he went into the Parachute Regiment until leaving with the rank of Sergeant in 1978. The following years saw several changes of career, from Pub Landlord to HGV Driver, to Motor Cycle Training Instructor. This latter occupation brought **Terry** to Lincoln to open a business in 1993.

The role of Town Crier was revitalised in Lincoln in 1990 and in 1994 **Terry** took on the role, and has remained Town Crier since that summer. During the following years a lot of effort has gone into developing the role of Town Crier. Quite a lot of work is done in conjunction with the

Mayoral Department and Lincoln Tourism. A good deal of charity work for local organisation is also undertaken. Some commercial work, which tends to pay very well, is also done. A little of this is local but the majority is away from Lincoln and therefore undertaken for purely financial reasons. **Terry** also gives talks on the subject of Town Crying through the ages, to any group who requests it.

Approximately six times a year **Terry** enters Town Crying Competitions around the country. Last year (1999) **Terry** achieved the following:

Blackpool International Champion (Second time in three years)
North Wales Champion
Shropshire Champion
British Open Championships Second Place.

Together with his wife **Trish** the following awards have also been received:

Best Dressed Town Crier and Escort, Shropshire 1999
Best Dressed Escort, Shropshire 1999
Best Dressed Town Crier and Escort, British Championships 1999
Best Dressed Escort, British Championships 1999
Best Dressed escort, Llandudno 1999, North Wales Championships

These competitions continue every year and are utilised to help put the city of Lincoln on the map as far as the other towns and cities are concerned. In addition, **Terry** will shortly be opening a web site, which will also promote the city of Lincoln. Engagements continue to come in, with about 25 already onboard for the year 2000, as well as four competitions, which have also been booked.

All in all, the role of Town Crier to the city of Lincoln gives a huge amount of both pride and pleasure.

LOUGHBOROUGH BRANCH

The Loughborough Branch, of the Royal Signals Association, held their Annual Dinner Dance on 20 November 1999 at the Carillon Rooms, Loughborough. 80 sat down for dinner, which was followed by dancing to The Terry Stewart Band. They came from all over England, (Cheltenham, Southport, Bristol, Worthing, Cornwall, Bracknell, Derby) as well as our local Branch Members and friends. Some of the ex-Signals hadn't seen each other for 30 years, and most had served some time during their Army career at Garrats Hey, Woodhouse Eaves. One of our Branch members, **Geoff Fletcher** from Southport, was married that morning to **Vivien** and they both attended the dinner, so apart from the usual reunion of old friends, it turned out to be a very special night for our last reunion of the century. The evening was a tremendous success and naturally there were lots of reminiscing amongst us all. We are all looking forward to next year's Annual Dinner Dance which is booked for Saturday, 18 November 2000. As a profit of £200 was made it was agreed at our December meeting that the Branch donate £100 to the RSA Benevolent Fund and £100 to LOROS who had helped and supported some of our past members and their families. If anyone reading this would like to join our Branch please ring our Chairman, **Ben Banyard**, on 01509 557686.

(The photograph is by courtesy of The Loughborough Echo)

NORFOLK BRANCH

We of the Norfolk Branch have been undergoing a very sad time with the loss of two of our members:**Gordon Royall** and **Brian Robinson**. in particular **Gordon** was one of our most active members and a stalwart of the Branch. Both funerals were attended by several Branches in Area 3, along with their Standards. At **Gordon's** funeral there was in excess of 400 mourners and eight Standards from various Branches which showed how popular he was. The Norfolk Branch would like to thank all those who gave their support to us during this very sad time.

At our December meeting a surprise was sprung on our Secretary, **Brian C. Gibbs**, when the Chairman, **Frank Mortlock**, suddenly rose to his feet and presented **Brian** with a Honour Membership Certificate signed by Association Chairman, **Maj Gen Alan Yeoman**, along with a beautifully written letter from the General. **Brian** thanked the Branch for this very much appreciated honour and said that the years he had spent as the Branch Secretary had been both rewarding and enjoyable, and that though he had many regrets about standing down from the position, he felt that it was time to move over. However, he still intends to be very active in the Branch. and will give it his support. In conclusion the Branch would like to thank the TA Centre Stewards, **Kevin** and **Nancy Barnard**, for their support to the Branch over the years, also **Mrs Dorothy Gibbs,** who has been the raffle lady over the years, with her winning smile at functions and meetings extracts the money from members and guest alike to swell the Branch funds. Long may she continue to do so.

Chairman-Frank Mortlock presents Brian C. Gibbs with his Honour Membership Certificate

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Our December meeting took the form of a social evening therefore no Branch business was conducted Once again we are indebted to **Debbie Wolfe** and **Kim Greer** for their work in providing a very acceptable spread. As usual at Christmas, under the direction of Branch Welfare member, **John McAreavey** and assisted by other Branch Members, incapacitated ex-Signallers and Widows of Signallers were visited with gifts, the objective being to let them know they are not forgotten. On conclusion of a short January meeting we had the pleasure of hearing a most interesting speaker. **Mr David Russell,** ex-RAF and a Prisoner of War of the Japanese told us in most graphic and sometimes amusing terms of life as a prisoner of the Japanese.

On Saturday 22 January. **Harry Stanley** and **Edgar McCall** represented the Branch at the Royal British Legion Lunch and AGM in the Tullyglass House Hotel, Ballymena. This contact between the two organsations is useful. Once again, join us any third Wednesday of each month in Clonaver TAVR Centre, Belfast.

POOLE BRANCH

In the late 1970's **Jimmy Logan,** a lineman by trade, completed his Regular Army service. His last appointment was that of RQMS/MTWO 7 Sig Regt, and he settled in the Poole area with **Eve** and their family. Within a few months, missing military life, he started local enquiries and advertisements for ex Corps members and found about 30 interested persons. Very conscious not to take from the Bournemouth or Blandford areas, he then sought permission to found a Poole Branch. Meetings were held in local public house's but eventually transferred to the Royal British Legion Club at Broadstone. **Jim** undertook the duties of Secretary and maintained that position for over 20 years until the end of 1999. Despite ill health over the past 18 months he never missed a meeting and organised, as always, our Christmas dinner. This was held on 17 Dec 1999, with **Brig** 'Paddy' **Evans CBE** presiding. Some 54 members/friends enjoyed a wonderful evening and tributes were paid to **Jim** and **Eve,** before a suitably inscribed framed print of 'the Cable wagon' was presented to him.

(L-R): Tony Curnow, Jimmy Logan, Brig Paddy Evans

Jim, who still intends to come to our monthly meetings, then handed over his duties to **Tony Curnow. Tony** can be contacted on 01202 770906 and new, eligible members are always very welcome to our meetings which take place at the Broadstone RBL club on the first Tuesday of each month at 7.45pm.

SHAPE BRANCH

by WO1 (RSM) M Rouse

The SHAPE Branch of the Corps Association can be seen seated on 10 December 1999 prior to the commencement of their traditional Christmas Lunch and drinking competition held at the SHAPE Officers Club. The Association being ably presided over by **Lt Col Fish** who with a small, but dedicated, inner cabinet organises numerous sporting and social activitics throughout each and every year. The Association itself is subscribed to by the vast majority of serving/retired members of the Corps here in SHAPE but is unusual, due to the fact that most members are still serving in the Corps. Special thanks for organising the Christmas Lunch must go to **Sgt Mick** '2 left feet' **Conception**, with entertainment and laughter provided by **SSgt Pat Millar**.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Our Christmas Party was a great success, with a record attendance. For the second year running it was held at Hounslow Barracks by courtesy of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment. There was live music and dancing and a quiz and a raffle. 'There was eating and drinking and much merriment and a good time had by all'. Our thanks go to the Committee and the Ladies Section for their hard work and able organisation which contributed to making this occasion *such* a pleasant one.

31 SIGNAL REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Christmas and the Millennium celebrations seem to be a long time ago, but some of the memories are still lingering. Our trip made in conjunction with the Reading Branch for Christmas Dinner on the Watercress Line was very successful. Our thanks go to **Alan Foot** for getting us all together.

Our last notes for *The WIRE* showed a couple of 'iffy' characters, thanks for all enquiries. I can confirm that it was **John Eversfield** and not John Lennon. Congratulations to ex-**SSgt Len Clark** on being awarded the Queen's Volunteer Reserve Medal. A fitting reward after many years service in the Regiment. **Len** and his wife, **Linda**, attended Buckingham Palace on 21 March.

A reminder that our Annual Dinner will be on 15 April in the Central Mess, Duke of York's HQ. Our trip to Brusssels is on 26-28 May, but more about that next time.

REUNIONS

EX-WHITE HELMETS

We maintain a list of ex-White Helmets for social purposes, details are very sketchy for soldiers still serving. If you were a White Helmet please contact **Ilene** on Blandford Military (94 371) 2365, so that we can up-date our records.

12th, 15th & 18th AIR FORMATION SIGNAL REGIMENTS ASSOCIATION

The next annual dinner of the 12th, 15th & 18th Air Formation Signal Regiments Association will be held in the North Stafford Hotel, Stoke-on-Trent, on Saturday April 15th. All ex-Air Formation Signallers, and their wives, will be welcome. More details from the Association Chairman, **Mr G. D. C. Evans** (01249-460428).

The meeting of the Southern Chapter of the Association will now take place at the Delaware Pavilion, Brighton, on Thursday, 6 April (not the 13 April as reported in the December *Wire*), assembling at 11.00hrs. Again all Air Formation Signallers will be welcome. Further details from **Paul Quinn** (01325-482471).

As in previous years, the 12th, 15th & 18th Air Formation Signal Regiments Association will combine with 19th Signal Regiment Association and the Royal Signals Amateur Radio Club to set up a display and working amateur radio station at 21st Signal Regiment's Open Day at Colerne on Saturday, 8 July.

BEVERLEY EX-BOYS ASSOCIATION

As the year 2000 is the 50th Anniversary of the formation of 6 (Boys) Training Regiment, we are arranging a Reunion Weekend in Beverley on 7-8 October 2000.

This will take the form of a visit to the Museum of Army Transport at 3pm on the Saturday. There is a cafeteria and bar where refreshments can be obtained and the museum is well worth a visit. This will be followed by dinner, in the evening, at the museum's Montgomery Centre, which will be open from 6pm with a bar. On Sunday, 8 October, a church service will be held in Beverley Minster. This should bring back memories of the long march, with the band, every Sunday morning to the Minster.

Since forming the Association in August 1998, we have 128 members at the present and numbers are still growing. In an effort to find more 'ex-boys' the Branch Secretary, **Tony Hull**, has broadcast on several local radio stations in the Midlands including Radio Nottingham where our member, **Dave Shakespeare**, was able to visit the studio and take part in the broadcast. So far this has produced a couple of new members and we are hoping to follow this up with more local radio stations in the north.

Anyone wishing to join the Association or obtain further details of the 50th Anniversary Reunion should contact **Tony Hull** at: 8 Ferncroft Gardens, Bournemouth, BH10 6BZ. Tel: 01202 770261.

KOREAN REUNION

To mark the 50th Anniversary of their departure from Hong Kong, 27 (Comwel) Inf Bde Sig Tp is holding a reunion on

SATURDAY 26 AUGUST 2000

at the OC's house in Lymington, Hants.
For details ring 01753 882927.

SIGNAL & TELECOMMUNICATION BRANCH REUNION

Saturday 15 July 2000
Commando Training Centre Royal Marines Lympstone

The 2000 Signal &Telecommunication Branch Reunion will be held at CTCRM Lympstone on the 15 July 2000
All former Royal Signal Instructors &
'Green Beret' Royal Signals are invited to attend.
The day will consist of a briefing, Photo, Barbecue (Sports) & Evening Function

Enquiries for more information and an Invitation form to:
(Limited accommodation available)

Maj PW. Thomas RM 01392 414032
WO2 C. Pilkington RM 01392 414084
Sgt R. Howe R. Sigs 01392 414213

Fax: 01392 414145

Or visit our unofficial website on: **www.civvie-street.co.uk**

KOREA

Anyone who served in Korea is welcome to attend a get together during the Annual RSA Reunion at Blandford 24/25 June. Details of the venue and time will be available from Reception, at the Reunion. Anyone interested is asked to call **Roy Painter** on: 0208-441 0104.

LOST COMMS

SERVICE PALS

Hilda Cranston WRAC 1964/70, is looking for anyone from 4 Coy WRAC/18 Signal Regiment 1965/67, from 16 Signal Regiment 1967/69 and Bielefeld Signal Troop 1969/70. Please contact her at: PO Box 144, Holland Park 4121 Old Brisbane, AUSTRALIA, or E-mail her on: hacranston@hotmail.com

Fifty years on, the Despatch Riders of 12th Corps Signals still hold their Annual Reunion at the Denbigh Arms in Lutterworth. **George Bagshaw** would be pleased to hear from any old comrades on: 0115 9526121

Carlton Television are producing a programme on the life of **Sir Norman Wisdom** and are anxious to trace his former good friend **Patrick Dickinson**. They served together in the Corps at Cheltenham during WW2. Anyone who can help is asked to call **Linda Regnier** on (020) 7612 7581.

AN APPEAL FROM THE NATIONAL EX-PRISONER OF WAR ASSOCIATION

The Association are certain that thousands of British POWs were not returned by the Russians. They would very much like to locate former signallers who were based at Allied Forces HQ in Italy in May or June 1945, or anyone who sent any signals concerning POWs in Europe around the same time frame. Anyone who can help is asked to call their Historian, **Mr Phillip D. Chinnery**, 10 Lambert Avenue, Langley, Berks SL3 7EB. Tel: 01753 541085.

Can anybody help **Cfn Darren L. Donkersley** with the current whereabouts of **Jo (Joanna)**. She used to go to Prince Rupert Boarding School in Rinteln and lived in Nienburg, Germany in the 1980s. **Darren** had a surprise meeting with her in Herford in 1993 just before he moved to Fallingbostel. Should anybody know where to contact her please could they write to **Cfn Darren Donkersley** at the following address:

Support Squadron SQMS (A)
Multi National Division (South West)
Headquarters and Signal Regiment
Operation Palatine, BFPO 553

CAN ANYBODY HELP?

In 1947, from May to December, **Mr R. L. Hughes** was staioned at Lubeck in Germany, at Waldersee Kasserne. A member of the Royal Signals, he was attached to 10 Royal Hussars.

Were you there at the same time?

If so, **Ron Hughes** would love to hear from you. Contact him at: Ivy Cottage, Alger Street, Ashton-Under-Lyne, LANCASHIRE, OL6 9LQ. Tel: 0161 344 1454 E-mail: united@strayduck.com

Life Member **Chris Edwards** is seeking the current whereabouts of his former pal **David Booth**. **David** came from Sheffield and served with **Chris** in the White Helmets in 1969. Anyone who can help is asked to call **Chris** on 0191-285 6740.

Anyone who can help with 50 Div Signals or 72 Field Regiment Signals in the British Expeditionary Force and North Africa between 1939-1945, please contact **Susan Hill** on 01642 700792.

Mr Elrick Gair is seeking the present whereabouts of his former friend **Peter Crook**, who served in the Corps in the 1950s. **Peter** was a commissioned officer and came from Felstead, Middlesex. Last known address was in Chelmsford. Anyone who can help is asked to call **Mr Gair** on Tel: 0207 624 4540.

Former **Sig Alfred Gerald Daines** is seeking the whereabouts of his old friend **Sig Jimmy Byrne**, with whom he served during WW2. **Jimmy** was born in Manchester and enlisted at Derby in March 1941. **Alfred** would also like to make contact with the former **Sig Thomas Paine** (who married a girl from Paignton, Devon) or anyone else who remembers him. Anyone who can help can contact **Alfred** either through his daughter on e-mail: sheila@ray01.fsnet.co.uk, or through **Jim Preston** on Tel: 01376 563 985.

CORRESPONDENCE

From: **Ms J. K. Dethick**
Via Piergi 103
Vitellino
06061 Castigliane del Lago (PG)
ITALY

Dear Colonel,

I am currently engaged in research into the Battle of Trasimere (20-30 June 1944) in Italy. I have written to all the Regiments involved with the exception of the 4th Reconnaisance Regiment (part of 4th Division) and the 56th Reconnaisance Regiment (part of 78th Division).

I understand that the Tactics Wing of the Signals Training School handled the Reconnaisance Corps personnel after it's creation (source British Army Handbook 1939-45).

I wonder if you could help me to contact any of the soldiers who fought with either the 4th or 56th Recce or any Royal Signals personnel who were involved in the battle.

Yours Sincerely.....

From: **Mr George Alfred Best**
9 Alamein Avenue
Wayfield Estate
Chatham
KENT ME5 0HZ

Dear Sir,

I find *The WIRE* very interesting to follow the events of the Royal Signals. I am so proud of our Corps. I have enclosed this photo of **Winston Churchill**, taken whilst he was on a visit to Iceland in 1941, to visit the 49th Infantry Division, (The Polar Bears). I thought it might be of small interest to any of your readers who may have been there at the time.

Yours Faithfully.....

From: **Brian Overland**
5 Ambury Gardens
Crowland
Peterboough
LINCOLNSHIRE
PE5 0ET

Dear Sir,

In the October, 1999 edition of *The WIRE* magazine you published a letter from **Ken Bunston**. In this he explained that he was attempting to organise yet another reunion of old comrades. This time it was to be a 50th anniversary reunion for No 1 Independant Selection Squadron, Royal Signals who had served at Gallowgate Camp, Catterick in early 1950. He had recently decided to extend this to include those who served with the Squadron at Beverley thus, I was looking forward to the event. In his letter to *The WIRE*, he reminded us all that we should, '…get off our butts and try and contact our old comrades of yesteryear'. Time, he said, was running out for many of us and we should make an effort to do just that. Sadly, **Ken** will not make his re-union as he suddenly passed away on 23 November, 1999.

Ken and I first met in December, 1950 when as newly qualified OWL B111's (Operator Wireless and Line for the new boys) we assembled in Aines Lines at Catterick for a draft to the newly re-formed 3rd Divisional Signal Regiment in Dovercourt, Harwich. We spent some ten months there in Baker Troop, he was Crew Commander Baker 2 and I had Baker 3. We pooled our pay, shared a civilian suit, shirt and tie and occasionally girl friends. This period cemented a friendship that has lasted almost fifty years. Since we both left the Corps, he in 1975 and I in 1978, we have kept in very close touch meeting up two or three times a year and a telephone chat most weeks. When either of us felt down we would phone the other recall a few anecdotes about times long gone, have a laugh about someone or something and our spirits would be lifted. This is what true comradeship has meant to me.

I shall miss him dearly but thankfully, I have a number of other ex-Corps people with whom I have a close and regular contact and the same spirit of comradeship exists. I would like to think that his final plea in his last letter to *The WIRE* was not ignored and could well serve as a epitaph and that we will, '…get off our butts and make an effort,' make contact with those friends of yesteryear and maybe go one step further and actually attend the 2000 Reunion at Blandford, I do hope so.

Yours Sincerely.....

From: **Maj (Retd) R. S. Bresloff MSM**
3 The Pastures
Penyffordd
CHESTER CH4 0HQ

Dear Sir,

May I, through *The WIRE*, pay tribute to **Lt Col Don Herring**, author of the book 'Jimmy's Apprentices'. An outstanding pictorial record of ex-Boys of the Corps. To those who haven't yet bought it. Do so, it will awaken many memories. Many Thanks. My best wishes for 2000.

Yours Faithfully.....

From: **D. B. Emley**
Tenny's Court, Marnhull
DORSET DT10 1PS
Tel: 01258 820228

Sir,

One wonders, (*The WIRE*, February 2000, page 16) does the good LCpl MacDonald also perform on the Trum Pet?

Yours etc.....

From: **Col (Retd) D. R. W. Thomas MBE**
Alturas
Town Row
Rotherfield
EAST SUSSEX TN6 3QX

Dear Sir,

It gives me great pleasure to forward the cheque for £1,000, a donation to the Royal Signals Benevolent Fund from the Old Comrades of the Eighth Army Signals/1647 Association past and present.

Our final reunion dinner on 23 October 1999 voted unanimously that this final balance should be donated to the Fund when our account was closed down. The final reunion was a great success with 28 Members and guests at table and a considerable number of regrets, with donations, were received from Members unable to attend.

A copy of the Menu card may be of interest and is enclosed. The toasts were made with due solemnity and there was many a moist eye in the silence following the penultimate toast.

Yours ever.....

I'll bet when this is over some bloody general will ask for a reunion!

From: **Lt Colm (Retd) P. F. Soward**
'Shipton' The Hollow
Child Okeford, Nr. Blandford Forum
DORSET DT11 7DT

Dear Sir,

I read with interest **Mrs Vickers'** letter in the December edition of *The WIRE* about her brother, **Matthew Kelly**, who served with 3 Air Formation Signals in Greece. I have known of her quest for some time but only now is the veil of time starting to lift.

The first RAF Squadron (30 Squadron equipped with a mix of Blenheim fighters and bombers) was dispatched to Greece immediately after the Italian invasion on 28 October, 1940, and was in action six days later.

3 Air Formation Signals was formed from 2 HQ Signals and did not arrive in the Middle East until March 1941. Not surprisingly the war diary of 3 Company (in Greece) did not start until 5 April 1941. The Company, commanded by **Maj Aubrey B. Moore**, left Greece during the period 24-27 April and arrived in Egypt on 29 April.

Mr W. Iorwerth Hughes served with the unit and he has recently written to me to explain that 3 Company, 3 AFS, originally went to Greece in November 1940 as 3 Company, 3 L of C Signals. To assist in the Air Formation Signals role, 15 Wing Signal Section (who had formed part of 1 AFS in France in support of the Air Component of the BEF) was dispatched from England to join them. To quote from his letter,

'...From memory I would say that it was mid-April that the detatchments were recalled to base. The enemy was advancing fast and our position became precarious. I think it was <u>one</u> in <u>ten</u> who were to stay behind and become prisoners of war. We all drew lots and those with a cross on their slip of paper stayed behind and the remainder made for the beaches of the Peloponese'.

It is interesting that the war diary makes no mention of members of the unit being required to stay at their posts until capture was inevitable but, in the turmoil of the time, perhaps understandable.

At the time of embarkation the unit consisted of Coy HWQ, 32 Dr Sect, 85 Tele Op Sect, 15 Wing Sig Sect, 19 Op Sect, 5 Constr Sect, 11 TM Sect and, surprisingly for an Air Formation Signals Unit, 57 WT Sect.

Yours Sincerely....

Here's a photograph of 'B' Flight of DR Sect of 3 L of C Signals in Greece in 1940/41

From: **Ron Larby**
178 Braemar Avenue
Neasden
NW10 0DS

Dear Sir,

As a frequent visitor to the Isle of Wight I was intrigued by the story of 100 year old **Reg Randall BEM** (pages 522 – 590) which appeared in the December edition of *The WIRE*. It tells the story of his arrest of a WW2 saboteur **Mrs D. O'Grady.** I therefore made some enquiries into this episode and the following may be of some interest to your readers.

42 year old **Mrs Dorothy O'Grady** was tried in camera at Winchester on 16-17 December 1940. She was tried on a count of nine separate charges, was found guilty of seven and was sentenced to death. However, an appeal was made, also heard in camera, at the Old Bailey on 10 February, 1941. This resulted in the quashing of two capital charges and her sentence being reduced to one of 14 years. Ironically the original papers being prepared for her appeal were lost when a German bomb destroyed the chambers of her defending council, **Mr Scott Henderson**. **Mrs O'Grady** served the full 14 years and returned to the Isle of Wight in 1955. Her husband, a retired London Firemen, who had returned to the service following a wartime appeal was completely unaware of his wife's activities. Until the day she died **Mrs O'Grady** never gave a reason for her behaviour.

Adrian Searle's book, 'Isle of Wight at War' gives a full account of the **Mrs O'Grady** story.

With regards.....

DONATIONS

Mr G. W. Cook	£	50.00
Lt Col (Retd) P. H. Johnstone	£	50.00
Maj (Retd) Ronnie Sampson	£	5.00
WO1 R. J. Stanton	£	10.00
Mr Bill Giles (Australia)	£	20.00
Mr R. L. Hughes	£	5.00
Mr A. M. Robinson	£	5.00
Mr Terry Wickens	£	13.10
Middlesex Yeomanry Association	£	41.10
Old Comrades of the Eighth Army Signals Association	£	1,000
RSA Tayside & Fife	£	21.00
RSA Sheffield	£	50.00
RSA South London	£	50.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£	20.00
Len Shanley	£	25.00
Collection taken at the funeral of the late Audrey Muriel Kerr	£	61.30
Mrs J. W. Cruise in memory of Lt Col S. P. Irwin	£	20.00
Miss P. F. Maniez in memory of Lt Col S. P. Irwin	£	50.00
Mr D. R. Ellingworth in memory of Maj J. Ellingworth	£	10.00
Mr D. R. Ellingworth in memory of Godon Royall	£	10.00
Maj (Retd) John Stroud in memory of Capt (Retd) K. Bunston	£	25.00

If responding to any advertisements in *The Wire* please mention that you saw it in your Corps magazine

LAST POST

Adams - Mr D. H. Adams	Served	Died 28/02/00
Axtell - Dvr A. Axtell	Served WW2	Died 16/02/00
Baikie - WO2 D. S. Baikie	Served 1961/81	Died 06/02/00
Beach - Cpl N. Beach	Served 1939/46	Died Jan '00
Bell - WO1 H. Bell	Served 1939/73	Died Feb'00
Bentley - Mr F. C. Bentley	Served	Died
Bright - Sgt C. M. Bright	Served 1946/60	Died 02/02/00
Brydon - Sig M. Brydon	Served 1949/51	Died 04/03/00
Buckley - LCpl J. C. Buckley	Served 1954/64	Died 30/12/99
Campbell - Sgt A. W. Campbell	Served 1971/93	Died 15/01/00
Campbell - Maj G. G. Campbell	Served 1946/85	Died 12/02/00
Casson - Mr H. C. Casson	Served 1942/43	Died 13/01/00
Chastney - Sgt S. L. Chastney	Served 1939/46	Died 06/09/99
Child - Cpl E. F. Child	Served 1941/45	Died 07/03/00
Clift - Sgt (RSM to CSM) F. Clift	Served WW2	Died
Collins - SSgt P. Collins	Served 1973/95	Died 19/02/00
Deverell - LCpl C. T. Deverell	Served 1939/45	Died 1999
Edwards - WO2 M. G. A. Edwards	Served 1948/70	Died 28/01/00
Ellingworth - Maj J Ellingworth MBE	Served 1944/76	Died 16/02/00
Forrester - Sgt C. R. Forrester	Served 1991/99	Died 31/12/99
Gerdes - Cpl R. K. Gerdes	Served 1971/93	Died 30/11/99
Hall - Sig G. Hall	Served 1959/81	Died 10/01/00
Harris - Sgt J. M. B. Harris	Served 1942/47	Died 26/01/00
Hobson - LCpl D. Hobson	Served 1949/54	Died 16/02/00
Irwin - Lt Col S. P. Irwin	Served	Died 07/03/00
Jennings - Sgt J. H. Jennings	Served 1926/46	Died 24/12/99
Johnson - SSgt Gordon Johnson	Served 1958/78	Died 22/02/00
Kirby - Maj C. F. Kirby MBE, TD	Served	Died Feb '00
Lorriman - Cpl E. Lorriman	Served 1941/46	Died 10/12/99
Morgan - Cpl W. J. Morgan	Served 1951/53	Died 07/01/00
Peplow - Sgt M. J. Peplow	Served 1960/75	Died 13/03/00
Potter - Sig J. W. D. Potter	Served 1940/46	Died Aprl '99
Richards - Lt E. T. Richards	Served 1938/46	Died 21/12/99
Riches - Mr H. J. Riches	Served 1939/45	Died 19/07/99
Robertson - Sig K. Robertson	Served 1941/46	Died Jan '00
Robinson - Sgt B. L. Robinson	Served 1974/89	Died Jan '00
Royall - WO2 G. R. Royall	Served 1963/86	Died Feb '00
Ruddy - Sig T. Ruddy	Served 1938/46	Died 07/01/00
Sheffield - Sgt W. Sheffield	Served WW2	Died
Shrimpton - Col G.H.T. Shrimpton CBE, TD, ADC	Served 1934/69	Died 01/02/00
Serebriakoff - LCpl V. V. Serebriakoff	Served 1945/47	Died 01/01/00
Smallman - Cpl N. J. Smallman	Served 1942/47	Died 24/12/99
Smee - Maj S. B. Smee	Served 1940/46	Died 20/12/99
Tambling - SSgt P. J. Tambling	Served 22 years	Died Nov '99
Terry - Mr I. E. Terry	Served 1939/46	Died 04/07/99
West - Sig W. J. West	Served 1939/46	Died 18/01/00
Whyte - Sig K. G. Whyte	Served 1941/46	Died 14/01/00
Worth - Col J. F. Worth OBE	Served 1919/59	Died 28/02/00

Gerdes - Cpl Roger Keith 'Scouse' **Gerdes** served with the Royal Signalsfor 22 years finishing his service in 1993 at Harrogate. He passed away on 30 November aged 49 years. We extend our heartfelt sympathies to **Mrs Gerdes** and her family.

Whiles – Tony Whiles it is with great sadness that we report the death of **Tony Whiles**, who passed away at home on 21 December 1999. **Tony** was Secretary of our Branch and a founder member. The news of his death is a shock to all Branch Members, he was the backbone of the Branch. **Tony** served in the Corps from 1951/53 as a Lineman, but his whole working life was with Communications, 37 years with Post Office Telephones, which later became BT. The funeral service was held at Sutton Coldfield Crematorium on 6 January 2000 and was supported by Branch members led by Chairman, **John Mobbs**. **Tony**'s coffin was draped with the Union flag, beret and Association Wreath. The Branch Standard was carried by **Arthur Thomas** accompanied by Standard Bearers from Royal British Legion (Tamworth) and The Staffordshire Regimental Association. The chapel was filled by family and friends, many from The Royal British Legion, where **Tony** was a loyal and active member. Our condolences go to Tony's children, **Stephen, Christopher, Andrew** and **Susan**. Our final tribute to **Tony** was on our Wreath, which read:

Farewell Tony
Look down on us
From the 'Certa Cito' Branch above
Till we all meet again
God Bless
From
The Royal Signals Association
South Staffordshire Branch

Harris – Sgt J. Harris, it is with regret that RSA Glasgow has to announce the death of one of the founder members of the Branch, **Sgt John M. B. Harris**. He was a life Member of the RSA. **John** died in Gartnavel General Hospital Glasgow, on Wednesday 26 January 2000 at the age of 76. He suffered a massive heart attack after being admitted for treatment for a duodenal ulcer.

John served in the Corps from 1942 to 1947. His service included the UK, Italy, Africa and Holland. He was attached to the Parachute Regiment, in the Air Landing Brigade Royal Artillery Anti Tank Unit. He landed at Arnhem, was wounded in the leg and taken prisoner. He was a POW for nine months. **John** held the 1939/45 Star, France & Germany Star, Italy Star, and the War Medal 1939/45. **John** was a respected member of the Branch, known as 'the wee para'. He was well known for his work for raising funds for the Erskine Hospital, and encouraged anyone who would listen, to help if possible for the cause. He will be sadly missed for his cheerful patter. The service was held at the North Dalnottar Crematorium Clydebank, conducted by the **Rev Jim Smith TD**, chaplain to the Forces and Padre of 15 Para.

The coffin with a single wreath and **John**'s red beret on top, was carried in to the chapel to the sound of the pipes, played by **Pipe Major David Ritchie**, playing 'My Home' and 'The Skye Boat' song. During the ceremony he played 'Highland Cathedral' and ended by playing 'Flowers of the Forest'. The Parachute Regiment Association Members paraded with three Standards. The Royal Signals Association Glasgow Branch Chairman, **Bill Taylor**, with twelve Branch Members paraded, to honour this comrade we had come to know so well. The **Rev Jim Smith** gave the eulogy, in which he mentioned that **John** on leaving the Forces, was employed by the CIS as an insurance agent. He was a man who was community minded, he also said that **John** was willing to help anyone, and having grown vegetables and flowers in his allotment, on many occasions gave the produce to those he felt needed it. The Padre mentioned **John**'s charitable work for Erskine Hospital, always thinking of what good he could do in the Community, (I was informed that he and some others had collected in excess of £10,000 over the years, by standing outside supermarkets with collecting cans. For donations for Erskine Hospital.) Many times **John** had to be persuaded to leave, as he would stay until the stores closed if possible. **John** leaves a widow **Helen** and two married daughters, **Christine** and **Helen**. The Chairman of and Glasgow Branch Members extend their sincere condolences to the family in their sad loss.

Smee - Maj Stanley B. Smee sadly passed away December, 1999. He joined the TA prior to 1940 and as he had completed and passed an Electrical Engineering course he enrolled in the Royal Signals with the 8th Army -The Desert Rats, from 1940-46, rising to the rank of Major. He was mentioned in despatches for Distinguished Service in May, 1946. After the war he resumed his career with Phoenix Assurance Co Ltd. (now Royal & Sun Alliance) where he became the Property Investment Manager until he retired in July, 1979. He will be very much missed by all his family and his many friends.

Douglas S. Baikie - 'Dougie' **Baikie** died suddenly in Aberdeen on 6 February 2000, aged 54. Born in Edinburgh he enlisted in Royal Signals in 1961, when he left school. That year he joined the Army Apprentice College at Harrogate, where he trained as a Telegraph Operator. In 1963 he volunteered for Airborne Forces. The same year, when he passed 'P' Coy at Maida and Parachute Training at RAF Abingdon, he was posted to 216 Sig Sqn (Para Bde Group). At that time, although just 5' 6' tall, he was sturdy in build, extremely fit, and possessed a healthy Scots aggression to accompany his wiry red hair. In 1964 the uprising in Cyprus saw 16 Para Bde Group, supported by 216 Sig Sqn, in the front-line between Greek & Turkish armed factions. 'Dougie' served throughout the operational tour, for which he was awarded the UNFICYP Medal. In 1965 he joined 1 PARA on a tour of Bahrain and the Persian Gulf, during which the sun turned his reddish complexion even redder. For this operational tour he was awarded the GSM (1962) with clasp S. Arabia.

He married **Joyce** in 1966 and they had two sons. **Jamie** was born in 1974, and **Duncan** in 1978. Tragically, **Duncan** died in 1991 aged 13, when a valve in his heart failed.

In 1968 'Dougie' was awarded the Dennis Cup, a Squadron trophy, for the best all-round soldier in the rank of Corporal and below. Throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s he was a regular member of the Army Cross-country Running Squad, as well as representing the Squadron and Brigade at distance running. When 'Dougie' led-off and set the pace for Squadron road-runs, the toms knew that much pain was on the way! He also had a good reputation as a Radio Detachment Commander during these years. In 1971, newly promoted Sergeant, he served with 16 Para Bde HQ & Sig Sqn in Lurgan, on a tour of the Province. At the end of this operational tour he was awarded the clasp N. Ireland, to adorn his GSM. In 1974 he was promoted to Staff Sergeant, and in late 1975 to WO2 (SSM). He carried out his duties as SSM with relish, continuing to lead-off the Squadron road-runs. Disbandment of 16 Para Bde in 1977 meant that 'Dougie' was the final SSM of 216 Para Sig Sqn, before it too became history. So, after 15 years wearing a red beret, he had to leave Para Signals on a posting to Germany. He served in 21 Sig Regt at RAF Wildenrath, and later at 22 Sig Regt in Lippstadt. Soldiering outside the Para Brigade was not something that 'Dougie' enjoyed, at all.

For years after 1981 'Dougie' disappeared from OCA view, although we did hear he was a Radio Operator on North Sea Oil Rigs. I met him briefly in 1996, on his way off-shore through Shetland. I thought he looked smaller and wider than I remembered, but the years take their toll on everyone. He now wore small NHS glasses, which glinted above a full (ginger) beard streaked with grey. Yet his 'patter' was unchanged, and he was still a stroppy wee Jock. He spoke with feeling about the state of the oil industry, his particular job, and the failings of civvy street. He was most forceful when talking about his finest, happiest days - when he was with 216 Para Sigs. I can still hear him proclaiming, 'Never Never Craphat, always ex-Para!!' I could only agree. Ex-Paras, who knew 'Dougie' from his days in 16 Para Bde, will be sad to hear of his passing. His funeral was attended by **Mick Granitza**, who had the 'ABI' to take a red beret with him, to dress the casket. This small act was much appreciated by **Jamie Baikie**, who said he saw it as a fitting and final tribute to his father. His old comrades in Para Signals send their sincere condolences to **Jamie** and to **Joyce**. Farewell, DSB.

Potter – Sig J. W. D. Potter who died in April 1999, served with 'E' Section, 1st Para Bde, 1st Airborne Div, in Africa, Italy, Germany and Arnhem. He was captured and sent as a POW to Stalag XIB. He leaves behind his wife, **Margery** and his son and grandson, who both also served in the Royal Signals.

Lorriman – Eric Lorriman had been ill for some time. Some of the members of the Bradford Branch of the Association attended the funeral. **Eric** was very proud of his 8th Army connections and up to its closure, he was Chairman of the Pudsey Branch of the 8th Army. Association. He served as a Corporal/Linesman with 50th Div at Alamein and returned to the UK for D Day. Most of his time was spent with a light Ack Ack Regiment. He leaves behind a large family of children, grandchildren and fourteen great grandchildren.

Kirby - Maj (Retd) C. F. (Bill) Kirby, MBE, TD. Bill Kirby died aged 97 on or about 20 February. He deserves a very good obituary. He was a master at Christ's Hospital where he ran a highly successful Signals Platoon from the mid-1920s to something like the mid-1960s. His enthusiasm and expertise in tactical signalling inspired very large numbers of ex-Christ's Hospital Boys to volunteer for service in the Royal Signals. Many of them gained regular commissions and an even greater number became wartime, national service and TA Officers.

One of his 'boys' was the cable officer of 2nd Inf Div in Kohima. In the 1960s and 1970s others were heading up the introduction of Clansman, responsible for the development of Bruin and commanding the Army's first satellite ground station. At least four Royal Signals Regiments have been commanded by ex-Christ's Hospital Officers trained by **Bill Kirby**. During WW2 **Bill** was, I believe, the Chief Instructor at 2 Operator Training Battalion. These are but a few examples of the largely unsung impact he made on our Corps. **Col John West** and others he could recommend would know more about **Bill Kirby**'s earlier career and the war years. My own experience of his individual style of leadership began when he returned to the school in 1944 to carry out tests on crossing mud as part of invasion preparations (probably for Walcheren?), resume teaching biology and in his spare time, revitalise the JTC Signal Platoon. His arrival made an astonishing impact. It seemed that within weeks of his return he had recruited the Signal Platoon to Company size and kitted it out with signalling equipment scrounged from all over.

He was a polymath, a great eccentric with a dry sense of humour that appealed to the young. He seemed to know about everything. He taught us heliograph, lamp signalling, telephony, fullerphone, radio theory and HF operating, mended the wirelesses, took Morse in his head at 25wpm and taught cable laying like no one else. He made it fun. When it came to 'Cert A', the infantry bit, he allocated three weeks off signalling for a crash course and we all passed. I have clear memory of the whole platoon doing words of command en bloc with him conducting like a choirmaster from the other side of the rugby pitch. We did voluntary Morse in our spare time. When you got up to 12wpm you were allowed to be a proper radio operator. Our grounding was so good that I was a long time in the Corps before I met anything really new in tactical signalling.

He eventually retired from teaching and the reserve Army and spent a long and honoured retirement in a walled off part of his old laboratory, surrounded by radios, bee-keeping kit and fermenting barrels of mead. The school marked his 80th birthday by a formal dinner attended by some 500 people, many of them with Corps connections. He never married but his other family was enormous.

(Following Col Jarrett's comments above, we received the following enhancement and publish it in its' entirety - Editor).

Bill Kirby's first involvement with the Signals was in the Cambridge University OTC during the early 1920s. He was studying medicine, but was persuaded by the then Headmaster of his old school, Christ's Hospital, to return there as a Biology Master. It was then that he formed the Signal Platoon in the Christ's Hospital OTC modelled on the Cambridge version.

During World War 2, after the Operator Training Battalion, he was chosen to work in Army Research, specialising in improving cross-country performance for both men and machines. He once addressed a War Office Committee, 'Good morning. I am **Bill Kirby**. I study mud!'

Of the older generation, mention should be made of two other Royal Signals 'Old Blues': **Maj Gen Tony Tighe**, who became Signal Officer in Chief and **Col Tommy Grigg**, who commanded 4 Signal Regiment and was later Officer IC Records. Neither was actually in the Signals Platoon at School, but both followed **Bill Kirby**'s lead into the Corps and kept in close touch with him afterwards. When he finally retired from the Cadet Force, at the age of 70, he was awarded a particularly well earned MBE, for services to the Royal Signals and to the Army.

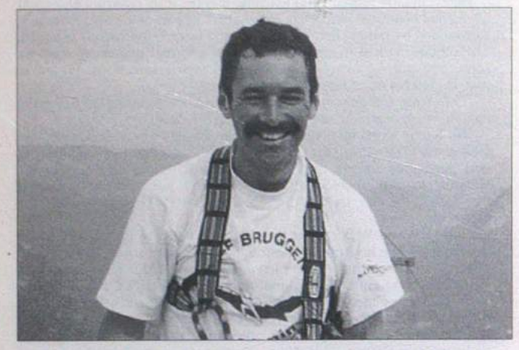
Casson – H. C. Casson, born on 29 October 1926, had high hopes of a military career. Like many young lads, during the Second World War, **Harry** was keen to join the Army despite, at fifteen, being underage for full military service. He discovered that he could apply to become an Army Apprentice and having passed the necessary exams and attribute tests, at the recruiting centre in Liverpool, he was accepted for training in 1942. Initially he joined the General Service Corps as a Boy A/T at the Army Technical School, Chepstow, to undertake engineer training. However, in mid 1942 his father, who was then serving in the Royal Corps of Signals, claimed him. In August 1942 he was posted to Catterick Camp where he joined the Boys' Training Company. In July 1943 he qualified as an OWL, but shortly afterwards he became ill. Unfortunately he was graded unfit for further military training and this keen, popular young soldier had his hopes dashed. In September 1943 he was given a medical discharge and reluctantly began a second career outside the Army eventually founding his own business. Happily his military story does not end there (ex-254 Boys are a very tenacious group): in 1990 he was discovered to be living in Waterlooville. By good fortune this led to him becoming reunited with his boys service colleagues, many of whom remembered him. He and his wife **Janet** attended a 254 Weekend Reunion and have kept intouch ever since. **Harry** is remembered with honour. A number of his former 254 comrades attended his funeral and are much saddened by his sudden death. We extend our deepest sympathy to **Janet** and his family.

Forrester - Sgt Colin Richard Forrester, it is with great sadness that 7th Signal Regiment, based in Bradbury Barracks Krefeld, must report the untimely death of **Sgt C. R. Forrester**. **Colin Forrester** was a member of the Regiment's Technical Maintenance Troop and had served with the Regiment since September 1997.

Sgt Forrester joined the Royal Corps of Signals in April 1991 and completed his basic training in Catterick with 11th Signal Regiment and subsequently training as a Telecommunication Technician (Radio) with 8th Signal Regiment. After completing his training he was posted to 216 Parachute Signal Squadron, Aldershot and successfully passed the selection process and parachute training in 1993. He was to serve with the Squadron until 1996, deploying with 5 Airborne Brigade on a United Nations Mission to Rwanda in 1994. He is remembered in the Squadron for his enthusiasm, vitality and fitness, this being especially noteworthy in a Squadron that prides itself on these characteristics. He represented the Squadron at cross-country and in the Lanyard Trophy (an endurance competition), and also canoed and rock-climbed in his spare time. After successfully completing his final trade course at the Royal School of Signals in Blandford, **Sgt Forrester** joined 7th Signal Regiment at Krefeld, with whom he served until his recent disappearance. He will be remembered as an intelligent, intense and determined man who proved his worth time and time again. He represented the Regiment at cross-country, long-distance walking, endurance competitions and orienteering. He deployed with the Regiment on Operation Agricola, in March 1999 and remained in Kosovo until November 1999. It was during his post-operational tour leave that **Sgt Forrester** completed the Day Skipper's Course improving his sea navigational skills prior to an attempt to cross the Channel.

An enthusiatic and accomplished canoist, it was widely known that **Sgt Forrester** had hoped one day to be able to row single-handedly across the Atlantic. Sadly it would seem that he died during a practice attempt, preparing himself for just such a crossing. On 31 December 1999, **Sgt Forrester**'s Kelepper canoe was washed ashore on the Dutch coast and his body was later recovered on 16 February 2000.

Our thoughts are now with his family and friends. He will be warmly remembered in 7th Signal Regiment and the Royal Corps of Signals as a remarkable character, whose determination and spirit of adventure was an inspiration to all who knew him.



Collins - SSgt Paul W. Collins it is with much sadness that the untimely death of former **Sgt Paul** 'PC' **Collins** was announced on 19 February 2000, following a long and courageous fight against Leukaemia.

'PC' joined the Corps in May 1973 as a Driver Lineman; following training he was posted to 22 Signal Regiment. 'PC's' subsequent 22-year military career saw service in a variety of Royal Signals units in Germany and the UK. 'PC' was an accomplished sportsman and gained representative honours at cricket, athletics and rugby. It is without doubt, however, his prowess on the rugby field is what he will be best remembered for. A hard uncompromising player with fitness levels of the highest order, 'PC' played at all representative levels in the Army. He had the honour of captaining the Corps XV on many ocassions and was a proud member of the first Royal Signals unit team, 7th Signal regiment, to win the Army Challenge Cup in 1984.

'PC' retired from the Corps in July 1995 but continued his association with the Army by accompanying his wife **Tina**, a Captain in the the QARANC, on a tour to Hong Kong. **Tina** and 'PC' subsequently moved to Camberley in May 1998 when **Tina** became the Matron of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst MRS.

Throughout his career 'PC'made many friends, they were not just confined to his rugby colleagues, due to his caring nature, easy humour and general love of life. He remained fiercely loyal to the Corps and a great ambassador for the Army. The number who attended his funeral in Aldershot on 25 February bear testament to the huge respect and love that he had gained throughout his life. He will be sorely missed but leaves a legacy in his determination to promote awareness and research into the treatment of Leukaemia, which will be continued.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to his wife, **Tina**, who displayed so much courage and determination during 'PC's' final battle.

Brydon - Sig Montgomery Brydon it is with great regret that the Glasgow Branch of the Royal Signals Association, of which he was a life member, announce the sudden death of one of it's founder members. **Monty**, as he was affectionately known, died in St. Margaret's Hospice, Clydebank, on Saturday 4 March 2000. He had originally been taken to the Western Infirmary, Glasgow, for tests and was then admitted to Gartnavel Hospital, Glasgow, for further tests. It was then discovered that he had a tumour on the liver. **Monty** was then transferred to St. Margaret's Hospice where he died peacefully a week later, at the age of 68.

Monty served in the Corps from 21 July 1949 to 12 August 1951. His service included the United Kingdom and a spell in Egypt with 3 GHQ Signals Middle East Land Forces. He was a Driver in the service and after leaving the service, he continued in that career. A well liked and respected Branch member, his forte was to sell as many football cards as possible at the Branch meetings, to raise money for Branch funds. **Monty** was also a keen member of the Branch attending the Annual Reunion at Catterick and subsequently at Blandford. Also visits to 32 (Scottish) Signal Regiment's (V) Annual Camp. His last visit was to their Camp at Cameron Barracks in Inverness in September 1999. As mentioned in the December 1999 issue of *The WIRE*, he, being a Driver by trade both during and after his service, had mastered the technique of driving the lorries with the trailer at the front between the cones, with aplomb. It was one of the tests we had volunteered to take part in during our visit. As the sole passenger in my car, he was very good company on the long journey from Glasgow to Inverness, both going and returning. He mentioned to me that his wife **Margaret** would not believe that he had not had a cigarette for over two hours, between a stopover on the journey and our arrival.

On leaving the service **Monty** was employed by the then Clevland Oil Company, driving oil tankers. He also became a Glasgow taxi driver and then finally a chauffeur with Glasgow District Council. He retired at the age of 60 owing to ill health. He was a keen gardener and although his garden was on a steep slope, he had had it terraced and made to look very attractive, even in September, when I saw it last.

The funeral service held at the North Dalnottar Crematorium, Clydebank, was conducted by Rev. Lee of St. Margaret's church, Knightswood Cross, Glasgow. The Minister gave the eulogy with a good deal of knowledge of **Mont**'s background. The chapel was packed with relatives, friends and neighbours. The Chairman of Glasgow RSA, **Bill Taylor**, along with twenty Branch members and **Bill MacNamara**, the Branch Standard Bearer, parading the Branch Standard, attended the service to honour a much liked friend and comrade.

Monty leaves his widow **Margaret**, two daughters, **Sandra** and **Margaret**, his sons **William** and **John** and his grandchildren. The Glasgow Branch extend sincere condolences to the family in their sad loss, and the Members have also lost a good friend who will be missed at meetings.

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

RETENTION – WHERE TO CONCENTRATE OUR EFFORT?

by Maj P. D. Peel R SIGNALS

What is left to be said about retention? We have had working groups, focus groups and discussion groups yet we still seem to be losing our soldiers as fast as we can train them. I believe that we probably now have a very good idea why our soldiers are leaving. What I sometimes feel we lack is an equally clear understanding of where we should concentrate our efforts to retain our soldiers; especially at Squadron and Regimental level where little can be done to influence such issues as pay and terms of service. This letter represents my personal view on where that focus should be, coloured by my experience of a 6 month tour in Kosovo.

For me, **retention is all about motivation**. Put very simply, motivated soldiers should have no desire to leave the Army and thus by motivating them, you retain them. Not particularly ground breaking I appreciate, but central to my line of reasoning. As an aside, I believe talking about motivation starts you off on a much more positive footing than talking about retention. Instinctively I feel I can do a lot more about motivating soldiers than I can do about merely retaining them. For me the word 'Retention' has too much baggage and evokes feelings of defeatism and helplessness.

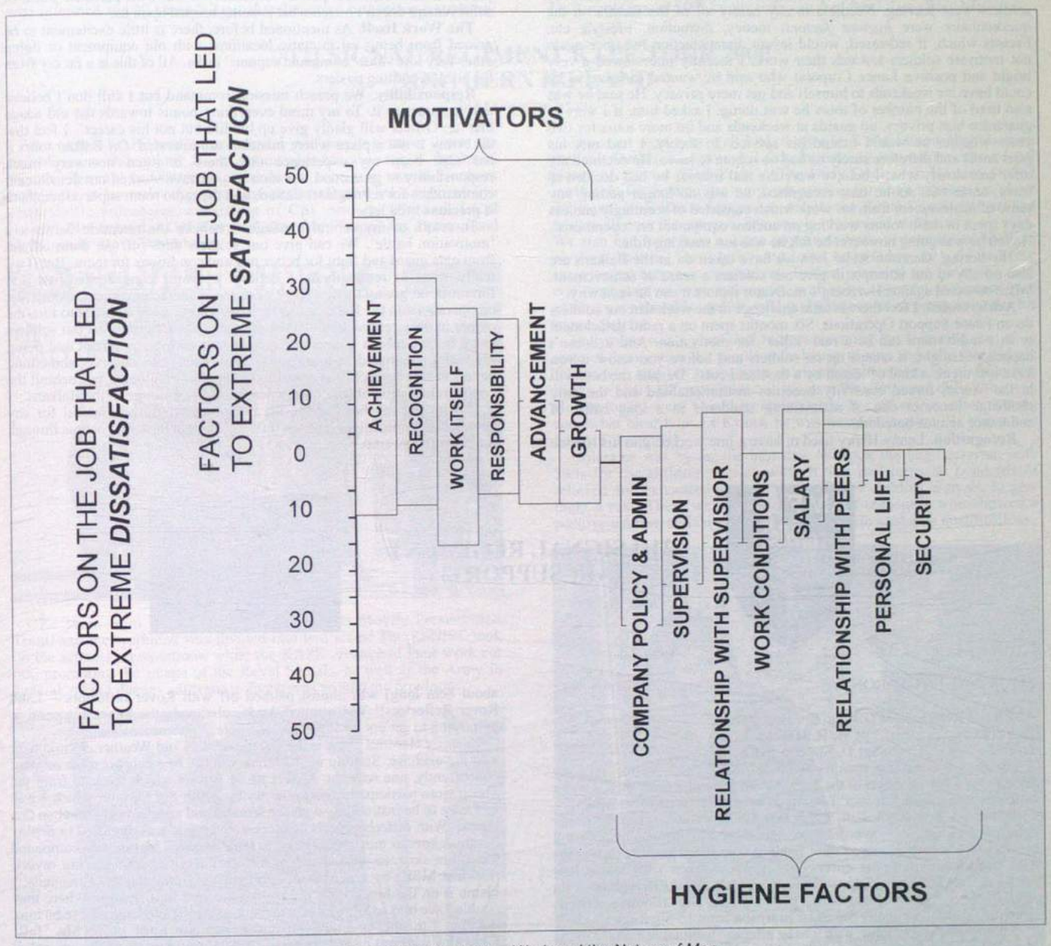
If one accepts that retention is about motivation, then the issue becomes one of how to motivate our soldiers. Whilst there are some distinct differences between what motivates a soldier and his civilian counterpart, especially when it comes to the battlefield, there are also many similarities. This link enables us to draw on the work of the social scientists that have researched motivation in the workplace. Fortunately for us their work is reasonably accessible and you do not have to delve too deeply into the 'psychobabble' before coming up with something useful.

Whilst at RMCS Shrivenham, I stumbled across some work on motivation that made particular sense to me by Frederick Herzberg. From his research, he grouped the factors that he believed influenced motivation into two categories. These can be seen in the diagram. The first category he called *motivators*, which he claimed were the factors that led to extreme satisfaction in a job. In this category he placed achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, promotion and personal growth. The second category he termed *hygiene factors*. He defined these as the, 'physical or psychological aspects' of a job. In this category he placed such things as company policy, supervision, relationship with supervisor and peers, salary, personal life etc.

To my mind, the real value of Herzberg's work comes next. He came to the conclusion that if you want to motivate someone you need to focus on strengthening the *motivators* and that you **cannot motivate people by concentrating on improving *hygiene factors* alone**. By improving hygiene factors you might lessen someone's dissatisfaction with a job but would not be able to motivate them to do a job. So for example, you might give your soldiers every night off guard, you might pay them more, you could free them of 'over-bearing' supervision and even be the best boss in the world but this will not get them jumping out of bed to do a monotonous and uninteresting job. It will purely mean that they are less 'hacked-off' with their lot. This factor also explains why financial retention incentives don't have such pulling power.

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS



Frederick Herzberg - *Work and the Nature of Man*

So if we want to motivate our soldiers, and thus retain them, Herzberg believes we need to focus on his *motivators*. We need to challenge our soldiers in order to give them a sense of achievement. We need to give them recognition for that achievement. We need to make their work more interesting, give them more responsibility and ample opportunity for personal growth and promotion. If we can do this, then in theory we will start to win the retention battle.

My own personal experience as the Adjutant at 3rd Division, and in Kosovo at the time of writing, bears out Herzberg's work. In the Summer of 1993, 3rd Division Signal Regiment returned from Germany. For the first 12 months back in the UK, the Regiment's Ptarmigan Squadrons went into an almost endless round of exercises on Salisbury Plain supporting brigade CPXs. To ensure coverage across the Plain, the Trunk Squadrons were prevented from moving and thus soldiers spent the majority of their time stuck in one place, monitoring a very stable system. There was no challenge in their job and the soldiers' sense of achievement was minimal. These exercises were also going on at a time when promotion had effectively been blocked because of the Option Whisky redundancies. The combination of these two factors ensured that the requests to 'sign-off' flooded in.

The Regiment worked up a retention action plan that initially focused on all of the 'wrong' things. In Herzberg's terminology, we tried to win the retention battle by focusing on improving the *hygiene factors*. We looked at cutting down the guards, giving people Friday afternoons off, giving them better welfare facilities and free trips into Salisbury in the evenings. We couldn't influence pay or soldier's living conditions but these were also considered. This didn't stem the flood and we were eventually forced to put a Ptarmigan Trunk Squadron into light care and preservation in 1994 due to shortages in manpower.

Around this time, the remaining trunk squadron started its training for a deployment to N. Ireland and the Regiment as a whole started to get onto more overseas trips to places such as Cyprus, Belize and Sardinia. Promotions also started to come through again. Slowly but surely, we started to win the fight to retain our soldiers. We stumbled over the solution but had no real model to explain the turnaround. Herzberg would

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

explain it by pointing to the fact that we only started to make headway when we focused on his *motivators*. Improving soldiers lifestyle purely made them less dissatisfied with their lot. When we cut out the boring static exercises and started challenging our soldiers and giving them a sense of achievement, we began to win the retention battle.

I believe we are still falling into the trap of focusing in the wrong areas. I recently caught sight of a questionnaire designed to draw out why soldiers were leaving. Needless to say nearly all of the factors on the questionnaire were *hygiene factors*: money, disruption, lifestyle etc. Factors which, if redressed, would lessen dissatisfaction but once again not motivate soldiers towards their work. I recently interviewed a very bright and positive Lance Corporal who said he wanted to leave so he could have his weekends to himself and get more privacy. He said he was also tired of the number of tours he was doing. I asked him, if I were to guarantee him privacy, no guards at weekends and no more tours for two years whether he would extend his service. In theory, I had met his grievances and therefore surely he had no reason to leave. He declined my offer and slowly what I believe were the real reasons he had decided to leave, came out. As he later recognised, he was no longer getting any sense of achievement from his work which consisted of seemingly endless days spent in radio rooms working on ancient equipment on 'operations'. He felt he was going nowhere; he felt he was just marking time.

The boring 'Garrison style' jobs we have taken on in the Balkans are also no ally in our attempts to give our soldiers a sense of achievement. When assessed against Herzberg's motivator factors it can be seen why:

Achievement. I feel there is little challenge in the work that our soldiers do on Peace Support Operations. Six months spent on a radio detachment or in a radio room can be a real 'killer' for motivation. And it doesn't happen overnight, it creeps up on soldiers and before you know it you have lost them; a kind of 'death by a thousand cuts'. Despite the best will in the World, forced inactivity becomes institutionalised and the only challenge becomes one of maintaining standards in a long battle of endurance against boredom.

Recognition. Lenny Henry used to have a line worked into his routine asking why the police didn't stop you when you drove well. They would stop you for speeding or dangerous driving but would never pull you over to tell you how well you 'took a corner'. It has almost become an unwritten law of life that Signallers only get noticed or recognised when something goes wrong. The phone goes dead, the lights go out, the food's cold – we get recognition but sadly the wrong type. When we do get praise, it can often feel phoney especially if our own personal sense of achievement doesn't match what is being heaped upon us.

The Work Itself. As mentioned before, there is little excitement to be gained from being sat in static locations, with old equipment or doing other very low value 'command support' tasks. All of this is a far cry from the army recruiting posters.

Responsibility. We preach mission command but I still don't believe that we practice it. To my mind everything points towards the old adage that 'an Officer will gladly give up his life but not his career'. I feel that the Army is not a place where mistakes are tolerated. On Balkan tours it has also been my experience that there is often not very much responsibility to go around. As soon as you have worked out detachment commanders for rebroadcast stations and the radio room supervisors, there is precious little left.

To return to my central message, I believe the retention battle is a 'motivation battle'. We can give our soldiers days off, get them off the front gate guard and fight for better pay and conditions for them. But if we really want to retain them, I believe we must concentrate, first and foremost, on giving them a sense of purpose and achievement. Doing this on operations in the Balkans can be hard. Therefore if we want to turn the corner in the retention battle at the macro level we need to get our soldiers away from 6-month tours spent mostly monitoring equipment and doing low value command support tasks. They want, and deserve, something better. In this respect, it is pleasing to see the drive being put behind the commercialisation of the communications infrastructure in the Balkans.

Having put my head above the parapet, I would be grateful for any comments people might have on this, my attempt to steer a course through the retention swamp.

21st SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

ALPHA TROOP AMF(L) - *by Cpl Paul Annetts*

Tp Comd **Capt W. R. Holbrook**
Tp SSgt **SSgt D. Sheerin MBE**

The normal beginning then for the usual *WIRE* notes routine, let's say goodbye to a few members of the Troop: In no particular order then, seeya's to **SSgt (YofS) Scott** 'Pieman' **Logan**, deserting the Troop to be Sqn YofS, 150 yards up the road at 220! **LCpl Daz Daniels** who's off to the sunny delights of 14 Sig Regt, on promotion, **Mr. Dave Marlor** who by now will be skipping down civvy street, and finally to our illustrious backbone, **Sgt Tim Tomkinson** off on his, cheers easy crypto and then YofS course, hats off fellas. Into the Troop fold we welcome **LCpls** 'Elts' **Eltringham** from JCUNI, 'Spud' **Evans** from 16 Air Assault Bde, **Sig** 'Blodwin' **Owens** from the factory and finally **Sig Matt Simpson** from 15 Sig Regt.

Well it was back to Earth with a bang after the habitual self abuse of the New Year and the anti-climax of the Millennium.....no bugs in sight. We were greeted on the first day with a briefing from the CO telling us, that due to health and safety regulations, we could no longer work in the asbestos filled, rain leaking, electrically shorted, unheated and badly lit hangars, as we had been doing for a number of years. So although the order from the CO not to do any work was greeted by some with whoops of joy, with only three weeks remaining until we deployed to the barren Arctic wastes of Norway, Alpha Tp felt the heat turning up! The same decision a few weeks later and we would have probably found us cart-wheeling down the streets of Colerne, but in good old Army tradition we adapted and overcame – (worked like stink when our kit was de-contaminated really!) and deployed in a ready state.

Thanks go out from all the novices to **Sig Andy Day** who, when as courier, stopped their pocket contents from swelling. Whilst doing a unit pickup at Donnington for 100 Recco Reflectors (Avalanche locators-about 8cm long) was almost palmed off with Rover reflectors – Land Rover Reflectors!! Well spotted **Andy**, obviously the Lance Corporal in you trying to get out – MCM Div take note.

Exercise Hardfall 2000, is the UK element's Cold Weather environment training exercise. Starting on 30 January 2000, two courses were running concurrently, one with the AMF(L) Log Btn on which the lads from the Troop were participating and one run by 249th Sig Sqn, on which I was fortunate to be instructing, with the females and attached personnel on this course. With different levels of success, everyone was qualified to deploy North. A special mention must go to **Cpl** 'Scouse' **Alston** who completed the 12km ski race well ahead of all other novices, and beating myself (resident MSI!) by a margin of approximately one minute. Personally, I blame it on the fact people didn't like the idea of a Scouser where they couldn't see him so allowed him in front so they could keep an eye on him, not that I'm one to whinge! Another mention must go to **Sig** 'Taff' **Charnley** who was awarded a certificate for most morale on the course!- it didn't stop there as he got frost nip where only 'Taff' can.....due to the lack of pants in temperatures of -14°C.

Although initially sharing accommodation with a fellow Corps unit, when 249 Sig Sqn had their main body arrive, Mjolfjell a small hamlet East of Voss was not big enough for the both of us. The Troop acquired a hostel a few kilometres down the road where it was possible to accommodate the Troop in it's entirety. With mountains, snow and blue sky the continuation training days were enjoyable, not mentioning the real log fire, piano and a couple of cases of Double Ice that ensured the evening debriefs were cosy.

Finally, a short anecdote on how not to cut hair; As word spread around the tight camp at Mjolfjell of the Troop barber, my room seemed to take on the look of a down trodden hair salon. I, **Cpl** 'Vidal' **Annetts**, resident hair guru (not!) had the boss, **Capt Holbrook**, and the Troop Staffy, **SSgt Daz** 'RQ' **Sheerin MBE**, (who has just been selected for promotion), arrive for, 'Just a trim please.' Successfully completing the Troop Staffy's hair, a

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

practice, for the man who writes my CR, I was engaged in lots of banter on how I would screw it up and cut too much off - I reached for the scissors. Whether it was all the skiing, I'm not sure, but I ended up cutting a little too wildly. Seeing the funny side the boss allowed me to use the clippers on a No. 4. In the low lit room I inadvertently picked up a No.2 guard and only realised after the second stroke...oops. Thinking things could get no worse I decided not to tell **Capt Holbrook** and continued. It was the boss who informed me 30 seconds later that the guard had fallen completely off. I had dealt one monk making, Rabi resembling, unguarded clipper blow to my boss's head!!!!!- right on the crown – I felt sick. The accommodation block was rocked by laughter, none of it was mine or the boss's. Four days later he met the new Comd of AMF(L), **Maj Gen Holmes** and DCinC Land – only a three star! – he wore his hat on both occasions. By the way I'm writing these notes from the Army Correction Centre and I'm on course for a F4 CR. The Troop will be in Hungary on Ex Ardent Ground 2000 by the time you read this.....its a hard life!

7TH SIGNAL REGIMENT KAPE TOUR 2000 NORTHERN IRELAND

By Lt Caroline Evans

This year's KAPE was rather unusual, not simply because it was the first of a new Millennium: It was a somewhat historic visit, as the Royal Signals' 'Jimmy' had not been sighted on a recruiting tour in Northern Ireland for at least eleven years. **Lt Caroline Evans** led a team of five enthusiastic volunteers, consisting of **Cpl** 'Snowy' **Blezard, LCpl** 'Paddy' **McFarland, LCpl** 'Glen' **Moffat, Sig** 'Tropo' **Jay Preston** and **Sig** 'Canada' **Dave Whitehurst**.

The Team went over with the Royal Signals Mobile Presentation Team, and the workload was divided into two areas: The RSNIPT took on the schools presentations, while the KAPE Team had their work cut out, promoting the image of the Royal Signals, as well as the Army in general, taking display caravans to five towns around the province.

The team were very well looked after by **CSM Simon Nichols** from the Irish Guards, who provided a useful running commentary about local places of interest (Daft Eddy's, The Dirty Duck etc). He also proved invaluable for fielding the numerous queries for more information about the Royal Irish Home Service, as despite the Royal Signals badges and posters all over the caravan, few people recognised at first who we were. We also had help from a close protection team of four Royal Irish, in civilian clothes. These provided local knowledge, as well as being experienced recruiters themselves. Belfast provided the 'in at the deep end' type start we were looking for, with some colourful comments from passing six-year-olds, and the odd taxi using us as target practise for his trigger fingers.

Ballymena was a great deal more welcoming the following day, as in spite of the weather the people were happy to stop and talk. One elderly fellow who had obviously been celebrating something for a while was happy to share his experiences of life as a Para Engineer during the war. He obviously wasn't used to seeing girls in uniform as, after peering somewhat blearily at **Lt Evans**, he was heard to enquire, 'Is that a wee boy or a wee girl?'

Coleraine was by far the best day. We took the large caravan, with 349s for the children to play with. It was half term, so hundreds of relieved and exhausted mothers dumped their children with us, to give them a rest. There we're also a number of teenagers who showed a positive interest, and they certainly held suitable academic qualifications.

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

The RSMPT and the KAPE Team joined forces on Wednesday evening, to host a group of fifty or so AC17 Cadets at Palace Barracks. The cadets were shown the latest Royal Signals equipment, and were given the chance to ask plenty of questions about life in the Army. They were particularly interested to hear about the first hand accounts of life in Kosovo and Macedonia, as all the KAPE members had deployed there on Operation Agricola last year.

The final two days covered Newtownards and Lisburn. Newtownards, or 'Ards' as the locals called it, was a friendly market town with plenty going on. Having been banned from getting a haircut prior to the tour, **Sig** 'Tropo' **Preston** went for a free 'number one' at **CSM Nichols'** wife's shop. As the RSMPT had no schools visits that day, the KAPE team borrowed their two IARRCIS terminals, linked up for emails. Lisburn proved particularly popular, as the caravan was set up opposite the YMCA cafe, where we were introduced to the delights of Bacon Sodas, Potato Bread and the Ulster Fry, a guaranteed artery clogger! **CSM Nichols** impressed us all with his BMX stunts, and **LCpl Moffat** won the prize for finding the youngest recruit (his cousin's daughter).

It was a highly intensive week, very much a KAPE Tour rather than with the emphasis on recruiting. The RSNIPT were there for that side, as they had the target audience, having access to schools. It was very rewarding, and certainly showed how important it is for the Army to keep in touch with the civilian world. It took very little effort to start talking to passers-by, who were always willing to stop, and one could see immediately how people relaxed when they found a person behind the uniform. This sort of tour may not boost recruiting figures dramatically, but we could all see how much good it does for the reputation of the Army, simply by breaking down the barriers and going out and meeting people.

CORPS LONDON DINNER

TUESDAY 9 MAY 2000

THE SAVOY, 1900HRS FOR 1930HRS
BLACK TIE, £34 PER TICKET

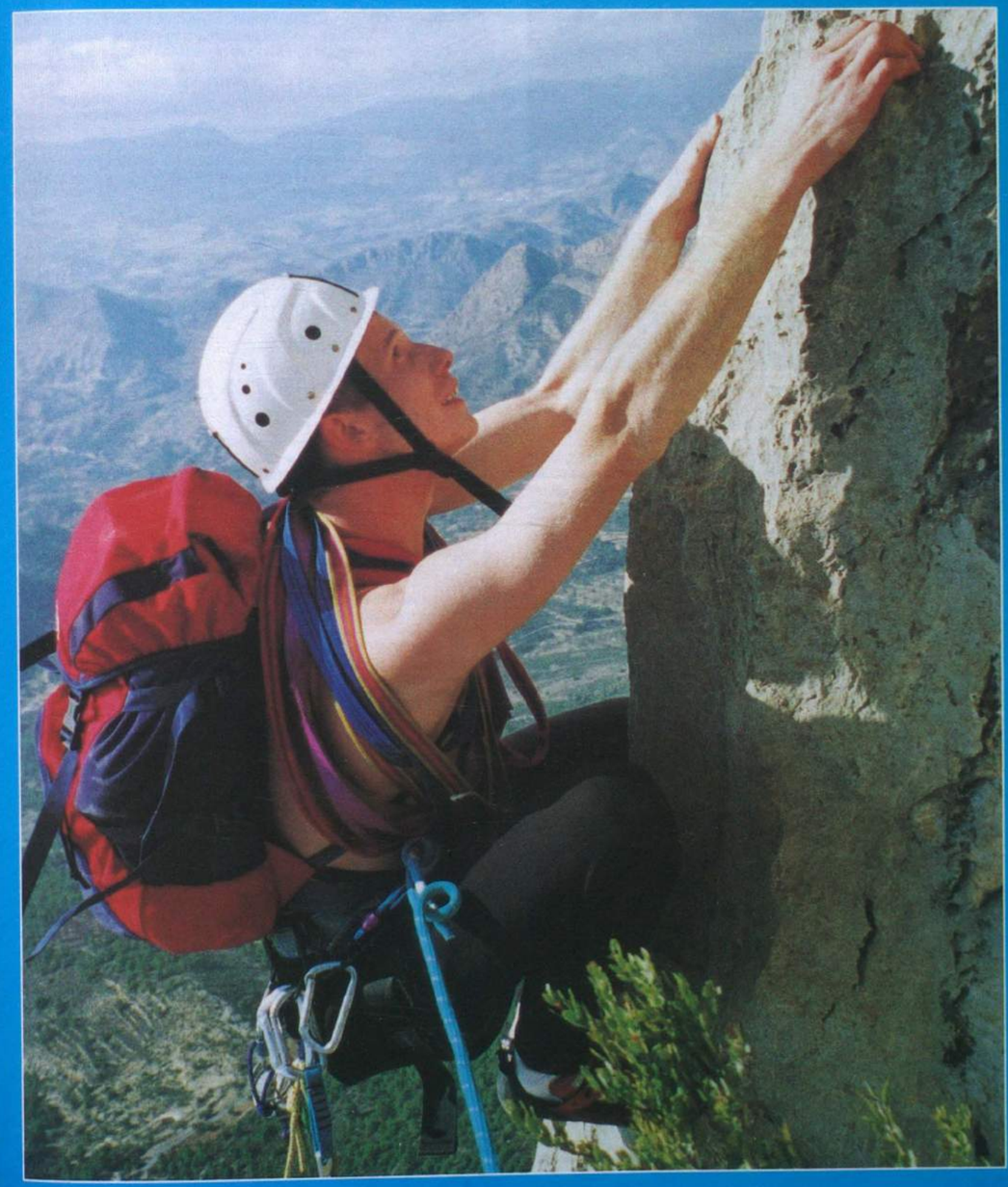
APPLICATIONS TO:
RHQ ROYAL SIGNALS, BLANDFORD CAMP
DORSET DT11 8RH TEL: 01258 482083

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

The Journal

of the Royal Signals Institution

APRIL 2000



'JIMMY'S APPRENTICES'

by Lt Col (Retd) D. P. Herring

Review by Col (Retd) C. J. Walters

Lt Col Don Herring was a TOT and served in the Corps until his retirement in 1982. His career commenced in October 1943 when he joined the Boys' Training Company at Catterick.

Don's book is a pictorial record of all the Apprentice Boy intakes that joined between the years 1942 and 1948. He has obtained photographs of all intakes and listed them by name. Such famous names are on display as **Ribchester, Pavey, P. Sharp, Soward** and **Grigsby**. He also gives a brief history of Boy Entrants to the Corps and the trades they could train for.

There is a tribute also to the 254 BTC Old Boys Association. This is a must for anyone of that era and is available from the Museum Shop at £7.99.

Col (Retd) Cliff Walters receives the Museum's copy of 'JIMMY'S APPRENTICES' from Lt Col (Retd) Don Herring

A SIGNAL HONOUR WITH THE CHINDITS AND XIV ARMY IN BURMA

By Robin Painter.
ISBN 0 85052 707 4 - £19.95

Review by David Horsfield

A special relationship often develops between those in charge of training Officer Cadets and the eager young men embarking on a military career, whether this is in time of peace or the conscripted service of wartime. Robin Painter was one of my Cadets in Mhow in Central India in 1942. Robin was an outstanding Cadet, passing out top of his course, an achievement that projected him immediately into a most difficult assignment that he did well to survive. In the few years from his schooldays to the end of his service in Burma he had marvellous variety of experience. Above all his story illustrates how a young officer, still in his teens found himself in totally strange circumstances of geography, language, removal from military support and separation from all superiors - and survived. It also illustrates well the severe threat from debilitating and life threatening illness, which was all part of the Burma war. Formal training provided little assistance in the circumstances that he faced, particularly the preparatory training given to the majority of the Wingate Troops. He was thrown back on his own resources in what a Pakistan General, in different circumstances described as 'cave man soldiering'. Wars often produce the unexpected. This book illustrates for young and old the excitement or worse of recognising imminent disaster and the satisfaction of delivering oneself and one's soldiers from the apparent jaws of death.

Pen and Sword Books Ltd
47 Church Street
Barnsley
S.YORKS S70 2AS

JOURNAL COVER PICTURE

LCpl Mark Ross out climbing whilst on Exercise Lizard Backstop with 7 Signal Regiment

ON ROYAL SIGNALS AUTHORS

Maj Gen D. R. Horsfield

I have beside me ten books by Signals authors of the Corps, all of whom, but one, I have known well. Three concern Brig Ralph Bagnold, desert explorer, inventor of the Long Range Desert Group and in due course a Fellow of the Royal Society. His sister was the established writer; Enid Bagnold so writing was in the family. Two are by Maj Gen Tony Deane-Drummond, whose military exploits were of commanding interest to a wide audience. The remaining five, good stories though they may be, are principally of Royal Signals interest. Any idea that these are written for financial gain is very wide of the mark. There is family interest and there should be greater interest within the Corps. The question their authors have to face is this. How many thousands of pounds will it have cost them in the final assessment after the book has been put on the market and sales have dried up? The authors I have read have good tales to tell and all are plainly proud of the Corps that they have served. Can more be done to promote these books? Even asking for a book from a library increases its sales.

THE BOOKS

Maj Gen D. R. Horsfield

1935	R. A. Bagnold	Libyan Sands
1943	Anthony Brett James	Report My Signals
1951	Lionel Harris	Signal Venture
1953	Anthony Deane-Drummond	Return Ticket
1988	Ashton Wade	A Life on the Line
1990	Ralph Bagnold	Sand Wind and War
1992	Anthony Deane-Drummond	Arrows of Fortune
1997	Michael Hancock	Lucky Signaller
1997	Richard Cartwright	They Did Not Fail
1999	Robin Painter	A Signal Honour

CONTENTS

MEMORIES - PART TWO
Mr B. Spencer 189

THE GERMAN ARMY SIGNAL SCHOOL & TECHNICAL COLLEGE FOR ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING - FELDAFING
Maj A. Duncan MBE 190

SIXTY YEARS ON - 20th CENTURY GRAND TOURS FOR OFFICERS OF THE 5th DIVISIONAL SIGNALS
Maj Gen (Retd) D. R. Horsfield OBE 191

CATTERICK AND THE 5th DIVISION 1938-39
Maj Gen (Retd) D. R. Horsfield OBE 191

ROYAL SIGNALS IN THE SAS DURING THE EARLY 1950s
Col (Retd) D. D. Ranft 192

ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE OF SCIENCE EXERCISE SHRIVENHAM CHIMANIMANI 9 JULY - 1 AUGUST 1999
Capt W. D. J. Wilson R. SIGNALS 193

ADVENTUROUS TRAINING PAID PERK OR VALUABLE INVESTMENT?
Maj David Drinkall R. SIGNALS 194

COME ON 'F'
Capt Edgar Harrison R. SIGNALS,OBE, MC 197

ARNHEM REVISITED
Lewis Golden 199

'BEVERLEY BOY' REMINISCENCES
Capt (Retd) B. J. Podmore 200

CORRESPONDENCE 204

APPRECIATION 204

MEMORIES – PART TWO

by Mr B. Spencer

We were allowed a respite after the initial landing on Sicily so the group went to the small town of Avola. Here our billet was the Fascist HQ (with Mussolini's portrait glowering down on us) and the local telephone exchange across the street. When we first went into the exchange, someone suggested we try and find out if it was working. Picking up a cord plug I inserted it into a socket on the panel and a pleasant female voice came from the headset, 'Pronto.' Not knowing the language or the response I withdrew the plug. Later we found out it meant, 'Ready,' and she would connect you to the person you wanted to communicate with. At any rate, at least we knew that it was working. A retired teacher, who lived in part of the building, could speak fluent French so, with our school French, we fraternised with the rest of the locals in the evenings – gathered on seats outside. The campaign was coming to an end, when our next move was to the fields on the hillside above Catania. Waking in the morning between the vines was a pleasure, as you just stretched your arm out and picked a big bunch of black grapes for starters before breakfast. The farmer had said that it was OK as he didn't have anyone to bring in the harvest.

Being Infantry trained and Combined Operators instructed we were ready for anything and we were given an assignment which meant going down to the harbour to board a motor torpedo boat. The vessel bounced along at speed for hours, about a quarter of a mile from the coast until we came, in darkness, to a boulder strewn wide shore at the foot of some cliffs at the top of which was the resort of Taormina. A faint sound of music came from the Commandos HQ. They were already on their way across the Messina Straits to ascertain what the German intentions were, now that most of their still effective forces had managed to retreat to Italy. Information we had been given was that the Germans, on a previous occasion had followed the Commandos without them knowing back to their base, some catacombs, and killed them by throwing in hand grenades. We were there to ensure it didn't happen again. The music high up stopped, a signal they were returning, the only sound was the breaking of the waves on the pebbles. A short while afterwards came a pad, pad, pad of their feet on the wet sand, as they carried their canoes and ran to climb up the steep pathway to the top, then silence again. Would the Germans commandos come? Every man felt tense as we positioned ourselves round boulders, with revolvers at the ready to aim at anything that moved at the water's edge. Time dragged till at last in the early light of dawn we were told to stand down and return to the boat; after a sleep we arrived back at Catania.

Makeshift plans were being made in a hurry for the invasion of Italy. The information from the Commandos was that most of the German forces were pulling away from the coast to a more strategic line, leaving Italian Marines etc to do the defending. A landing craft transport was ready for sailing in the harbour as our Section went aboard. Officer IC, Sergeant, Corporal and three Operators, with No 18 sets strapped to our backs. There was also a soldier with a mine detector. There was limited space for standing, as in the middle was an American Jeep for reconnaissance purposes. Around this were military police, cyclists and all manner of specialist personnel who would be required to take control and operate as soon as the invasion started. As usual it was dark when the convoy set off at a steady speed till we turned to starboard and went straight for Reggio Di Calabria on the 'toe'. The sounds of whistling and whirring shells was heard as they flew overhead, fired by the 8th Army artillery from the outskirts of Messina. Getting nearer the Italian coast it was apparent that some property had been hit and there was plenty of smoke about. Our officer was looking for a particular landmark to guide us onto the landing beach, but not seeing it he asked the coxswain to proceed further up the coast. As we passed a promontory a machine gun suddenly opened up with red and white hot bullets hitting the side of the craft and ricocheting into the air. Immediately the boat was turned to go further away and the Officer IC said to the coxswain to return to the place we'd started from. 'If we don't find it this time,' he said, 'You can get out and walk, I've other people to drop off.' We did find it in broad daylight, the ramp went down and seven of us trooped off. The craft quickly pulled away. A few shots rang out from a dry river bed with its exit lined with a high wall which curved round to the back of the beach on either side. As one man, we all flattened down on the edge of the lapping water, half in and half out. Ready cocked revolvers appeared and were pointed at the top of the wall opposite us. We waited for something to happen. After a while the officer motioned for the Operator to start his Mine Detector and walk slowly up the beach, nothing was found. The Officer then proceeded to follow him stepping into his footprints, we all did likewise, in Indian-file. As we reached comparative safety against the wall, and to break the tension a bit, I softly sang 'Following my father's footsteps, following my dear old dad.' Suddenly from out of the blue came the screech of six mortar bombs, one after the other in quick succession, landing right on the waterline we had just left. Thank God we had moved when we did or it would have been the end for us. The waterproofed sets were opened up, when round the corner from the river-bed came two Italian marines, with their hands on their heads. They were followed by a Scottish soldier chivvying them along with his rifle. His khaki jacket was opened at the front and high up on his chest I saw a round red bullet-hole. 'You've caught one Jock,' I said. 'Yes, third time unlucky, maybe I'll get a bit of home-leave with it.' Pushing his prisoners past us, they disappeared out of sight. The Sergeant then asked the Corporal and I to find a place for the signal office. Luckily we found one next to the promenade with a substantial sloping exit/entrance nearby. General Montgomery, with his caravans etc came ashore a few days later and signed our diary. You could say that we were part of the first service people to return to the mainland of Europe after its recapturing in part, from the enemy. George Formby, soon afterwards, gave us an impromptu entertainment on the two small fishing boat keels which I got ready for him, with Beryl his wife on one, and him on the other. 'Eh, it's turned out nice again,' he began. Meanwhile a few soldiers came up to hear him play his 'uke' and then the Italians from the prom came down. I don't think they knew what he was singing about but at the end they gave him plenty of applause. The Western Brothers did their singing comedy pieces at a later date, just before the Section loaded into a truck and travelled the long road to Taranto in the instep of the 'heel' of Italy. (This was their equivalent of our Portsmouth). We had a flat in the city centre and it was good to go out and window shop, not too far, we had to be cautious. After a week of relaxing, the officer told us we had to catch up with the main army who were now going up the Adriatic coast, but instead of the truck he had decided to go by train which had just been repaired – as it would be quicker. Arriving at the station we discovered a smallish carriage coupled up, having three compartments, no gangway and no toilet. It left, six to a compartment, in a cloud of steam. We travelled through the countryside which made us feel more relaxed. We were even able to open the windows with the leather strap attached to them, to take in the fresh air. After about an hour what appeared to be a river, in the distance, came into view and the train stopped. The door opened and the Sergeant told us to sit one at each window and two in the middle, not to move but to remain seated. When he'd gone the train moved slowly towards the 'river' but upon getting near to the edge we found that it was not a river but a ravine! The pioneers had been able to cut a lot of nearby trees into logs to build two pylons, one each side of the stream, with the criss-crossed logs. On top of these were 'bailey bridges' and railway lines which took us across the ravine. It looked and was a brand new construction and we were the guinea pigs to try it out. Very slowly the engine ran onto the bridge. There was the sound of creaking logs, as the weight compressed the wood, then a slope developed down to the middle. The engine tried to go up the other half but failed and we were suspended in the middle. I looked at my rigid mates and they were scarcely breathing, in my own mind I recalled the old cinema films. You know the ones, where a train travelling at speed went on to a trestle bridge which suddenly collapsed causing the train to hurtle off the end into the valley far below. At the same time I was devising a quick means of escape through the window. The driver decided to reverse and was successful in returning us to the starting line. 'Everybody out!' shouted one of my mates, as he got hold of the door handle, 'One more try,' the Sergeant shouted outside and we were off again with a bit more speed. This time the driver went straight through to the other side. The watching Pioneers gave a big cheer, we opened the doors and scrambled out fast lighting our cigarettes as we went, to calm our nerves – the air turned blue.

The journey continued uneventfully until we reached a large railway junction at the city of Foggia with an airfield nearby. A bit further north was a place called San Severo with a small opera house which was to be our 'billet'. Our sleeping quarters were in the boardroom, a beautiful ceiling painted with cameos of principle performers in the different operas could be appreciated as you lay on the floor. The Officer had his own office in one corner of the room and one day as Billet Orderley I was surprised when the door opened and in came some top American Officers. One of them stepped forward and asked me to bring our Officer to confer with General Eisenhower, who was in charge of the American Armed Forces in the area – the son of the Commander in Chief of Allied Forces. This I did and as I listened it transpired that the Americans wanted to take over the opera house as their HQ, to organise the bombing of the Rumanian oilfields and would the message be reported to the British Command. The 8th Army were now at the Sangro River and the winter weather was making things difficult for crossing the swollen torrent of water to fight on the other side. We Operators were doing shift work on the Fullerphones, taking messages from and to the Army HQ. We did have an interlude and that was to meet other Beach Signal Groups at a rendezvous some miles away towards the coast. Here we celebrated the downfall of Mussolini and the defeat of Italy with a splice the main brace drink of rum which was neat, in a mug. Not being used to this strong drink it had quite an effect on me. I think they kept filling it up without me knowing. Someone then spoke and said that they wanted volunteers to join the partisans in Yugoslavia, would you like to join them? 'What do I have to do when I get there?' I enquired. 'Well they operate from one of the islands and go on missions to the mainland to blow up bridges and German convoys etc. You will go with them and when you get back you give a report back to HQ here of all that went on, over the radio.' 'It sounds just like a holiday, but no thanks. I can't speak the language and it means more seawater crossings and I'm just getting my land feet going again. The Americans put on a wonderful concert back at the opera house with American and Italian artistes, including an opera singing star, chorus, dancing girls etc. It was during the tenor solo that the lights went out, total blackout, then somebody in the stalls produced a torch and shone it on the evening dressed soloist. Other people followed suit till the upper circle were focussing their torches on the tenor, who continued to sing. All of a sudden an inflated condom descended from the ceiling and wafted down very slowly. Whilst it descended all the torches moved away from the singer to the condom to follow its descent. There was some nurses

sitting together in the boxes and they were laughing their heads off. As soon as it landed the lights came back on – a Yankie prank no doubt, still everybody had a good night out.

The time came for us to vacate the opera house and arrangements had been made for us to catch an empty ammunition ship returning to 'Blighty' from a port not too far away. Unfortunately the crew was not happy about our being there, the only extra food they had was tins of 'bully beef'. So for our slow journey back we had fried 'bb' for breakfast, mashed dried potatoes with 'bb' for dinner, 'bb' sandwiches for tea and 'bb' leftovers for supper. We hoped to be in 'Blighty' for Xmas but it was New Year's Eve and we were still in the Channel, so as there was no alcohol on board we celebrated by each having a glass of water and a spoonful of Andrews Liver Salts! It was a moving experience, but it was good to be nearly home and getting ready for D Day.

THE GERMAN ARMY SIGNAL SCHOOL AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE FOR ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING - FELDAFING

By Maj A. Duncan MBE

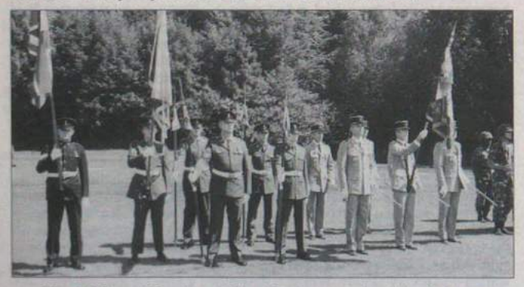
I felt it was about time that this little known outpost of the Corps, situated in the beautiful countryside of Bavaria about 50km south of Munich; in sight of the Bavarian Alps and surrounded by some of the most famous of the Bavarian Lakes was brought a little more to the attention of the Corps as a whole. I would have liked to follow the normal *Wire Notes* structure by welcoming 'Bob' and saying farewell to 'John (Digger)' someone or other and his wife 'Linda', however, this is rather difficult as I am the only UK representative here working in what is commonly known as an ISODET (Isolated Detachment). I think this means that after all these years I am at last trusted to 'work without supervision'. However, I have my doubts. I am not sure if these are the first ever *Wire Notes* from our sister school here in 'Freistadt Bayern', but there have been a number of significant and really quite exciting events here at the school which I believe are of interest to us all.

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GERMAN ARMY SIGNAL CORPS

The celebrations for this most prestigious event took place on 2 July and the Corps was extremely well represented by the SOinC(A), the Corps Pipes and Drums and a parade flag party provided by 16 Signal Regiment I was personally delighted to be so well supported by the Corps and as you would expect their support was warmly welcomed by our German colleagues, whose hospitality is worth experiencing at first hand, and the addition of such an international flavour served to significantly enrich the overall tone of the day. The initial parade, consisting of over 700 troops, took place in 32 °C and it was to the great credit of all concerned that they all survived intact. The extreme heat in fact melted the SOinC's Sam Browne, and shoe polish (mine was less important). **Cpl Hunt** please contact **Mrs Avril Duncan** on the use of a well know product to remove the polish stains from our No 4 Dress at short notice, and I hope you have brought the equipment back up to scratch.

The Corps Pipes and Drums
entertaining the assembled guests before the Parade

The parade was followed by a quite outstanding display of German Army Signals Equipment, past, present and future and throughout the day the assembled over-1200 guests were entertained by the Pipes and Drums. How they also survived the heat in full Highland Dress will remain, for me, forever a mystery. I believe a lot a water was consumed?



The 16 Signal Regiment 'Flag Party – showing The Colours

During the afternoon, the SOinC(A) planted a tree on behalf of the Corps as a symbol of how we would wish our co-operation in the future to grow. I must confess that this 'wonderful' idea was at first received with a degree of puzzlement. However, the fact that the French SOinC followed suit and that both trees are now shown to the wide variety of visitors to the school only serves to demonstrate that some of the most far fetched ideas can sometimes work out for the best.

SOinC(A) Germany and SOinC(A) UK - Zusammenarbeit

The day was rounded off with a party in the local Town Hall in Weilheim. Copious amounts of beer were consumed and the Pipes and Drums once again provided an outstanding finale to the day.

Brigade General Bader experiencing an age old tradition
The Pipe Major and Drum Major look on (is it in admiration?)

THE SECOND INTEROPERABILITY COURSE FOR NATO OFFICERS - FELDAFING 26 - 30 JULY 1999

The second Interoperability Course for NATO Officers took place here in Feldafing during the last week of July. The course involved officers

The Interoperability Course for NATO Officers 26-30 July 1999

from seven nations, including Hungary and Poland two of our new NATO partners, and for the second time this year it was a real pleasure for me to welcome a strong British team. The course actually takes place in English and we were this year supported by some quite excellent presenters from a wide variety of agencies (have to be more careful with this word in case it causes confusion) including SHAPE, NATO C3, MOD (GE), MOD (France) and a number of multi-national Corps and Divisions. The UK representatives included DCIS(A), Force Development, RSS Area Systems Group and last but very definitely not least the Bowman Military Team. The course was a great success, especially the addition to the programme of one or two visits to the cultural centres of Munich City Centre (Hoflbrauhaus) and the Andechs Brewery. Once the hangovers have cleared, perhaps we can look forward to next year.

SIXTY YEARS ON

20th Century Grand Tours for Officers of the 5th Divisional Signals

Maj Gen D. R. Horsfield OBE

In 1938 the Division barely existed when James Yule and I, two members of our Q Course of seven Young Officers, joined the Signals unit in January 1938. For most of our time we were the only two officers living in the Mess. Nothing has changed our belief that our posting stemmed from the fact that the Unit, then in Scarborough, had reached the final of the Hospitals Football Cup and wanted reinforcements. James and I had both been Soccer representatives of the RMA Woolwich. Beaten in extra time I was tasked, with the help of James with training a team of four for the first Army Motor Cycle Trials. Our experience at that point was limited to the few hours training on such machines during our Q Course. We were the only team containing two officers and claimed third place in the Championships with the two of us amongst the first ten individual places. We were on strange ground down in Aldershot, so were well satisfied with our achievement.

Meanwhile our preparations for war included no Divisional training. Brigade training was limited to a three-day Exercise each summer, governed by the pace of marching infantry. War was very close when James and I proudly put up our second pips on 26 August. Nine days later war was declared, reservists and others were posted in and I, aged 22, became a Company Commander. In the next fortnight we moved out of Catterick's Le Cateau Lines to a tented camp we created nearby, at Gandale and then back to Hooge Lines. At each site we dug slit trenches. On the evening of 19 September I was instructed to be ready to move 'to the Tropics' by midnight four days later. Uprooting oneself, preparing for new things and putting in good order all that would be left behind was an almost impossible task at the pace required. I managed one full day at home for farewells. By 28 September we were at sea. It was not until 1947 that I was to see England again.

The comparisons between my war years and more recent conflicts highlight the astonishing changes which have taken place in my lifetime in transport and communications. At no time in nearly eight years was I able to talk by any means to any of my family in the UK. When the Mediterranean became closed to our shipping, the sending of a letter could expect to receive a reply after some three months. Air travel, except for operational purposes only became possible after the war ended. So the Grand Tour went on, Egypt, Ceylon, then Singapore Rangoon and Java each in turn closed before we reached them by great good fortune. Directed back to Bombay and across to Calcutta I was flown into Burma to command what there was of General Slim's Corps Signals at the age of 25 for the retreat back into Assam and thence to India. There was much of interest and much to learn in all these travels. There was also much to enjoy too for those lucky enough to survive in good health.

James Yule, who remained with the 5th Division had a different story. He was amongst those sent to Norway in 1940 where he was a Brigade Signal Officer. As a casualty from a train crash he became a prisoner of the Germans. His Grand Tour was of prison camps for five years, finishing up in Colditz.

CATTERICK & THE 5th DIVISION 1938-39

By Maj Gen D. R. Horsfield OBE

Early in 1938 our Course members found themselves allocated to Signals units with the expectation of becoming familiar with all the functions and activities of real soldiering. Two of us were in for a surprise. We were allotted to 5 Divisional Signals in Scarborough. Driving there to learn more we were told that by the time we were due to report the unit itself would have moved to Catterick, so it was seemingly joining us rather than the other way round. Reporting in due course to the hutted Le Cateau lines there was remarkably little unit to be found. There was no Company to serve a Divisional Headquarters. The last of three Gunner Sections had just left with its Artillery Regiment and there was only one Brigade Section. James Yule and I were the only two officers living in Mess. Being one place above him in the Army List I could claim to be the senior dining-in member for what that was worth. When it came to allocation of duties I took over the command of 13 Brigade Signal Section, not that I remember anyone to take over from. James had to be content with looking after nine men and giving support to 7th Royal Tanks. The matter of immediate importance was that the unit had won its way to the final of the Hospital Cup in Scarborough. Was it by chance or not that we had been selected for this posting. James and I happened to be two Soccer colours from Woolwich, he an expert and I a temporarily converted rugger player. Can such qualifications affect ones posting? I have been suspicious of posting organisations ever since. We lost the match on a scorching hot day after 45 minutes each way followed by extra time.

Our charming Commanding Officer, George Henderson had another priority. He had been severely wounded in France and after evacuation to Switzerland, spent much time recovering from the loss of an eye. Later in his service he had been an early, if not the first, manager of the Royal Signals Display team with its showmanship involving a mixture of both horses and motor cycles. 1938 was mechanisation year and there were to be Motor Cycle Trials to help promote vehicle mastery in place of horsemanship. This was of immediate interest to our Commanding Officer and his two new officers were to train the team of four. With only the brief School of Signals training to build on there would be plenty of work to do. There was Stowers, a Display Team Sergeant to help us. My Brigade Signal Section had men with plenty of skills, being composed in large part by long service soldiers who had completed a five year tour in India. There was apparently much truth in the ditty which started 'You'll get no promotion this side of the Ocean.' Here was an excellent operator, recently from overseas, who was plainly a leader. He was a valuable all round athlete and had achieved a good level of education either in the army or before. Nevertheless, there was considerable discussion and tooth sucking before it was agreed that he should be promoted to the rank of Acting Unpaid Lance Corporal. Many of his kind became officers when war broke out and gave valuable service. I hope he did well too. We worked hard and regularly to meet the Motor cycling requirement. The moors close at hand with steep hills, minor streams and varied surfaces was right on our doorstep. The course when set would have long sections with demanding time limits for completion mixed with test sections of hill, stream or bog which should be ridden without loss of balance for maximum points. There was a small penalty for putting one foot down for a prod, more for greater foot work and no points for absolute failure. Some practice was needed too in the preparation of our machines and quick roadside repairs. In the end we carried off both the team and individual Northern Command Trophies. One prod of the foot on the two circuits of the course prevented me from avoiding all deductions.

The Army Trials were in Aldershot with advantage to the local teams in knowledge of both the type of terrain and the local geography. Even so we achieved second place and at a later date I was invited, on my personal record, to become the officer in a group of twelve to compete in the Scottish Six Days M/C Trials. This was a great experience with many interesting people encountered. It took us from Edinburgh up to Fort William, out to Mallaig and several other places of note. It was a pity we were not to be mounted on the faithful Norton 16H which we knew so well. In fact we were used for trials for competitive selection of a new type of machine for the Army. Norton, Matchless, BSA and Triumph were the manufacturers involved. I drew Triumph who gave us poor support or may have been given too little warning. We were only able to collect our machines at the Midland factory at the last minute, riding directly to Edinburgh to check in. All vehicles in those days had to be run in at moderate speeds for the first one or two thousand miles. Otherwise they

were liable to seize up. The Triumph 350cc side valve engine lacked power, but even the other makes we had were no match for the mounts of the civilian entries. We were up against class performers and would have liked to claim modest places amongst them. Nevertheless I had followed one piece of military advice which was, 'get known for something'. I was a motor cyclist! Though the task set me by Col Henderson was an unusual one I believe it had certain merits. To be given something important to do for the sake of the unit and to be left to carry it out unsupervised could have make or break ending. If it works out right, it is good for all parties.

Catterick Camp life had much to offer. Having left the major Signals area we were now much more part of the Garrison with friends from every arm of the Service. The Club was the centre of much social activity as it was in Aldershot. Nobody would have forecast that in a dozen years time both would be gradually fading away. Tennis Tournaments were popular and Saturday evening dances well subscribed, the Morritt Arms at Greta Bridge also being much favoured. The Lake District was within easy reach and the local countryside was magnificent. Trips home to Benson near Oxford were easier to fit in. At this time high quality cars of a certain age had little second hand value. I was the owner of a 2 Litre Lagonda and driving was a pleasure.

My private expedition training continued even if the military side lacked purpose. On one occasion I owned up to Harold Taylor that my poetic horizon never got further than Kipling, Wavell's 'Other Men's Flowers' and the like. His comforting reply was, 'I charge extra for reading poetry.' However, there is one jingle that remains in my head, though the author's name escapes me;-

When I was young and Hitler small and Goering hadn't left his hangar
I went to Norway having bought a ticket on the Arganaut,
A vessel advertised to call at Bergen and Stavanger.

This is precisely what we did, Nigel, myself and CP the adopted Godfather. I do not remember Bergen, a Hanseatic Port and ancient capital of Norway as being large, but perhaps we only explored the seaboard. The steep sided grassy slopes of the fjord were spectacularly green and the whole picturesque in its very best sense. As we travelled it became apparent that this was no place for speed. Many of the roads were not metalled and as is their way became ribbed and very rough on the car until one learned that increasing speed to a suitable point meant that one rode the top of the ridges in reasonable comfort. On one occasion a greasy stretch caused us to slide disconsolately into a ditch. We were prepared to some extent by having brought a rope and by attaching one end to the car and waving the other at the few passers by, one of them got the message and towed us out. On the mountain roads another hazard appeared to be large herds of goats. In places where the road dropped sharply away on the valley side we were worried for their safety. In fact they were no problem. We found that they were superbly agile so that they were impossible to hit and that if one moved slowly they flowed round the car like a liquid. We came to enjoy their cheese. In Oslo we felt at ease and at home, making contacts readily. Memories in Norway and Sweden are much of trees, lakes and fine views. Plentiful trout were enjoyed long before fish farms made this delicacy easy to come by. In Stockholm the lingua franca for us was German which was the second language at the time in Sweden. Stockholm seemed to be far ahead of Britain in planning its city and creating new buildings of style. On we sent south past the great lakes to cross to Denmark at Helsingor.

This was the time of Chamberlain's fateful visit to Hitler in Bonn and there were surprises in store for us. In a central square that evening yellow posters were being scattered about with the words displayed, 'Krisen Akut,' and, 'Chamberlain rejser hjem,' which even we could understand. Our Prime Minister's visit to Hitler had failed. Reporting to the British Consul the next day we explained our Service connections and our previous intention of driving home through Germany. What should we do? Well, he said, Germany is plainly off and the port of Esbjerg would not be safe. If war is declared the ferry would be stopped and you would be taken off. Your only option is to drive all the way back to Bergen, which will be a convoy port in war. Catch a boat there. This we did. By the time we arrived at Newcastle, the heat had gone out of the situation. There was some signs of trench digging about, the first sign we were to see of war preparation. Back at work there was no strengthening of our unit for a real job. We became an extra Depot Regiment for the training of additional recruits with drill instructors loaned to us from various infantry battalions. I was myself borrowed by the Signals Training Battalion to help increase the flow of new Signals operators. I still did part time with my Brigade Section as time flowed by. There is little to record about preparations for a forthcoming war. I do not recall any efforts to consider what shape it might take or what we should be doing about it. Perhaps another ghastly trench war was envisioned and this was a thought to be stifled. The Royal Tank Corps as it was then called was moving, with all too little help, in the right direction and others might be making modest progress. Thank goodness the creation of good new aircraft was not thought too provocative to our eventual enemy as improvement to the Army might have done.

Our summer manoeuvres showed our dismal state. The event took some three or four days at the pace of marching infantry. Laundry vans and other lorries had been hired to provide essential transport as garrison vehicles were too few. Bren gun carriers were represented by small cars decorated with yellow flags and the only anti-tank protection was the Boyes rifle, an outsize version of the soldier's personal weapon and in short supply at that. Only an enemy could have taken encouragement from what went on. So the story continued with lingering false hopes of peace for a further year. Leave was not restricted but uncertainty prevented forward planning so I signed on for two weeks amongst 4,000 metre mountains in Zermatt, which proved to be my farewell to Switzerland for many years. The response for skiers had been poor because of other peoples doubts and I found myself guided in a party of three with Jeanette Kessler, one of our leading racers and Ripley Oddie, her fiancée. I could not have had better company. There was no mountain transport working in the spring, so the ascent of Monte Rosa, for example, was a two-day affair with a night spent in the Betemps Hut. We ranged far afield though less strenuously than Harold Taylor might have wished. The remaining few months to the war were eked out happily enough, perhaps too much so for the several sincere friendships which were suddenly to be severed by war's declaration.

ROYAL SIGNALS IN THE SAS DURING THE EARLY 1950s

By Colonel (Retd) D. D. Ranft

Much has been written concerning the exploits of the SAS during the Second World War. After the war, in October 1945, HQ SAS and the 1st and 2nd SAS Regiments were disbanded, as no role could be foreseen for then in peacetime. However, the SAS was resurrected in the 1950s, and their subsequent exploits have become well known, but how did this resurrection come about? In their excellent book 'Re-enter the SAS'* the authors comprehensively cover the fortunes of the SAS in the early 1950s. The communist uprising in Malaya started in 1948, and two years later a need was seen for a special force to be raised to undertake prolonged deep jungle penetration. In August 1950 the first squadron of the Malayan Scouts was raised under Lt Col Mike Calvert. By the end of 1951 there were four squadrons, and the Malayan Scouts became 22 SAS Regiment. The teething problems of the early days of this regiment are graphically described in this book, but little mention is made of the Royal Signals contribution in providing radio communications in very difficult conditions.

The first Royal Signals Officer with the Malayan Scouts was Capt (now Major (Retd)) Wilf Batty, who had the difficult task of setting up a communications system from scratch. The initial problems were legion: lack of a lightweight HF radio for long range jungle communications: resistance from staff in senior HQs to the priority demands of this new unit: the fact that although there was a war going on the Senior Staff HQ and REME workshops were working peacetime hours (closed at weekends): and the inexperience of some of the Royal Signals men in infantry skills, such skills being essential when spending weeks at a time in the jungle.

I was the first Royal Signals Officer to serve with 22 SAS Regiment. We were not without our faults. A proper selection system did not exist then. The regiment was a mixture of experienced wartime SAS men and at the other extreme, a few 'chuck-outs' from other units. Discipline was lacking at times. I could tell a few interesting stories about the 'goings-on' at this time, but *The Wire* is not the place!

Radio communications between jungle patrols and base camp were achieved by using the WS62. The WS62 was a valve set (no transistors in those days) intended to be powered by a wet battery, which of course was completely impracticable in jungle conditions. However, REME produced a modification whereby the WS62 could work off three WS18 dry batteries. Each of these batteries weighed 9lbs (If I remember correctly), so the poor Signaller had the radio (40lbs?) plus 27lbs of batteries to carry. Fortunately the load was usually spread within the patrol.

Radio communications were by HF skywave. Ionospheric conditions in Malaya were such that HF communications were usually impossible between about 1800hrs and daybreak due to atmospheric interference, and the foibles of the skip distance. When the day's march was over the Signaller had but a short time to erect his antenna and make contact with base, using CW.

This short article is intended as a tribute to those Royal Signals men who served with 22 SAS Reginant in Malaya in the early days of 1951/52. They had a difficult task. Their radio equipment was unsuitable for jungle conditions and yet they performed magnificently. I would very much like to hear from any of those who served with me at that time. Col D. D. Ranft, 'Olinda', 8 Wilmslow Avenue, Woodbridge, SUFFOLK, IP12 4HW: Tel: 01394 387081.

* 'Re-enter the SAS' by Alan Hoe and Eric Morris, Lee Coope, London, 1994.

ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE OF SCIENCE EXERCISE SHRIVENHAM CHIMANIMANI 9 JULY 1999 – 1 AUGUST 1999

By Capt W. D. J. Wilson R SIGNALS

Ex Shrivenham Chimanimani was a trekking expedition to the Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe. The expedition fulfilled a requirement that military undergraduates at RMCS organise and participate in an adventurous training expedition during their degree course. It also coincided with the completion of the second year exams and offered a welcome break from academia to the six expedition members: Capt's M. E. Burton RA, D. K. Francis RA, P. R. Griffiths R SIGNALS, W. D. J. Wilson R SIGNALS, Lt S. Gough R SIGNALS and OCdt A. Kavanagh GSC.

The expedition members arrived in Harare over a three-day period and after conducting initial arrival administration we were all glad to leave the capital behind. We initially headed East towards Nyanga National Park, where we spent three days acclimatising and conducting a series of day walks. The culmination of this 'build-up' training was to climb Zimbabwe's highest peak, Mt Inyangani (2592m). This proved to be an excellent walk with breathtaking views over looking the entire National Park and even into Mozambique.

On the summit of Mount Inyangani
(L-R): Lt Simon Gough, Capt Donald Francis, Capt Mark Burton, Capt Paul; Griffiths, Capt Jurgen Wilson and OCdt Adam Kavanagh

Despite being in the middle of the Zimbabwean winter the temperatures were uncomfortably high to walk in the afternoons. As a result we took full advantage of the activities provided by the National Parks Authorities. One such activity was a horse-riding trek, which proved to be anything but gentle. By the time we returned two hours later I wished we had not claimed to be accomplished riders. A more relaxing pass time was fly-fishing in one of the numerous dams. We were told that the area was renowned for its trout and as a result we decided to hire some rods, and fish for our supper. Needless to say nobody caught anything. It was not until the next day that we were told by a South African couple that it was out of season and that there were no fish in the dams yet. Somebody saw us coming…

Due to the fact that it was dark by 1900hrs the evenings were mostly spent by a fireside cooking excessive amounts of fillet steak (at the cost of off-cuts in the UK), admiring the stars and nursing blisters/fisherman's elbow/saddle sores from the day's activities. One exception to this was when the thatched roof to our 'A' frame lodge caught fire. OCdt Adam 'Fireman' Kavanagh performed some heroics by climbing onto the roof to contain the fire, whilst Capt Donald 'Budgie' Francis was last seen soaring at 15000ft providing top-cover. Fortunately nobody was injured or no serious damage was caused despite Lt Simon 'Firestarter' Gough's best efforts.

Communicating with a Zimbabwean Signals Corporal, Nyanga Village

Although Nyanga and the Eastern Highlands are a popular area for Zimbabweans to visit it is relatively unspoiled by foreign tourists. Thanks to this and having an ex-pat (Capt Francis) on the expedition we were able to benefit from 'local rates', making our stay very affordable. Additionally the locals were very friendly and not in the slightest bit pushy, unlike some African countries. It was with some reluctance that we left Nyanga for the main trekking phase of the expedition.

Any reluctance we had before leaving Nyanga was soon displaced when we arrived at Chimanimani. The prominent Chimanimani Mountain Range and forested slopes provided an impressive but daunting sight. The following morning we made our way to base camp where we were to start our ascent to the plateau from which we would be conducting the remainder of our walks. Our intended route of Banana Grove soon gave way to a long and steep climb up Long Gully after OCdt Adam 'Pathfinder' Kavanagh showed some promise of becoming an Officer by taking a wrong turn. Once we reached the plateau an awesome sight greeted us: we had traveled half way across the world to…Sennybridge.

Lt Simon Gough demonstrating 'classic' abseiling in Chimanimani

Despite the unfortunate parallels between the scenery in the Eastern Highlands and Wales the next four days proved to be immensely enjoyable and challenging. After spending our first night by the Southern Pools we conducted a series of walks including the Saddle and Skeleton Pass both areas which were used extensively by guerillas crossing over from Mozambique during the civil war. We also climbed Mt Binga (2436m), Mozambique's highest peak, from the Zimbabwean side. This was an extremely arduous climb, which on completion provided spectacular views of both Zimbabwe and Mozambique. By the time we descended from the plateau back to base camp we all felt suitably drained and looking forward to eating something other than noodles, soya and piri-piri sauce. With only one more night before we were due to leave Chimanimani the unthinkable happened: it started to rain. Having been assured by Capt Donald 'You Don't Need Waterproofs Lads' Francis that there was less than a 1 in 100 chance it would rain I was suddenly very pleased I had ignored his advice. The 20-mile journey from base camp to Chimanimani turned out to be an experience, which I would rather not repeat. Parts of the track were washed away exposing sheer drops and elsewhere the track had turned into a sheet of mud, offering little to no grip to our rear wheel drive minibus. By an enormous amount of luck, some intricate rope work by Lt Simon 'Look I'm

The JSMEL' Gough and a South African families Land Rover we were able to continue to Hot Springs for a well-deserved break.

Our next stop was Masvingo, another National Park, where we intended to carry out some more day walks and hopefully see our first game. We decided that the best way to combine the two aspirations was to hire a guide and go on a game walk. Our guide finally turned up 20 minutes late with an AK47 slung on his shoulder (in case we came across poachers) and looking less than happy at being awake at 0620hrs. He was even less impressed when he heard that we wanted to go on a long walk and not a game drive! Despite early mornings allegedly being the best time to see game we saw disappointingly little. As we were paying the guide by the hour we were surprised to realise he had taken a 3km detour so that he could go to the toilet. Although he could sense our disapproval he was not expecting to have to make the time up by tabbing the rest of the way round. By the end of the game walk/tab our guide was relieved to get rid of us and although we gave him a tip, we did not see him again. A far more rewarding way of viewing game turned out to be on horseback. Within 20 minutes of setting off we had already seen wildebeest, warthog, zebra, eland, dyker, ostrich, baboons and a variety of other animals. The highlight of the ride was, however, sitting 5ft away from two rhinos grazing. An experience non of us will forget in a hurry!

The remainder of the trekking phase of the expedition was spent in similar circumstances in Matopos and Hwange National Parks where we were fortunate to see almost all of the game we had hoped to including elephants, giraffes, hippos and crocodiles. We also had an encounter with a baboon who decided to steal some of our food. Having already got away with a bag of potatoes we decided to leave him a sandwich laced with extra hot piri-piri sauce, garlic and pepper to discourage him from returning. Although we did not see him again we did hear him…

The last few days of the expedition were spent on R&R at Victoria Falls. The 'big city lights' were a welcoming sight after spending nearly three weeks 'in the bush' with very little civilisation. Although Victoria Falls was noticeably more expensive than the remainder of Zimbabwe it was still relatively cheap and offered the opportunity to participate in some more adventurous pursuits such as white water rafting and bungee jumping. We also had the opportunity to go to Zambia to buy souvenirs at a fraction of the cost of those in Zimbabwe and, of course, see the Falls themselves.

In conclusion, Ex Shrivenham Chimanimani was a very successful expedition. The expedition achieved its aims and provided all members with invaluable experience in organising and running expeditions. Zimbabwe is an ideal country to organise adventurous training in thanks to the low cost of living and the number of National Parks, which offer such a variety of countrysides and the number of additional adventurous training pursuits available.

One view of Victoria Falls…

…and another one!

ADVENTUROUS TRAINING – PAID PERK OR VALUABLE INVESTMENT?

by Maj David Drinkall BEng Royal Signals, The Royal Signals Canoe Club Secretary, HQ 2 (NC) Sig Bde

References:

A. CMS(R)D/DAT/13/35/51 Army Code 71011 Revised Apr 96.
B. AGAI Vol 1 Chap 11.
C. D/Trg/6/36/1/11/1 PAT (Army Adventurous Training Compendium) Army Code 71547(96) Revised 1996.
D. Mountaincraft and Leadership (3rd Edition) Eric Langmuir.

INTRODUCTION

Since 1969 the Principal Personnel Officers (PPOs) of the three Services have recognised Adventurous Training (AT) as being an important part in preparing Service personnel 'to stand up to the shocks and strains of war'. It was not until 1971, with the inception of the Joint Services Charter, that AT in the Services was defined. The same definition was reaffirmed, in April 1992, by the Executive Committee of the Army Board (ECAB), who agreed that AT should be defined as:

'A form of outdoor training for service personnel requiring participation in challenging pursuits, by inference those which contain an ever-present risk to life and limb, and calling for, from those taking part, some or all of the qualities of fitness, physical and moral courage, initiative, powers of endurance and interdependence.'

From this definition, the Army developed the aim of AT which is:

'To develop, through challenging pursuits and within an outdoor environment, leadership and the necessary qualities to enhance the performance of military personnel during times of peace and war'.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF ADVENTURE TRAINING

Military personnel have always been associated with AT undertakings. Since early Victorian times the Military have been at the forefront of a tradition of exploration and travel. The Victorian passions for knowledge and collecting, in parallel with the desire to pit themselves against the elements in demanding recreational pursuits such as mountain climbing, may well have developed the philosophy of AT. The perception soon grew that participation in outdoor pursuits was both formative and educational.

The beginnings of 'outdoor education' were seen in the UK as early as the 1830s with the foundation of natural history societies in schools, and the use of fieldwork study techniques by Universities. By 1883 young people were also becoming involved in outdoor activities outside formal education through organisations such as the Boys' Brigade and, from 1908, the Boy Scouts.

The impetus for recreation in wilderness areas continued, and was further encouraged by such events as the first ascent of the Matterhorn in the early 1900s and the polar exploits of Shackleton and Scott. By the 1930s, with the development of public transport, city dwellers were wishing to exercise their 'right to roam'. With the mass trespass of Kinder Scout in 1932, a whole new recreation was born which led to the development of the National Park System and the formation of both the Ramblers and Youth Hostel Associations.

Far reaching effects for AT in the services came from the training developments made in World War 2. Not only was there a requirement to train servicemen to survive in mountain, arctic and jungle conditions, but also to develop less traditional forms of leadership training. The Highland Fieldcraft Training Centre at Spean Bridge in Argyllshire was one such development. Lord Rowallan, after whom a Potential Officer Development Company at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst is named, had a highly refreshing approach to Officer Training: 'Develop character first and military leadership will follow'. He put this into practice at Spean Bridge where courses were deemed 'arduous, challenging and unconventional – but highly successful!'

The first specific AT Centres appeared in the form of the British Kiel Yacht Club in 1945 and by 1951 was established as the Kiel Training Centre at its present location in Holtenau. Soon afterwards the Army Outward Bound School was founded at Tywyn, and in 1960 the Winter Warfare School was opened at Silberhutte and The British Outward Bound Centre was established in Norway. By the mid seventies the services recognised the need for a joint approach to AT and the Joint Service Training Centres were fully developed.

ARMY ADVENTURE TRAINING

GENERAL

Following the approval by the Executive Committee of the Army Board (ECAB) in 1992 of the recommendations made in 'A Review of Adventurous Training', AT became formally recognised as a mainstream training activity. Due to a lack of available funds a structure of four inter-related and progressive levels of training was established. Whilst the aspiration to fully fund all AT still exists, the situation continues whereby some training is fully funded, and mandatory, and some remains voluntary and part funded by the participants. The Army training levels are:

Level 1. This is mandatory AT for recruits, or leadership and initiative training (L&I Trg) for apprentices and officer cadets, as part of the Common Military Syllabus. Arborfield apprentices enjoy two weeks L&I Trg within their course, whilst Bassingbourn trainees enjoy a five day AT camp during Week Nine.

Level 2. This is participation in annual group adventurous training at sub-unit level as directed by Formations. Such training should last for at least seven days and has a laid down syllabus. Level 2 AT should be conducted by 20% of the Field Army, as directed by Commands.

Level 3. This relates to voluntary participation in both external (out of Theatre) and internal (in Theatre) AT expeditions. This level requires substantial commitment by the individual, not least financially. Currently, the minimum contribution expected from participants is a third of the total expedition cost.

Level 4. This level relates to formal course training at either an Army or Joint Service Training Centre, or training organised by qualified Joint Service instructors out of Centres using a JSAT approved course training plan (CTP) to qualify novices to proficiency level.

AIMS OF ARMY ADVENTURE TRAINING

There are four general aims of AT as laid down by DITP(A), relating to the different levels. They are as follows:

'The Aim of Level 1 AT is to give basic skills training, appropriate to the respective group, in at least one recognised AT activity.'

'The Aim of Level 2 AT is to develop in individuals some of the qualities of fitness, physical and moral courage, initiative, powers of endurance and leadership through group participation in challenge pursuits, and to identify and select suitable individuals for further training'.

'The Aim of Level 3 AT is to promote the opportunity for groups of volunteers to test their abilities and expertise at the highest possible level against the challenges available in their chosen activity'.

'The Aim of Level 4 AT is to provide progressive levels of skills and knowledge to enable selected individuals to lead or instruct service personnel in the approved JSAT activities.

THE ELEMENTS OF ADVENTURE TRAINING

ADVENTURE

'The aim of Army AT is to develop, through challenging pursuits and within an outdoor environment, leadership and the necessary qualities to enhance the performance of military personnel during times of peace and war.' In other words, AT has the same aim as all other training mediums but utilises 'adventure'. The Concise Oxford Dictionary provides the following definition of 'adventure'…. 'an unusual and exiting experience; a daring enterprise; a hazardous activity'. Much has been written on the benefits of 'adventure' by pioneers such as Kurt Hahn, Lord Rowallan, and later Lord Hunt and Roger Putnam. These men were among the most influential to recognise and foster the use of outdoor pursuits as a versatile training vehicle, which could be moulded to suit the needs of a variety of user groups, including the Armed Services. But it is a passage by Colin Mortlock that most succinctly expresses what AT means to the majority of its participants and providers. Here he describes the archetypal adventure situation:

'… a person has sudden fear of physical harm and no longer feels complete master of the situation. He feels, however, that he can, with considerable efforts on his part, and given luck, overcome the situation without accidents. He accepts that his skills are about to be tested. He is conscious of a definite degree of uncertainty as to the outcome, and feels, as it were, poised on a knife-edge between success and failure. If he succeeds he has experienced adventure. He had found himself in a situation which becomes firmly etched upon his mind – perhaps forever. He has feelings of satisfaction, if not elation, about the result. The degree of satisfaction and pride is proportional to the scale and intensity of the adventure'.

It is the 'adventure experience' which is at the heart of the Army's AT ethos and which will lead to the enhancement of a soldier's performance during peace and war.

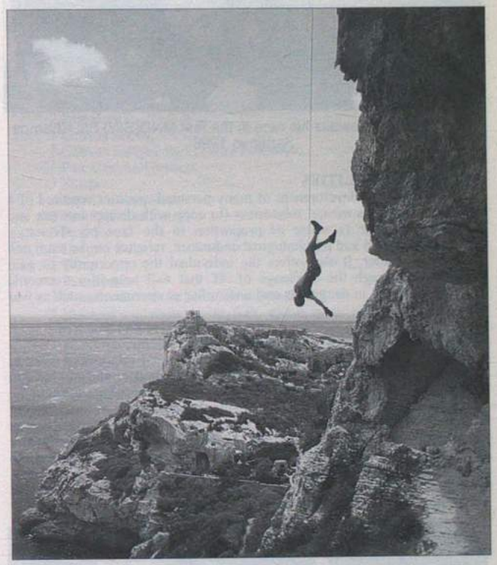
FEAR RISK AND DANGER

The relationship between the three AT principles of fear, risk and danger can be easily confused and it is important to ensure that both leaders and instructors have a clear picture of the balance required. Fear is a primal emotion which is rooted in instinct but developed through learned experience. Overcoming fear can produce strong feelings of satisfaction, confidence and self-esteem. It is this facet that should be utilised in AT. By learning to overcome fears soldiers become better at coping with fear in the future. The 'adventure experience' relies on the emotion of fear, without which adventure becomes recreation. Fear extended to terror, however, is not adventure and can be a very negative experience. The term 'apprehension' probably best describes the level of fear required for an 'adventure environment'.

If the emotion is fear and danger is the object of our fears, then risk is the action that we take to prevail. Risk is the uncertainty of outcome that produces the challenge in AT. If an individual or group is not aware of the risk then there will be no training value. For example: 'The group took a risk crossing the glacier in the afternoon'. If the team did not know that it was dangerous to cross a glacier late in the afternoon then, in their minds, there was no risk and therefore no training value, just great danger! Risk is in the eye of the beholder and therefore there does not necessarily need to be real danger for a student to feel he is taking a risk.

Within AT, danger is seen in two forms, real and apparent, which have a critical distinction. For example, 'real danger' occurs when the consequences of a fall whilst rock climbing would lead to injury. 'Apparent danger' occurs when the consequences of a fall are not dangerous (the student is on a safety rope), yet real apprehension is part of the experience. Abseiling is an excellent example of an 'apparent danger' activity. Typically when abseiling, the student is attached to a safety rope and is operating within a highly controlled situation, yet the apprehension felt is immediate.

Due to the intensity of the emotions involved, the soldier needs only a limited exposure to fear, risk and danger in order to have experienced 'adventure'. This is particularly pertinent with novice groups where the apprehension starts to build well before the activity, and only subsides once complete.



COMPETENCE

Within an AT environment, risk is offset by the competence of the individual. Adventures are both personally specific (based on personal competence) and situation specific (based on situation risks)'. Therefore instructors and leaders need to take account of both competence and situation in order to gauge the correct level of challenge in order to provide an 'adventure experience'.

Maj David Drinkall ascends the Zugspitz via the Hollental Klettersteig

LEADERSHIP

The 'real time' practical experience in leadership that AT activities offer soldiers should not be underestimated. Decisions cannot be evaded, as often those decisions are forced by the situation in which the leader finds himself, and are required to counteract danger. For many junior officers and NCOs, leading a Unit expedition is their only opportunity, outside of military operations, to experience an environment where their leadership is tested against a true risk to life and limb. Often AT is the only environment where a junior commander has true independence of decisions and the sole burden of command.

Often, the instructors and leaders are challenged by the leadership responsibilities as much as the students are challenged by the risk of the AT activity. It is because of these opportunities for leadership that outdoor pursuits should be embraced as a vehicle for training.

Capt Neil Stace awaits his race in the first MND(SW) Ski Champs Sarajevo 1998

PERSONAL QUALITIES

AT leads to the development of many personal qualities required of a soldier. It develops mental robustness (to cope with disappointment and setbacks), humour (a sense of proportion in the face of adversity), initiative, physical and psychological endurance, reliance on the team and trust in the leader. It also offers the individual the opportunity to gain confidence through the challenge of AT that will help him overcome difficulties found in dangerous and unfamiliar environments, such as war fighting.

THE TEAM

During military operations soldiers are commonly required to work in teams. These teams are often thrown together at short notice and have to operate under duress. AT provides a powerful medium for experiencing the nature of the team, particularly during multi-day expeditions. Having experienced the well observed pattern of group evolution for themselves (forming, storming, norming and performing[2]), soldiers are better equipped to get together as a team in times of crisis. Furthermore, group activities engender a sense of belonging. Through shared experience, particularly involving the physical and mental challenges of the 'adventure environment', the team develops esprit de corps.

Maj David Drinkall and colleagues pose for a photo whilst on their Joint Services Ski Instructors Course in Norway

THE NATURE OF THE ACTIVITIES

Outdoor pursuits lend themselves easily to the creation of a challenging 'adventure environment'. Indeed, it is the exhilaration and enjoyment of personal challenge that draws exponents to these pursuits and maintains their enthusiasm; facing the challenge becomes addictive. The established activities which the services recognise for the provision of AT are mountaineering, rock climbing, canoeing, skiing, sailing (off-shore), gliding (including hang gliding and paragliding), sub-aqua diving, caving and parachuting. This list should not be considered as exclusive, nor should every aspect of these pursuits be regarded as AT. Applications to undertake AT activities through service schemes are considered solely in the light of their own merit and assessed as to whether the aims of AT will be achieved.

THE 'PULL FACTOR'

Well structured AT provides the soldier with a fulfilling experience which is both exhilarating and enjoyable. As a result, there is a great demand for AT from the participants themselves. When recruiting, the Army advertises life in the services as an 'adventure experience' and consider previous personal development training, such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme or Queen's Scout Award, as a positive factor in the selection process. Personnel have the expectation that their 'quest for adventure' will be fulfilled within the Army. Therefore, the provision of AT is seen as a 'pull factor' in the battle for retention of Army Personnel.

THE TRAINING GAP

Military training is aimed at producing operational effectiveness. However, there are some facets of operational performance that cannot be undertaken during normal training courses. Therefore, there will be a 'gap' between what is required operationally and what can be achieved in training. This is known as the training gap' and can be defined under two headings:

a. **Realism.** Realism is often the factor that differentiates training from operations. Trainees cannot use live ammunition on a two sided exercises so the operational aspects of combat are missing as safety constraints are imposed to minimise risk. Actual conditions that operations will need to be conducted in cannot be forecast very accurately. Exercises test skills, systems and structure, they rarely put the participants under the 'real time' duress of fear.

b. **Resources.** During training courses, resources such as time, facilities, money and equipment are often limited; therefore only the basics are taught and tested. Personnel are expected to gain 'experience' elsewhere in order to become ready for operations.

AT can help fill the training gap by providing both the realism of the environment of risk and the resource of time, as at Unit level AT is often conducted partly over weekend and leave periods. As AT provides relatively inexpensive training, scarce resources such as money, facilities and equipment can be best utilised to provide efficient, worthwhile training. AT can therefore further reduce the training gap.

Sig Nicola Burnip trains as part of the R. SIGNALS and ARMY Marathon Canoe Teams in Monmouth

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Many of the practical skills and experiences acquired while undertaking AT are transferable to the soldier's primary role. Navigation, campcraft, water safety, rope-work, meteorology, first aid etc are all skills which are relevant to the soldier, as are the experiences of enduring physical hardship, undertaking expeditions, organisation and administration, foreign travel, leadership, teamwork etc. Transferable skills and experience are another facet of AT whose value cannot be overstated. In terms of Defence Budget, such skills and experience are gained cheaply, compared with the cost of adopting formal training to cover these elements.

SUMMARY

The Army sets great store by the resilience and flexibility of its soldiers. AT provides three major factors that make it a valuable training medium, they are:

a. Development of soldiers in preparation for War and Operations.
b. Excellent retention factor.
c. Cost effective.

AT must seek, through exposure to physically and mentally demanding activities, to develop character and leadership and it is important for the focus of Unit level AT to be on developing the soldier, not the skill alone.

Reference Books:

1. Priest S (1990). The Adventure Experience Paradigm in Miles and Priest.
2. Belbin J (1981) Management Teams; Why they succeed or fail. Heinemann

COME ON 'F'

By Captain Edgar Harrison Royal Signals OBE MC

Foreword *by Col (Retd) C. J. Walters Director, Roval Signals Museum*

This article by Edgar Harrison is a personal account of his time during training. He was a member of the legendary 'F' Company at Catterick. 'F' Company eventually became Boys Training Company from which sprang such organisations as the Army Apprentices' School, Harrogate and The Junior Leaders Regiment at Denbury. 'F' certainly has good pedigree! Edgar went on to an illustrious career which included early service as a soldier in China with the Foreign Office Wireless Service for five years. In 1941 he was selected for special service with the SIS (M16) at Bletchley Park from where he was commissioned. During the war he trained agents for field deployment and saw service in many countries including Norway, Greece, Crete, Egypt and Russia. He parachuted into Yugoslavia and was extricated by submarine. He met up with the Long Range Desert Group of Ralph Bagnold (also Royal Signals) in Sudan and he served on the Russian Front. Edgar was discharged from the service in 1946 on medical grounds and joined the Diplomatic Wireless Service in which he served until 1975 when he retired. During this time he served in Japan, India, Singapore, Russia, Beirut, Delhi, Singapore and UK. For his final appointment he was Director of the Service. I had the privilege of recently interviewing Edgar when he also presented me with a copy of his autobiography which covers 'The First Sixty Years of My Life'. There could not be a more unassuming and charming character who has given his all to his country. In so doing he has been awarded BEM, MBE, OBE and MC, but so unassuming is he that it was virtually impossible for me to determine the reasons and actions behind these awards.

F Company at Catterick -April/May 1929 Squad

Name	From
Day	Bishops Stortford
Fraser	Fort Georqe
Godwin	London
Harrison	Caerphilly
Key	Dover
Marshall	Nottingham
Millar	Dover
Pearce	Tyrone
Roake	Cardiff
Stanford	Slinfold
Tizard	Portland
Turnham	Portsmouth.

Who knows how many times 'Come on F ' raised the efforts of boys competing against men on the sporting fields of Scotton and the Highlands. Suffice to say this cry certainly contributed to the fact that the prestigious, Mackworth Trophy remained in the possession of F Company continuously whilst I was associated with this most illustrious of all Royal Signals units.

How does one commence a short history of 'F' when my knowledge of the Company extends only to the period 1926 to 1933. I shall try. In 1925/26 the Royal Signals moved from Maresfield in Sussex to Catterick Camp in North Yorkshire. When settled at Catterick it became the Signals Training Centre (STC) commanded by Brig Clementi-Smith. The whole comprised the Depot Battalion, the Training Battalion, School of Signals and Mounted Wing. My concern is principally with the Training Battalion (TB) comprising D E and F companies and particularly with F Company. Apart from F Company, all recruits joined the Depot Battalion aged 18 and over and, after three months soldiering, joined either D or E companies or the Mounted Wing depending on their trades. Fitters, Instrument Mechanics, Linesmen and Despatch Riders went to D Company (some Linesmen went to the Mounted Wing). All Operator Signals went to E Company. Numerically the Depot Battalion was by far the largest followed in strength by E Company, D Company, F Company, Mounted Wing and School of Signals. These six units competed annually in athletics, cricket, hockey, rugby and soccer for the Mackworth Trophy. So to F Company.

I have no idea who dreamed up the idea of offering apprenticeships into the Army by open competition. All I do know is that it was a brilliant idea which resulted in the Corps attracting and training intelligent boys. All boys had to be of British parentage, and the thrice yearly examinations were held in the UK, India, Far and Middle East. Usually 150 places were up for grabs and the Corps took between 12 and 16 of these boys in December/January, April/May and August/September. I was an April 1929 entrant having come 23rd in my examination.

On arrival at Catterick we were posted to No. 3 hut and remained in civilian clothes while we were measured up for our uniforms and footwear at the Tailor's shop adjacent to the Mounted Wing. We also had our hair cut at the Hairdressers next door to the Tailors. While still in civvies we were taught how to make and unmake our beds and the basics of marching drill. After some two weeks we were uniformed and kitted out and awaited our numbers. It was widely rumoured our squad would be the first of the 232s and so it turned out. Fraser - 2320048, Godwin 2320049, me 2320050 and so on. Amongst the kit issued was a length of half inch white tape. This was cut up in appropriate lengths, each stamped with our numbers. These numbered tapes were then stitched by us on to our blankets, uniform, underwear, shirts and socks. Visits to the QM stores resulted in us being kitted out as hereunder:

1 Cap stiff with brass badge and chinstrap
1 Fatigue Cap
1 Cap comforter
1 Tunic with brass buttons, dog collars and epaulettes
1 Pair Trousers with braces
1 Pair Breeches
1 Pair Puttees
2 Pair Boots
1 Canvas Shoes,
1 Canvas Fatigue Jacket with buttons
1 Pair Canvas Trousers
3 Shirts
2 Pair Drawers Short
2 Pair Drawers Long
3 Pair Socks
1 Leather Belt
1 Whip
1 Pair Spurs
1 Housewife with needles, thread and wool
1 Hold-all containing knife, fork, spoon, razor, shaving brush, tooth brush and button stick
1 Brass nameplate stamped with name and number
1 Kitbag
1 Groundsheet
1 Greatcoat
1 Pair Woollen Gloves
2 Hand Towels.

Having achieved a certain amount of expertise in marching, we marched to Hipswell Post Office and sent home our parcelled civilian clothes. Now, under the tutelage of Sgt Carpenter and LCpl Birkett we were inculcated into the many facets of soldiering. So much to learn - bed making, laying out of kit, trumpet calls and whistles - of which more anon, similarly with hut duties and much else. Probably for the first time in our young lives we accepted responsibilities and real discipline.

So, to trumpet calls and whistles which, between them, were to play a major part in the time we spent in F Company. Our first trumpet call of the day was Reveille 0615hrs in summer and 0700hrs in winter (during Spring Drills in Summer Reveille was at 0545hrs twice weekly). This was followed by Orderly Room, Post, Stables, Retreat, Defaulters and Last Post. All parades were ordered by whistles as was 'Lights Out'. Lance Corporal Boys were responsible for the series of whistles. Three whistles indicated ten minutes to parade time, two whistles for five minutes to parade time. Then 'On Parade'. A loud whistle and cry of 'Lights Out' indicated it was 9.30pm and bedtime. We 'stood to our beds' nightly at 9.00pm. Sgt 'Pedlar' Palmer was the Trumpet Major and there were two Boy Trumpeters of whom one was named Stokoe, I think. We became familiar with the calls and whistles in a very short time.

Until a squad 'Passed Out' they were virtually confined to No. 3 hut under the watchful eye of LCpl Birkett. Our daily routine went something like this. Reveille, wash and dress and make one's bed. Breakfast came next and then we tidied up our hut (each boy had a task on a roster which rotated weekly). This being satisfactorily completed, we were marched to the Training Battalion square to carry out various drills and disciplines - quick and slow marching, forming and unforming fours, opening and closing order, wheeling, saluting and whip drill. After about an hour we marched back and, depending on the day, attended education classes at the School of Signals of which more anon, or PT at the gymnasium adjacent to St Martins church or boxing at the 'Blood Tub' in the Mounted Wing. All kinds of sporting activities were indulged in on the Scotton and Highland playing fields.

Apart from Saturday and Sunday afternoons, there was little if any spare time. So much to learn. How to clean our badges and buttons without staining our uniforms, how to bone our boots and burnish our spurs, to darn and sew and put on our puttees properly. Our progress in these skills owed a great deal to the boys in our squad from the Duke of York's School, Dover and the Queen Victoria School, Dunblane. They were so helpful.

Education, all recruits to the Corps were expected to obtain a Third and Second Class Certificate. Boy Apprentice Tradesmen were expected to obtain a First Class Certificates and, exceptionally, Special Certificates. Promotion beyond the rank of Sergeant was denied those not possessing First Class Certificates. Once one had obtained a First Class Certificate it was no longer compulsory to attend education classes. Religious Instruction (RI) lessons were given to all boys. I am not sure if they were monthly or weekly. The vast majority of F Company were Anglicans, many attended Confirmation classes and were duly Confirmed by the Bishop of Ripon. St Martins Church Choir owed much to F Company boys. They practised with the Corps Band every Friday and were given an extra two day's leave annually. Two other boys, that elected to pump the organ, were also given the extra leave. Church going on Sundays was compulsory and was not much liked because of the parading beforehand although we boys admired our be-medalled SNCOs, WOs and Officers with their Great and other war decorations. Rain on Sunday mornings was welcomed as Church Parade was then cancelled.

After three months intensive training the great day came. Sgt Carpenter pronounced us fit and ready and we were paraded before the CO of the Training Battalion to show off our paces as it were. After completing the intricacies of marching and drill, individually we marched to the CO, whip saluted, gave our number, rank, name and trade, whip saluted again, about turned and marched back to our squad. I shall never forget my elation on the day I 'Passed Out'. Returning to No. 3 Hut, we were congratulated by Sgt Carpenter and told we should read that day's Company Orders carefully. We did and discovered we had been posted to either Hut No. 2 or Hut No. 7 depending on one's trade. Fitters and Instrument Mechanics to Hut 2, Operator Signals to Hut 7. After a fortnight's leave we returned in late August to commence trade training. I, with most of our squad, went to Hut 7.

I have briefly touched on leave. We were allowed two weeks in August and two weeks in December the latter covering Christmas and the New Year. While at Catterick we were strictly confined to camp limits bounded by Hipswell, Hunton and 'the pole' of the latter more anon. Being thus restricted leave was eagerly awaited. A week before the commencement of leave 'F' Company orders contained the names of all boys going on leave, their destinations and the amount of money they would be paid after deduction of their railway fares. Every effort was made by the boys to appear really smart and well turned out for their leave. This entailed the wearing of civvy boots, nickel spurs and a length of half inch fawn tape wound around the bottom of the puttee. We were of course dressed in our best tunics, breeches and puttees. Our civvy boots and nickel spurs were obtained by a weekly deduction from our pay. While at home we could wear civilian clothes or our walking-out uniform. One thing we had to remember was to have a short back and sides haircut before we returned from leave.

Sport, as mentioned earlier 'F' Company had a deservedly great sporting tradition with the winning of the Mackworth Trophy the hallmark of success. Although we were always competing against men three or four years older than us, we more than held our own in most events. The principal sports were athletics, boxing, cricket, hockey, soccer and rugby. We were not allowed to box against those in man's service. The venues for sporting activities were Scotton for athletics, cricket, hockey and soccer and the Highlands for rugby. While there was some organised training, boys who were interested in sport were expected to be individually and collectively motivated enough to train in their spare time. As a Company we excelled at athletics and rugby, and were fair to middling at the other sports. The climax to our sporting season occurred in September with the final athletic meeting of the year. On occasions the Mackworth Trophy was decided on the last race - the 4 x 440 yard relay - with Sgt Carpenter running the last leg, to cries of, 'Come on Carpo,' we invariably won. My contribution to this meeting was in the 100 yard relay, the individual 220 yards and the long jump. At the latter in 1932, I set an Army Junior record.

'F' Company prided itself on the excellence of their rugby teams year in and year out. In addition to playing against D and E Companies, Depot Battalion, Mounted Wing and the School of Signals, we also played against public and grammar schools. In respect of the public schools, Ampleforth always provided the toughest competition and regularly defeated us. Then came the great day in 1932 when for the first time, we defeated the school on their own soil. It was indeed a dramatic victory. The custom at Ampleforth had been that, after the game and showers, we were given a meal accompanied by a pint of beer. On this occasion, however, the beer was omitted! I wonder if we ever defeated Ampleforth again. While credit must be given to a number of persons for the excellence of 'F' Company's rugby sides, the principal credit must, I think, be given to Maj F. R. Cobb who commanded 'F' Company 1926 - 1930, of whom more anon.

Officers Commanding:

Maj F. R. Cobb 1926 - 1930
Capt H. E. Rance 1930 - 1932
Capt D. C. Holland 1932 - 1936
Capt T. Boileau 1936 -

My training at Liverpool Post Officer 1930 - 32 meant that I knew little or nothing of Capt Rance, I was however fortunate enough to have two wonderful Commanding Officers in Maj Cobb and Capt Holland. I left Catterick in 1933 and so have no knowledge of Capt Boileau.

Maj Cobb, a bachelor, put all his energies, heart and soul into the well being of 'F' Company. Into all of us Boys he inculcated pride in the Corps and in particular 'F' Company. Nothing less than giving one's all was expected from all the Boys. In many respects he ran 'F' Company as a public school – we moved from hut to hut as we acquired skills and seniority, the equivalent of lower and upper 5th and 6th Forms. Lance Corporal Boys equated to prefects and wielded certain disciplinary powers particularly over under-age smoking and bad language. I was possibly the youngest of all apprentice tradesmen and very naïve about life in general. I well recall Maj Cobb coming to No.3 Hut about a month after I arrived in Catterick. After telling us how privileged we all were to be in the Royal Corps of Signals, the pride of the Army, we in 'F' Company were the cream of the Corps. Never ever were we to let the Corps down. The motto of 'F' Company was *'Stick together and muck in.'* He made a point about the habit of soldiers having themselves tattooed and went on to say that no 'F' Company Boy would do such a thing, (I have never seen a tattoo on an ex-Boy). Then came a chat about self-abuse that went completely over my head, the older boys later told me what he was talking about!

Maj Cobb and Capt Holland were particularly interested in sport, at which 'F' Company excelled. We were encouraged to train at Scotton and elsewhere and to take pride in the past and present achievements of the Corps both in the UK and abroad. The Corps magazine, *The WIRE*, allowed us to follow avidly the progress of favoured units in athletics, Army Soccer and Rugby Cups, and in India the Durand Cup. Small sections in China also achieved success. In the 1937/38 season a team largely drawn from the Shanghai Signal Section won the prestigious Tsz Ling Cup, beating the much favoured top Chinese team 3-2. This was the only occasion that a foreign team won the trophy.

So far I have only touched upon the real reason that 'F' Company was created. It was, of course, formed to turn out first class soldiers and tradesmen. I am competent to comment only upon my own trade – Operator Signals. Unlike today, with its tendency for specialisation and compartmentalisation, 'F' Company strove to turn out all-rounders and succeeded in their aims. At the end of my training I was a competent signaller in Visual (flags and lamps), Line and Wireless Telegraphy. I had passed an Equitation Course, under the famed CSM 'Snaky' Young and could lay cables. Competence had also been acquired in equipping and operating a telephone exchange. I also had a Second, First and part of the Special Certificate of Education.

As Operator Signals, a large part of our training took place at Liverpool GPO ('K' Company, commanded by Capt Coombs, RE). We were accommodated at Seaforth Barracks, the Depot Battalion of the King's Liverpool Regiment and commuted daily by train from Seaforth and Litherland Stations to Exchange Station in the city. I should mention here that, before we could be accepted at Liverpool, we had to acquire a Group E standard of excellence in our trade. At the Post Office our instructors were a school-master and a school-mistress who brought us up to the Post Office standards of excellence in Sounder Telegraphy, Inker Reading and Punching. The latter was the making of perforated Morse tapes. Until we achieved the required standards we were not allowed into the Instrument Room (IR) to work the 'live' circuits. We were tested weekly in the schoolroom and to give you an idea of the excellence required we were given a Sounder terminal at which we were expected to receive 30 telegrams in 30 minutes and then send the telegrams back in 30 minutes, both procedures without errors. A similar standard of excellence was required in Inker Reading and Punching. We were also taught Post Office counter work in as much as it affected the telegraph side. Capt Coombs came to the schoolroom every Friday to pay us out. Our pay included monies for our train fares and meals in the Post Office canteen. We took considerable pride in our appearance at Liverpool and Capt Coombs was rightly proud of us. So much so that while I was there in 1931/32, he arranged for us to be prominent at the service of the laying of the Foundation Stone of the Anglican Cathedral. There were sufficient numbers of Boys at Liverpool for us to compete at athletics, boxing and soccer against Post Office and Telegraph Boys, the Cabin Boys of the large liners, then regularly calling at Liverpool, and the local schools. Although usually outnumbered we gave a good account of ourselves and frequently the Liverpool Echo commented on our prowess.

To ensure that we did not get out of touch with the army equipment regular visits were made to a Territorial Army unit at Chester Castle. There, two Royal Signals, regular army Sergeants rigorously tested us. The results of these tests were passed on to 'F' Company. On our return to Catterick emphasis was placed on wireless training, principally the 'A' and 'C' and 120 watt sets. With the latter set we regularly worked Bere and Soike Islands. The 1922 Irish Agreement had allowed us to hold on to these islands which guarded the entrance to Cork harbour. We did not like the weekly chore of the charging and toting of the large number of batteries needed to run the 120 watt set. Exercises with the 'A' sets were of short distances. Those of the 'C' set were over much greater distances and, with the latter, we practiced and understood the art of direction finding (DF).

Equitation Courses for apprenticed tradesmen started in 1932. Although I took one of these courses in 1932 I am not sure whether it was of three or four months duration. I think the latter. We had to be at the Mounted Wing by 6am each morning and this meant an early call at 5am. For the first fortnight of the course we were taught how to look after horse and tackle and to 'muck out'. After this we were given an individual horse, complete with tackle, to look after. Mine was named Sinbad – I found out why he was so named after experiencing his habit of rolling when jumping. Our instructor, 'Snaky' Young, who with his horse Baby, was to represent both Corps and Country at the highest level, saw to it that we acquired competency in the saddle and a knowledge of horses. I like to think he was proud of us when we 'passed out', after demonstrating our skills in the Mounted Wing riding school and down the famous 'lane'. Riding down the latter with crossed stirrups was hairy.

It would be an understatement to say 'F' Company turned out tradesmen of the highest standard. All Boys entered Man's Service with a Grade 3 Trade Certificate and the vast majority also had First Class Educational Certificates. Class 2 Trade Certificates were within their capacity but they could not be obtained until after a year of Man's Service. In my case I obtained Class 2 at the age of 19 and my Class 1 before I was 21.

Leaving 'F' Company was a wrench. I can never put into words the debt I owe Maj Cobb, Capt Holland and my instructors at Catterick and Liverpool. My posting was to Tidworth (F Troop Cav Div Sigs) and as I waited with my kit for the bus to take me to Darlington station, Capt Holland drove up in his car and said, 'Jump in and I will take you to Darlington.' On the way he said how impressed he was with my all-round abilities and that he had marked my papers accordingly. In that I gained commissioned rank in Section VIII of SIS and became the Principal Signals Officer of the Diplomatic Wireless Service, I do not think that I disappointed him. Come to think of it, I cannot recall any ex-Boy I met after the 1939/45 War who reached a rank less than Sergeant. One became a Brigadier, one a Colonel, quite a few Lieutenant Colonels and a large number of Majors and Captains.

I mentioned 'The Pole'. This was a flag-staff atop the highest point above the Bellerby Firing Ranges. From it a red flag was flown when firing took place on the range. 'The Pole' was about three miles from 'F' Company lines and it was often incorporated in punishments for minor offences such as – 'You will run to the Pole and back and then report to the Orderly Corporal when you get back.' Many are the Boys who did 'The Pole and Back'. There was a generally acceptable time for the run of under one hour.

The comradeship engendered in 'F' Company ensured that an ex-Boy could always expect assistance from other ex-Boys, regardless of rank. This particularly applied when they moved from one Signals unit to another and in Civvy street. I experienced the helping hand when I moved from Tidworth to Peking, Shanhaikuan, Tientsin, Shanghai and Hong Kong signals Sections and 3rd and 2nd Divisional Signals.

After thoughts:

Under discipline I should have mentioned that, during Maj Cobb's tenure of 'F' Company, corporal punishment was frequently administered. Principle offences attracting this punishment were, under age smoking, bad language and being late on parade. Lance Corporal Boys usually laid the charges and, if found guilty, a Boy would receive, in ascending order - Admonishment, three days or five days CB. After being given CB, CSM 'Hoot' Gibson would take one to one side and offer the alternative of 'strokes'. This offer was usually accepted and the guilty boy would write in his own hand the following: I, No……Boy A/I respectfully request the favour of his Officer Commanding that he be given strokes in lieu of CB.' Having accepted the petition, Maj Cobb, accompanied by CSM Gibson, would take the boy to the 'F' Company hut nearest to the Orderly Room. There the strokes would be administered by the CSM on the bare bottom followed by handshakes all round and the boy would return to duty. I do not recall any boy receiving more than five strokes. The pain from the strokes usually lasted two to three days.

Under Recreation I should have included debating, the performance of plays and the participation in Tattoos. My abiding memory of debating is of a motion put forward by Boy A/T Thomas Baron Chatfield that the South Wales miners played as significant a part in the winning of the Great War as did the armed forces. Welsh steam coal was the world's best and gave our ships the edge especially the Royal Navy. Clean and almost smokeless coal undoubtedly played a major part in the Royal Navy's achievement of superiority over the enemy during the Great War. Incidentally, Chatfield's father was then RSM of the South Wales Borderers at Brecon. Two plays were put on while I was in 'F' Company both by R. C. Sheriff. 'Journey's End' lingers longer in my memory. This was well acted and produced. One incident in the play still brings a smile to my lips. Boy Stanford, playing the part of one of the nervous/frightened soldiers, takes out a cigarette and strikes a match to light it. Stanford a non-smoker, had no idea how to light a cigarette, he held it in his hand and kept striking matches, holding the flame to the end of the cigarette and he thought that was all that was needed. When it came to puffing the cigarette it was, of course, not alight. Whilst soldiering and gaining proficiency at one's trade played the major part in our training at 'F' Company the additional skills of debating and the performance on the stage resulted in a more accomplished tradesman entering man's service.

Mention must also be made of 'F' Company's participation in two Tattoos in 1932. The first was on the Knavesmire at York where we enacted the 'Battle of the Toy Soldiers'. We played this for five nights and one matinee. It was very well received, so much so that we were invited to the Terry's chocolate factory where, in addition to receiving a box of chocolates, we were allowed to taste others of their products. We were also initiated into the processes of chocolate making. After that we were given a grand tour of York Minster.

Our next tattoo was in Roundhay Park Leeds where we enacted 'A Grand Slam'. For this, 52 Boys, our complete complement, dressed up to represent each of the playing cards in a pack. Bidding took place over the loud speaking system and, after doubling and re-doubling, a grand slam was bid and made. It was so well done that we were asked to give a separate performance for the bridge players in that part of Yorkshire - this we did. Our reward was to be taken round Burton's clothing factory and a Foundry. At both places we were given a good meal. Captain Holland commanded 'F' Company at this time.

ARNHEM REVISITED

Lewis Golden

My wife and I hope to return to Arnhem in September. It will be the fifty-fifth anniversary of the ill-fated operation which was mounted in 1944, code-named 'Market Garden'. One British and two American airborne divisions were to seize and hold the numerous river bridges which had to be captured if Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery's plan was to be realised. He envisaged an armoured thrust sweeping through Holland into Germany so as to end the war that year. The British Division was the 1st Airborne Division, comprising the 1st and 4th Parachute Brigades and the glider-borne 1st Airlanding Brigade. With the support of 1st Polish Parachute Brigade it had the task of seizing the road bridge across the River Neder Rijn at Arnhem, the furthest away, some sixty-four miles into enemy held territory, from the position of the land forces which were to relieve it. The operation failed; but in that perverse way which characterises the British Army, that failure is celebrated as much, if not more, than its greatest successes.

The pilgrimage to Arnhem this year will be led by Maj Gen Tony Deane-Drummond, now aged 82 and the most senior in rank of the ageing survivors of the battle. As one of the company commanders in my unit Maj Deane-Drummond, as he then was, had a remarkable escape soon after he was taken prisoner at Arnhem following upon a strenuous period of fighting. Escape was in his blood. As a Lieutenant he had taken part in the very first parachute operation by the British Army. That was in 1941, and the object had been to blow up a viaduct in the north of Italy. The operation succeeded but all the parachutists were captured. On his third audacious attempt Tony Deane-Drummond got away to Switzerland and found his way back to us in England. At Arnhem he achieved the well-nigh impossible : for thirteen days and nights he stood hidden in a shallow cupboard in a room which was being used by the Germans to interrogate prisoners, and when the enemy left he escaped. A very tough individual.

'There were no Jews at Arnhem,' was the monstrous sneer broadcast over the radio from Germany by William Joyce, the infamous 'Lord Haw Haw', who was later hanged as a traitor. Joyce's assertion was a groundless lie which would have been believed by only the most unthinking of his listeners, for obviously he had no means of finding out how many Jews were serving with airborne forces. But his words were still fresh in my mind when my wife and I visited Arnhem in 1979, thirty five years after I had landed there. I noticed that the counter assistant in the Post Office was wearing a silver Magen David. No, he was not Jewish but his sympathies lay with Jews. That reminded me that we were in the country in which Anne Frank had lived her short life, and in which Rembrandt often portrayed Jewish subjects. Even the Airborne Museum, now established in what had been the Hartenstein Hotel in the adjoining village of Oosterbeek, the building which 1st Airborne Division used as its headquarters during the battle, shows the Dutch concern for their Jewish citizens, for a photograph of the rounding up of Jews by the Nazis is prominently displayed, as is the record of the consequent protest by their non-Jewish countrymen.

There were, of course, many Jews in 1st Airborne Division, and possibly some also in the supporting 1st Polish Parachute Brigade. For example, there was the Royal Army Medical Corps surgeon, Capt Lipmann Kessel, who remained behind with our wounded when we eventually withdrew across the river, and who operated on Brig John Hackett, commander of 4th Parachute Brigade, saving his life after the German doctors had written him off as too far gone. Then there was Lt Col Eddie Myers, commander of the Royal Engineers units, who swam the river to make contact with the Poles. A friend of mine comes to mind: Lt Dennis Kayne who was serving in one of the battalions of 4th Parachute Brigade. Then there are the fallen. A visit to the Arnhem Oosterbeek War Cemetery is a reminder of their names :-

Capt J. M. Henry	Parachute Regiment
Pte B. Haikin	Parachute Regiment
SSgt J. A. Z. Susskind	Royal Engineers
Private A. L. Taylor	Dorsetshire Regiment
Sgt R. Franks	Glider Pilot Regiment
Sgt T. A. Rubenstein	Glider Pilot Regiment
Sgt E. Simion	Glider Pilot Regiment
Hans Rosenfeld, served as Corporal J. P. Rodley	Parachute Regiment
Pte G. A. Emanuel	Parachute Regiment
Pte H. Zimmerman	Somerset Light Infantry
Tpr W. B. Chevinsky	Reconnaissance Corps
Flt Lt R. M. Singer	Royal New Zealand Air Force
Ldg Airman R. J. Eden	Royal Air Force

They rest along with so many in unnamed graves marked 'A Soldier of the 1939-45 War'. How many Jews lie in those graves? Maybe none, perhaps several. As the inscriptions on the graves record, they are 'Known Only To God'.

The highlight of all pilgrimages to Arnhem is the Sunday morning memorial service conducted in that beautiful cemetery, often attended by the Prince of Wales as Colonel-in-Chief of The Parachute Regiment, and

by the Queen of The Netherlands. It's a most moving experience, made more so by the schoolchildren who stand by the graves and, at an appropriate moment, tenderly lay a bunch of flowers beside each one. Bidden by their teachers they observe the extreme youth of most of the fallen, as the grave-stones record. Today these children are the grandchildren of those who first discharged their solemn duty immediately after the end of the war. The memorial service has no specifically Jewish content, but possibly because I once voiced a complaint about this the band now plays Bruch 's Kol Nidre during the wreath laying.

I was then a Captain, my role at Arnhem was that of Adjutant, 1st Airborne Divisional Signals. Although only 21 years old I had experienced more action with Airborne Signals than any other Royal Signals Officer, for as luck would have it I was the only one who had served in all three of the previous airborne theatres of war; in North Africa in 1942 and 1943 with 1st Parachute Brigade; in Sicily in 1943, again with 1st Parachute Brigade; and in Italy later that year, with the glider-borne guns, 1st Airlanding Light Regiment. All that experience was as nothing at Arnhem, for early on I was ordered to take command of a sector of the perimeter defences in the grounds surrounding the Divisional Headquarters building, and there I stayed for the duration of the battle. Nevertheless it was to me that men in my unit turned at one of our annual reunions, when the need for a Royal Signals account of the battle of Arnhem was thought to be warranted in order to refute the story that communications had been a complete failure; and I wrote '*Echoes from Arnhem*' which was published in 1984, now out of print but available in the Reinhart Library or, if one is patient, through one's public library.

Approaching the subject with no preconceived notions I went to the War Diaries which units were required to file monthly and which are available at the Public Record Office at Kew Gardens. Here I read much of the vast array of books on operation 'Market Garden'. I soon tracked down the origin of the myth that communications had been a complete failure. It stemmed from the book '*Arnhem*' written by the Divisional Commander, Maj Gen Roy Urquhart, ghosted by Wilfred Greatorex and published in 1958. Authors who wrote subsequently seem to have repeated the myth without questioning its authenticity. Similarly damning was the film 'A Bridge Too Far'. At the premiere I was sitting behind Maj Gen Urquhart and Maj Gen John Frost who, as a Battalion Commander, had been the hero of the hour at the bridge; and after the film ended I asked them why Signals had had a bashing. They both assured me that the film was not meant to be a documentary, so I should not worry. Nevertheless it was a documentary, and I *did* worry; but I consoled myself with the thought that in 1946 another film of the battle had been made. It was called 'Theirs is the Glory'. With some of those who had got back as the actors, it was authentic and had not made Signals a scapegoat.

Why did Maj Gen Urquhart slay Signals in his book '*Arnhem*'? Might it have been that he made his statement, '…the communications were a complete failure,' to justify, possibly even subconsciously, the decision he took the day we landed to leave Divisional Headquarters, to go off in search of 1st Parachute Brigade which was advancing towards the bridge? That decision nearly cost the Divisional Commander his life. He found himself surrounded by the enemy, had to lie low and was therefore not in command of the Division during the first two vital days. His absence gave rise to friction between the two Brigade Commanders, 'Pip' Hicks of 1st Airlanding Brigade and 'Shan' Hackett of 4th Parachute Brigade. One of them had to assume command during Urquhart's absence. The trouble was that Hicks had landed on 17 September, Hackett on 18 September. Hicks was much the older man but junior to Hackett in service as a Brigadier. I happened to have been in the Operations room in the Hartenstein Hotel and had witnessed the argument. It was embarrassing.

Although very much less drastic than had been feared at the time the operation was planned, when signals had remonstrated with the divisional staff that its sets were not powerful enough to cope with the task being put upon them, the weakness some of the time of some of the radio links contributed to the lamentable outcome of the battle; but there were many more telling causes. Chief amongst them was the refusal of the commander of the whole airborne force, Lt Gen 'Boy' Browning, to accept his Intelligence Officer's report before the Operation was launched of the build-up of Panzer units around Arnhem; and the shortage of aircraft which meant that only two Brigades, 1st Parachute Brigade and 1st Airlanding Brigade, could land on 17 September, with 4th Parachute Brigade having to drop the next day and the Poles even later. Yet all fades into insignificance when one reflects on the real cause of the failure of the operation: the inability of the relieving force to make headway against a determined enemy. Even with communications which were less than perfect the message was got through to the relieving force that it had to arrive on time if the bridge was to be held. This it could not do, not because the need for its urgent presence was not known and appreciated but because it was quite unable to make quick enough progress. The relieving force was 30 Corps, consisting of the Guards Armoured Division with two infantry divisions, 43rd and 50th, following on behind, and it had been entrusted with the task of advancing some sixty-four miles in four days or less, with only one access road available to it and no means of getting off that road. Small wonder that it failed. Enemy action simply kept cutting the road, so impeding the advance. Even with help from units of the American airborne divisions, given with great courage and vigour, 30 Corps just could not make it; and in retrospect it justified the suspicion reputed to have been voiced by Lt Gen Browning, that it was 'A Bridge Too Far'

My wife and I duly took part in the 55th pilgrimage to Arnhem. It was a particularly memorable occasion because, being apparently the final official pilgrimage, its programme was extended and did not end as usual with the service of remembrance at the Oosterbeek military cemetery, a melancholy annual tribute to the fallen. Instead, on the afternoon of that day, Sunday 19 September, we surviving veterans of the ill-fated operation in 1944, which was to have opened the way into Germany and end the war that year, piled into a hundred or so old army vehicles for a 'Trip of Honour, through the villages west of Arnhem which had seen so much of the fighting. In the words of the Dutch organisers '... in this way the inhabitants of Oosterbeek, Wolfheze, Renkum, Heelsum, Doorwerth and Heveadorp can once more express their gratitude and respect to the brave men who tried to liberate The Netherlands from the Aggressor in 1944' and '... it is the last possibility for the veterans to show their appreciation towards the population of Renkum for the hospitality which was offered them during the annual commemorations of the Battle of Arnhem'.

Just as it was on the equivalent Sunday in September 1944, the day we had landed, it was a beautiful warm sunny afternoon. We donned our red berets, put on our medals and set off. As we motored along at a little more than a walking pace we were given a quite overwhelming reception. The whole population seemed to be at the roadside or leaning out of windows, waving and applauding and shouting, 'Thank you f or what you did.' and, 'God bless you.' Many hands reached out to try to touch ours. One lady who was confined to a wheelchair drove it recklessly into our path so that my Jeep had to stop and receive her greetings. I thanked her for looking after us, but she would not hear of it. 'You gave us hope,' she said, and we blew kisses to one another as my Jeep moved off. Tragically hope was all we had given, for the death and destruction caused by us and the Germans during the battle had left the Dutch with even greater hardship when we withdrew than before we had landed. But for those who were suffering under the Nazi terror, hope was everything. Certainly the warmth of the greeting from the very young to the very old, with only time for split second eye contact as the convoy moved along, was astonishing. I was not alone in having difficulty in restraining my tears. Never have I been so moved.

Back at the Hartenstein Hotel in Oosterbeek, now the Airborne Museum but during the battle in 1944 the headquarters of 1st Airborne Division, we formed up behind the Band of the Parachute Regiment for a farewell parade, marching past the leader of the pilgrimage, my old comrade Maj Gen Tony Deane-Drummond, who took the salute along with the Burgomaster of Renkum and other dignitaries. The crowds lining the route this time were even more dense and demonstrative. As we passed her by a little girl thrust a spray of carnations into my hand. It was all again a moving experience. We carried on to the Town Hall, some 800 metres distant, where we were dismissed. Suddenly the celebrations were at an end. It was a nostalgic moment, for few of us would be likely ever to return. I am nearly 77 years old, and one of the youngest. It had been a fond farewell.

'BEVERLEY BOY' REMINISCENCES

Capt (Retd) B. J. Podmore

This is the story of a Regimental Boy and his Unit, No. 6 (Boys) Training Regiment, Normandy Camp, Beverley, East Yorkshire. It covers just over two years service which was the average service of a Boy Entrant.

My reasons for writing this article are I suppose three-fold. In my interest and research into our Corps history I have discovered that there is very little reference to Boys' Service in general and in particular no mention at all of Beverley and No. 6 (Boys) Training Regiment. Regrettably our Corps Museum has nothing on display in the way of written material or artifacts. The little that has been written is in some instances not factually correct anyway. I am therefore trying to rectify the situation. I have tried to be as factually correct as is possible bearing in mind the period of time that has now elapsed. What is very good news is that The Ex-Beverley Boys' Association has now been formed. More about that at the end of this article.

The year was 1955 and the month was July. At this time No. 6 (Boys) Training Regiment had just vacated Normandy Camp for the pastures of Newton Abbott, Devon. The whole unit had dispersed on 'End of Summer Term' leave and would then be reporting back to their new home. I as part of 'man-service' entry 255 had been left behind for final documentation before we embarked on our Trade Training courses at the Signals Training Centre, Catterick (Drivers, DR's to Ripon). The Unit had been a Boys Company prior to the move from Richmond to Beverley in 1950 and then re-named 6 (Boys) Training Regiment. They in turn had been a successor to F (Boys) Company at Catterick. I can still recall on that day in 1955, sitting and waiting in the billiard room, next to the NAAFI, for the Bedford (TCV) QL to arrive and convey us to the railway station at Beverley and then on to Catterick via the railway stations at York and Richmond. Wondering what lay ahead for me as a future Telegraph Mechanic (X trade) in The Royal Corps of Signals. There was one

consolation I suppose. I had, by virtue of attaining the rank of Boy/RSM, been appointed to the rank of Local Lance Corporal. A policy I am given to understand still exists today for Junior Soldiers of more senior rank. (Can I hear mutterings of never held the rank of 'Signalman?') My Trade Training course was to be at 2 Sqn, 1 Training Regiment, Kemmel Lines. But that is another story. I was to return back to 2 Sqn later in my service to be 'demobbed'.

I had joined 'The Regiment' on 5 May 1953 at the sprightly age of 15 years and 3 months having left school that April. Pay was 2/6d a day, a total of 17/6d per week of which 7/6d was taken back for 'credits' and if not used up on kit deficiencies, barrack damages etc, was given back to you at end of term. 4 May had been my enlistment day in which I had made the last of several visits, with my father, (ex-2 Batt Grenadier Guards) to the Recruiting Office at Bethesda Schools, Bethesda Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent. A Colour Sergeant of the South Staffordshire Regiment was to oversee my 'signing on' for six years with the Colours and three years on the reserve' and of taking the Oath of Allegiance. I then made my way to Beverley by courtesy of British Rail. We were all met at Beverley railway station by a Cadre NCO who turned out to be the (R) Recruit Troop Sergeant. Some recruits were already on the 3-tonner having travelled via York. We spent six weeks in 'R' Troop on basic training (the last intake to do that at Beverley.) R Troop moved to Selby as a separate unit at the beginning of the Autumn Term of 1953. You were not allotted your Regimetal Number until completion of your Basic Training and therefore I was referred to as NYA (not yet allotted) Podmore. My Regimental Number was to be 22776277.

The Regiment had three squadrons. There was HQ Sqn which consisted of permanent staff (Cadre) then the Boy Squadrons of 'A' Sqn (Arras lines) with A & B Troops (later changed to A, B, D & E Troops). 'B' Sqn (Aisne Lines) with D & E Troops (later changed to J, K, L & M Troops). I was posted to 'B' Sqn, D Troop, (later became J Troop). Later on we had epaulette flashes and I remember that J Troop was dark blue and M Troop was orange. In the latter part of my time spent there I remember my Troop Commander was a National Serviceman, 2Lt Maudsley. The Troop Sergeant was Sgt 'Freddie' Freeman and the Troop Corporal was a chap called Whittingham, a re-enlistment into the Corps, who after demob from the Corps at the end of WWII had become a London Transport bus driver. K Troop commander, also a National Serviceman, was a 2Lt Dixon. Both these Officers left the Regiment on demob, at about the same time as I. After being promoted to Boy Warrant Officer (B/WO) rank you ceased to belong to a Troop. There were only ever two Boy WO's at one time so therefore whoever was B/RSM there would not be a B/SSM in the same Squadron. The OC of 2 Sqn was a Maj Williams. The SSM was a man called 'Pop' Rider. He was a big chap but 'Pop' by name and nature. He, like a number of other married Cadres, lived in the 'hutted' married quarters that were situated to the left of the camp entrance (opposite the Guard Room.). The quarters followed a contour of a semi-circle leading on to a group of brick buildings (there were not to many of them on the camp) that formed the classrooms. The Admin Officer if my memory serves me right was Capt Fyffe and he was also in charge of the Band/Corps of Drums. The camp had two gymnasiums and they were quite large. There was a WO1 of the Army Physical Training Corps in charge with Regimental PTIs as assistants. I do recall that the SSM of 'A' Sqn was Tim Holt, a man I was to meet up with again in 1957 when he came as RSM to 3 GHQ Sig Regt at Episkopi (Cyprus). I was to remain in 'B' Sqn for the duration of my Boys Service. I remember the new regimental numbers of the Regular and N/S (the 230s) being published on Part 1 Orders and that caused some excitement at the time. We were all either 22537s, 22569 or 22776s. All Boy soldiers were of course subject to Military Law and Queens Regulations. The punishments were the same as a 'Man Soldier' ie: Detention, CB (jankers/defaulters) with one additional type of punishment which was only administered to Boy Soldiers. This was the dreaded 'strokes'. A bamboo type of cane used to strike you across the buttocks. You always paraded for OC's Orders in Denims. If strokes were to be administered it was the duty of the SSM to carry out the punishment in front of the OC. You were bent over a table/chair, fully dressed. It was always the common practice to wear the issued US BDs on these occasions just in case you got the strokes. They were the garments that were 1157 issue and had to be worn underneath our Denims to assist in keeping us warm in winter. If the strokes were to be given on CO's Orders then they were carried out by the RSM but you wore PT kit. You were marched out after the CO had stated your punishment, wearing Best SD, straight into the RSM's office. If strokes were to be administered you changed into PT kit, Best Boots and grey socks (turned over at the top of the boot) and then marched back in again for the punishment.

Training was split into two categories, Education and Military. The training day was also split to cater for both. The RAEC were responsible for the former and at that time the establishment was one Officer and a number of Sergeants (long before it became an all 'commissioned' Corps). Most of the SNCOs were teachers completing their National Service. The Officer I recall was a Capt Edwards. He had risen to fame as an international rugby player and played full back at that time for Wales. I was later to meet up with him again in Birmingham in 1976 for at that time I was still a serving soldier in the Territorial Army. He was by then a retired Colonel and was the organiser of a seminar by UK Land Forces in support of the Reserve Forces. There was no trade training as such. The only thing I can recall in connection with communications was the Amateur Radio station in our lines. I never saw it in use but it was housed in one of the 'Spiders' in 'B' Sqn Lines.

Our uniform consisted of two issues of SD, one Best, one 2nd Best, with buttoned up collar and SD cap. The cap badge was the second pattern issue with King's Crown. We wore Collar Dogs and initially were issued with the first pattern type. (I make these references to 'patterns' for I have an extensive collection of Corps memorabilia by way of cap badges, collar dogs and Div Signs etc). I had enlisted after the death of King George VI but before the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. They were later changed to the second pattern. I do have a photograph of myself in uniform wearing that mixed insignia. The Boy WO's/NCO's all wore miniature rank insignia. The small 'Tapes' (which later were adopted on the new issue No.2 Dress) were worn by ranks below B/WO. B/SSM's wore the Staff Sergeant's crown. The B/RSM (Tara) had for his 'Tate & Lyle's' the Collar Dogs of the General Service Corps. I still have mine and they have the 'Kings Crown' One particular part of our dress that I remember was the way the 'Chinstrap' was positioned on the SD cap. It was brown, had two brass buckles and one 'stud.' This was a brass rivet. It had to be positioned so that, as one looked at it from the front, 'Jimmy' had to be 'Kicking the ball' (on a 252 if it was not) We wore the 'Catterick Rose' on each sleeve. No Training Regiment colour 'flashes' were worn on the sleeve unlike those that were worn by the remaining six Training Regiments (triangle for Cadre and rectangle for trainees (except 7TR)). The shoulder title, R SIGNALS, was of brass and worn on each epaulette. The standard issue web belt was worn with SD. I do have photographs of the Regiment (pre 1953) taken on the drill square at the E Yorks Depot and in Beverley town which show all Boy soldiers wearing black leather belts. Boys below the rank of B/Sgt were allowed to wear the good conduct stripe. This was commonly known as the 'dodger.'

In 1954 our then Colonel-in-Chief, HRH The Princess Mary, Princess Royal visited the Regiment. One part of the schedule was to 'Review' her Boys (that were how she referred to us). This was done by first 'Trooping the Colour' a drill manoeuvre, which we were quite familiar with. It was part of our general training and used for ceremonial purposes throughout Northern Command. It was done in precisely the same way as the Queens Guards do it today. The parade consisted of two Guards, one from each Squadron, (No's 1 & 2) and each Squadron, on a rota basis, took its turn to be 'Escort to the Colour' All Boy WO's/SNCO's held 'Officer' ranks. The B/RSM was the Lieutenant Colonel, and Parade Commander. His dress included the Sam Browne (no pace-stick, just standard walking cane) and on formal parades he carried the regulation officer's sword. The officer's insignia were superimposed on white material and worn on the epaulettes. The Boy rank remained *in situ*. Other 'Officers' carried as their 'swords' the 18" bayonet and did the appropriate sword drill with them. We competed between each Squadron and Trooped the Colour on an annual basis for the 'Hedon Sword'. This sword had been presented to the Regiment by the nearby village of Hedon. *I wonder where that is now?*

All our kit was of standard issue and on the same scale of issue as man service. However, we were not issued with BD's or berets. We did have issued u/s BDs (as previously mentioned) FSMO (Full Service Marching Order) was laid out on top of lockers all squared off with plywood or very stiff cardboard. We had to scrub the wood on our issue boot brushes. The clothes brush was exempt for it had on it a red varnish finish. Our 'KIWI' polish tin lid had to be polished and void of any paint. Socks woollen (grey), shirts KF (khaki flannel) Vests white PT (not the red one) etc were also 'squared off' The white hold-all for holding washing gear etc was scrubbed white. The Ammo boots had 13 studs on the sole, highly 'spit and polished' all over. Your Best pair of boots had their studs burnished smooth for 'bed & room inspections'. Cardboard and 'boners' plus brasso or Duraglit and Kiwi polish were the tools of our trade. The electric irons worked overtime. We were not allowed 'box pleats' on our SD but our overcoats were 'pleated square' at the pockets and also at the rear (Guards fashion). Mess tins received the same treatment as the kiwi polish tin. The 'Fire Points' in the billets were scraped with razor blades or sharp knives to get them to a true wood colour. In the Billets the stirrup pumps were 'black-leaded' (so were the two cast iron coal stoves). The two red fire buckets had to have their water free of dust. Blotting paper was used to get the water clear. Obviously with the strict regimentation that was part of our life, some decided that enough was enough and took all kinds of steps 'to work their ticket' One favourite trick was to start 'bed wetting'. It got so bad at one stage, with the odour etc, that they were all put in a separate billet. You can imagine how that appeared to us if we had to venture near to them. Food was still on ration. The margarine was cut into one inch squares and floated in water to stop melting. We only had evaporated milk at meal times and this was watered down. As Boy Soldiers we were entitled to an issue of food at morning tea break. This always consisted of those hard milky type biscuits (two) with one mug of fresh milk. The mugs were the standard issue white one-pint pots. We referred to it as the free NAAFI break.

Annual camp took place each training year, rotated on a Squadron basis. The two years that I took part, 1953 and 1954 (there was not a Camp in 1955 due to the move) it was held at Zetland Camp, Marske-by-the-Sea, North Riding of Yorks. I do not know about the history of the camp but I do know it contained a mortuary and that it had been converted for use as the guardroom (the 'slab' was still there). I still have good memories of evening passes to Redcar and Skelton. It was an all canvas camp in respect of the Boy Soldiers living accommodation. The first job on arrival was to fill the paliases with straw.

There are some 'personalities' I can recall which cannot be missed out. The CO was Lt Col R. A. Connor (sadly I believe he passed away in 1994). The Adjutant was a Capt Galbraith (big moustache) and I think he had a brother also serving in the Corps. The RSM, whose name was Thompson, was a small stocky chap with a very well waxed moustache. He was one of two Cadre members of staff who always wore the old style OR's SD as Working Dress (the same as issued to Boy Soldiers.) The other person was SSgt Jenkins, the disciplinarian of the Regiment. He was the Drill Sergeant and any Boy Soldier earmarked for promotion would

certainly attend one of his D/D (Drill & Duties) courses which was of four weeks duration. The QM was a Maj Brandon, Officer IC M Troop was Lt F. C. Lockwood who I believe went on to serve and retire in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel Then there was the Provost Sergeant, SSgt 'Slip' Moloney. I last saw him in 1956 whilst I was passing through the Depot Regiment at Saighton Camp, Chester, en-route for the Middle East. I can recall RQMS Ewer. I was to meet him later in my service when in 1959 I was posted from 15 Signal Regiment at Episcopi to 8 Signal Regiment (Cadre). I was entitled to married quarters and he was to oversee that for me. He had retired from the Corps and was a Civilian on the married 'pads' staff at Catterick. His 'striker' at Beverley was SQMS Redmond. I think I am right in saying that Maj Brandon and the SQMS were ex 'F' Company Boys. One of the Troop Sergeants in 'A' Sqn was a SSgt George. I was later to meet up with him in 8th Signal Regiment, at Catterick (1961) where he was SSM of 1 Sqn (trade upgrading). He was one of three persons to give me a character reference for the Police Service. One of the other referees was a Cyril Northgate, a Civilian Instructor at 3 Sqn, Kemmel Lines. An Ex Beverley Boy, (22776...) Cyril had not long completed his six years in the Colours and had joined the training staff. We had on Cadre, Sig Halfyard (N/S) the Kent cricketer and Cpl Jennings who had been posted in after repatriation as a POW from Korea. His story is told in the book by Philip Warner, 'The Vital Link' a history of our Corps from 1945 - 1985.(I think and hope I have the right Jennings). Johnny Prescott, who went on to become a British heavyweight boxer, was a Boy in 'B' Sqn. A chap called Cullen was a B/RSM (he was from Stoke-on-Trent). When I joined the Regiment a chap called Cottillard was the B/SSM of 'B' Sqn (a Channel Islander, I think). Mick Hall a Channel Islander (we had a few of them and Shammies) was also a B/RSM. I followed on from him in that rank. Mick was to serve with me and his brother Dennis in 3 GHQ Sig Regt (later redesignated 15 Signal Regiment). Dennis Hall along with Phil Weatherall were with me on the 'Quicksilver' Tour of 1956.

The Regiment had a good Corps of Drums under the control of Capt Fyffe. In 1954 with other Boy Units of Northern Command the Regiment formed a PT display team to take part in that year's Command Tattoo. It was held in Roundhay Park, Leeds. We appeared on TV and I remember Princess Margaret taking 'The Salute' on one of the evening performances. We were all moved to The Army Apprentice School Harrogate where we were accommodated and administered for the duration. I cannot remember whether it was Hildebrand or Uniacke Barracks we were housed in. I know that it was the barracks sited opposite the Apprentice School (not College in those days) and the Infantry Boys Battalion was resident in the Barracks at that time. (they had recently moved from Tuxford). The School RSM, WO1 Lonsborough, Coldstream Guards gave us instruction on drill and display formation sequences. I have reason to believe that he was the Father of the British Olympic swimming champion Anita Lonsborough. I did notice some time ago whilst reading in *The Wire* about the article on the Apprentice School at Harrogate Re-union. It made reference to him attending. The uniform for the Tattoo was, red PT vest, white shorts, pumps and socks. I can remember that we doubled into the arena each time to the tune of the 'Swedish Rhapsody.'

Our training year was split into three Terms, Winter, Summer and Autumn. The leave quota usually worked out at about three to four weeks at the end of each term. You entered 'Man Service' as near to seventeen and a half years of age as possible. Each Boy on joining the Unit was allocated a 'Man Service Entry ' course Number, ie: in my case 255.

I have made two nostalgic return visits to Beverley, one in the summer of 1989 and the second took place in 1997. The Normandy Camp had been demolished and replaced by a large housing estate. The only remains of any identity of the Camp was that the leader road onto the estate was named Normandy Avenue and it more or less followed identical contours of the main road that went through it. The quarry was still in place and the Mental Hospital could still be seen at the point which had been at the rear of the camp adjacent to the Drill Square. On the 1989 visit the only remains of the adjacent Victorian Barracks of The East York's Regiment Depot were the partly demolished Victorian Married Quarters. They had been situated next to the main entrance to the Depot and formed part of the wall, which engulfed the Barracks. A very impressive set of buildings. On the 1997 visit I spoke to a lady who was manning the Service Station at the site near to both Barracks. Her family had been the owners for many years. She recalls the 'Boys' and particularly mentioned a name or two. One thing that she also mentioned was that the old Victorian entrance to the East Yorks Depot Regt, had been earmarked and approved for preservation. Apparently one night the structure was demolished without authority. Although the law took its course it did not bring back what would have been a reminder of the military history of Beverley. So hence as already mentioned there is no trace of either Barracks or Camp. All that does remain is the very old brick wall that served as the 'dividing line' between both Barracks. This wall started in front of the Regimental Barbers Shop and the RP's accommodation in Normandy Camp. Along side of it were the 30yard range (on the E Yorks side) and the MRS. A large Morrisons super store has now been built on the site of the Depot East Yorks Regt. At the entrance they have on display, in two glass cabinets, various dress, regalia and badges of the East Yorkshire regiment and its successors. I went on to serve in the Corps until the end of my regular engagement in January 1962.

Finding myself in the preceding years on The 'Quicksilver' Tour of 1956, Suez campaign (Operation Musketeer). That was the time when we had to change the speed of the creed 7B teleprinters from 50 Bawds to 45 bawds so as to work the Royal Navy on the submarine depot ship, HMS *Tyne*. This ship had been converted to comms complex. Then there was 3 GHQ Sig Regt later redesignated as 15 Sig Regt (and EOKA) 8 Sig Regt (2 Sqn) I maintained my continuous service in our Corps by joining the Territorial Army immediately I left the Regular Army. In 1962 I joined the Staffordshire Police (still on demob leave). I was allowed by my Chief Constable to serve in the TA and should have joined the RMP in accordance with QR's. A long story but I managed to remain in the Corps (my trade had a lot to do with it). My last Unit was 30 Engineer Brigade & Signal Troop (V) based in my hometown of Stafford but now sadly disbanded under the Options for Change. I went on to serve until 1984, Commissioned from WO2 and thus completing 31 years continuous service. I am a life member of Royal Signals Association, Secretary of the Shropshire Branch of the Association, a licensed Radio Amateur, call sign G0VNU & G1ONZ and a member of the Royal Signals Amateur Radio Society (3252). I went on to serve in the Police until 1988 when I had to retire, at the age of 50, on medical grounds. This was all due to a spinal injury occurring whilst on duty.

The two photographs displayed with this article are of Man-Service entry courses 254 and 255 (Easter 1954 & Summer 1955). My course, which has been previously mentioned, was 255. I am seated on the front row and to the immediate right of our CO, Lt Col R. A. Connor R. Signals. RSM Thompson for some reason known only to him was AWOL. On the CO's immediate left is Paddy Henderson the B/SSM of 'A' Sqn. I think I am correct in saying, that the person standing in the second row from the back and first in from the left, is the Association Branch Secretary for Guernsey, Eric Le Quesene (22776...). I can name a few more but there is not the space at this time. The second photograph (254) is the course that Mick Teague (to whom I make reference to later) was part of it. He can be seen back row, second in from the left. The B/SSM to the immediate left of Lt Col R. A. Connor is Rex Clothier, B/SSM of 'B' Sqn. There is a Boy WO missing and according to tradition it should be the B/RSM. Unfortunately I cannot remember exactly who that could have been. Although a couple of names do come to mind.

Perhaps in the not too distant future and following current practice, there may be a chance that a barrack block or building at Blandford will be named 'Beverley.' Can anyone reading this article manage to 'pull some strings' to achieve this? It would make a very loyal servant of the Corps and many others (I am sure) very happy and ensure that the name 'Beverley' which was so much part of our lives and Corps history will live on forever.

I made reference at the beginning of this article to the formation of our ex-Boys' Association, which has the full recognition of RHQ Royal Signals. This great happening can not go without mention of those who are responsible. A lot of hard detective work and appeals via the media by Tony Hull and Mick Teague have made it all possible. We had our first re-union in September 1999 at the Victory Club in London. A newsletter has been produced and at this time of writing we have over 70 members and a 'contact' list. I now have personally 'linked ' up with several of my former 'Boy' comrades some I have not seen for well over thirty years. The address of the Secretary is: **A. Hull, 8 Ferncroft Gardens, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH10 6BZ.**

DON'T BE DISAPPOINTED

COPY MUST BE RECEIVED SIX WEEKS BEFORE THE PUBLICATION DATE

Man Service Entry 254

Man Service Entry 255

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 AFCO/ACIO 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

CORRESPONDENCE

From: **Maj D. B. Warne - SO2 Plans 1**
Defence Procurement Agency
BOWMAN IPT
Elm 2a #147, MOD Abbey Wood
PO Box 702, BRISTOL, BS34 8JH

Dear Sir,

Lt Col Terrington's article in the latest edition of the *Journal* ('Manning the Corps -The Challenge of the next millennium'), to my mind, does not sit well with the following article by a member of his own Regiment (Installers at the Ready' – Capt (TOT) N. Baugh). Col Terrington is of course right to talk of the Corps being '…in high demand and spread too thinly across a diverse range of tasks'. He is also right that there are '…too many commitments' but how can we reconcile this with our support to non-core (or Corps?) business such as providing communications support to static airfields? It is time the Corps examined what it should really be doing in today's army; what should our 'commitments' be? Do we really need to man static COMMCENS, airfields and depots? Do we still need a Regiment (+) in Northern Ireland? The luxury of having sufficient manpower to meet all of these commitments has long since gone. With manpower in short supply should it be used on these tasks or supporting that part of the army on the Formation Readiness Cycle?

I do not suggest that the Corps should be committed totally to operations as this in itself could be counter productive. But would this be worse than the separation and turbulence caused by trying to spread ourselves too thinly across too many tasks? It may be that the challenge offered by tasks such as working on airfield local area network installations, or the stability offered by a period in a UK static COMMCEN, provide variety in an otherwise never ending cycle of training for operations, mounting operations and cleaning up after them. If, however, this variety is only available to a subset of our manpower we are fooling ourselves as to its impact. 'Posting by exception' may have its part to play as we should not create turbulence just for the sake of meeting an arbitrary posting date. This of course would need to be carefully balanced against many conflicting needs. We must also ask ourselves do our soldiers want to remain in units based predominantly in the south of England when a large percentage of them come from the north?

Provocative, to some, but questions that must be asked. I offer no answers - simply more food for thought. Some useful work has been done in defining a new Corps orbat post SDR, but more fundamental questions must be answered before this work can be completed.

APPRECIATION

Colonel Peter Goldney

Peter Goldney who died on 17 December 1999 aged 64 joined the Corps in 1953 and served with distinction for nearly 37 years. He was a single minded officer with high principles and an unimpeachable integrity who was always willing to speak his mind irrespective of whom he might offend. He possessed considerable charm which made him a very popular officer particularly with those who served under him and his contemporaries.

Peter Goldney was born in Dalhousie, India on 1 August 1935, the son of Lt Col J. L. Goldney of the 2/4 Gurkha Rifles. Following his education at Wellington and Sandhurst he was commissioned into Royal Signals in July 1955 winning the Agar Memorial Prize for his intake. Following his Subaltern's Part 1 Course at Catterick he spent five years in Germany serving with 5 AGRA(AA) Signal Squadron in Oldenburg and then with 2nd Divisional Signal Regiment both in Hilden and Bunde. After his Subaltern's Part 2 Course he decided to follow a life time ambition to become a pilot and, following training at Middle Wallop in 1961-62, he was sent to Aden to join 653 Light Aircraft Squadron AAC. He then returned to Middle Wallop to qualify as a helicopter pilot before joining HQ 2 Wing AAC at Netheravon. He returned to the Corps in 1966 and spent a year with 3rd Divisional Signal Regiment. He successfully completed Division 2 of the Staff College and in January 1970 returned yet again to Middle Wallop as GSO2(Avionics) at HQ Director of Army Aviation. He commanded 6 Armoured Brigade Headquarters and Signal Squadron from 1972-74 before completing his second Grade 2 Staff tour with HQ NORTHAG in Reindahlen. Following his attendance at the National Defence College Course at Latimer he spent a short time at RARDE, Fort Halstead before, in 1977, taking command of 10 Signal Regiment in Hounslow. In late 1979 he started a long tour as GSO1 (EW) on DMO's staff in the MOD. On promotion to Colonel in 1983 he was posted as Colonel (GS) to C&E Division of HQ AFCENT in Brunsuum. His last appointment before retiring in 1990 was as Colonel (GS) D124 (A).

Peter was a good all round sportsman excelling at hockey at which he represented the Corps on numerous occasions between 1955 and 1967. He was an accomplished skier and took part in both the BAOR and Army Championships. However, his greatest talent lay in his ability as a glider pilot and he represented the Army in Inter-Service Gliding Championships six times between 1962 and 1971. In 1962 Peter married Penelope Gillespie, they had three sons.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION
IS NOW ON THE INTERNET
www.royalsignals.army.org.uk/museum/

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REUNION 2000

This year's Annual Reunion will be held at Blandford Camp over the weekend 24/25 June. All members and their guests are welcome to attend. The outline programme of events is as follows:

SATURDAY 24 JUNE

1030	Princess Royal Day parade by the serving soldiers of 11 Signal Regiment.
1200	All ranks luncheon in the Regimental Restaurant.
1500	Arena Display, including the Royal Signals Motor Cycle Display Team (The White Helmets), the Corps Band, the band of 34 Signal Regiment (V), the Corps Pipes and Drums, the Branch Standard Bearers' Competition and ending with the playing of Retreat.
Evening	Social gatherings in the Junior Ranks' Mess, the Sergeants' Mess and the Officers' Mess.

SUNDAY 25 JUNE

1030	Church Service.
1130	March Past.
1200	Dispersal.

Meals in the Regimental Restaurant are available through pre-booking with the Association HQ or telephone 01258 482090. Regrettably accommodation on Camp is not available, but the Association HQ has a list of local accommodation.

The Museum Shop will be open throughout the weekend for the sale of goods.

Produced by the Publishers, Regimental Headquarters Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8RH. (Telephone: Military System 737 2079 or STD 01258 48 2079)
Printed in Great Britain by Holbrooks Printers Ltd, Norway Road, Hilsea, Portsmouth, Hants PO3 5HX
For advertising rates apply to: Combined Service Publications Ltd, PO Box 4, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 7LR (Telephone 01252 515891)

THE Wire

and the Journal

June 2000

The Royal Corps of Signals

Global Crossing™

One Planet.
One Network.

Global Crossing in the UK is a major supplier of integrated communications for corporate businesses, with a global IP-based fibre optic network currently spanning five continents and providing local service to 200 cities in 24 countries. Our complete range of data, voice, business Internet and secure e-commerce services is exclusively dedicated to meeting the needs of today's business, combining the highest quality technology with real value for money.

Project Managers and Assistant Project Managers

Responsible for the delivery of elements of the core network and/or tailored and bespoke voice, data and IP services to our rapidly expanding customer base. You will have the energy and experience to lead and motivate a virtual team of designers, engineers and sub-contractors to deliver on time and to cost. Formal Project Management training and experience in OR or PE an advantage.

Technical Project Managers

Responsible for the provision of technical support to project management teams, and the co-ordination of engineering and sub-contractor activity. You will have a strong technical background (probably as a TOT or Foreman of Signals) and well developed management and leadership skills.

Resource Manager

To lead a small team responsible for the day-to-day planning of engineering activity undertaken by in-house and third party engineers throughout the country. You will be skilled in balancing competing priorities, matching resources to commitments and maintaining management statistics.

Logistics Manager

Responsible for co-ordinating the provision of technical equipment countrywide from newly established stores centers in Crewe and Reading/Basingstoke. You will have a dynamic, hands-on approach and the management skills to deal directly with suppliers, manage stock levels and ensure 'just-in-time' provision to field engineers via third party couriers. Experience as a QM or RQMS would be a distinct advantage.

Build and Support Engineers

A range of positions exists countrywide for high quality, dynamic communications engineers. You will possess the motivation to work individually on tasks to implement core network and customer site solutions. Training will be given to build on your sound technical knowledge and experience. Experience with fibre optic installations and router/data systems a distinct advantage. Excellent career opportunities to Team Leader and Field Support Manager levels. Vacancies also exist at these levels for candidates with sufficient technical and supervisory experience.

We're building the communications network for the future
Build your future with us

Other opportunities also exist within the company for network managers and call centre operators.

Excellent salary and benefits package for all opportunities, including company car for management and mobile engineering positions.

Check out our website **www.global-crossing.co.uk** then send your CV to:
Lisa Moody, Human Resources, Global Crossing, Oakwood, Crockford Lane, Chineham Business Park, Basingstoke, Hants RG24 8WB

The Royal Signals Magazine

June 2000 Vol. 54 No: 3

The Wire

(Incorporating the Journal of the Royal Signals Institution)

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 Blandford Mil 2087 STD 01258 482087

Subscription rates 2000 (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
Deputy Editor Mrs J. A. Herring

The Wire is a member of the Association of Service Newspapers

CONTENTS

	Page
Editors Notes	206
Movements	211
News from Headquarters	213
Training	216
News from the Balkans	226
News from Northern Ireland	229
News from the Regiments	235
News from the Squadrons	279
News from the Cadets & UOTC	289
Sport	291
Yacht Club	292
The Royal Signals Association and News from the AO's Desk	293
Reunions	296
Lost Comms	298
Correspondence	299
Donations	300
The Last Post	300
The Late News	302

FRONT COVER
Comes courtesy of 21 Signal Regiment.

BACK COVER
Shows **Sig Vinnie Wootton,** from 36 Signal Regiment (V), in his normal landing position whilst on Exercise Cockney Waltz 2-12 March 2000

The closing date for copy to reach this office, in order to go in the next issue is 15 June 2000

!STOP PRESS!

SIERRA LEONE

As we go to press the Corps has approaching 200 Signallers deployed in West Africa, supporting current operations in Sierra Leone. We hope for substantial coverage in the August issue.

Authors alone are responsible for the content of their articles. The opinions expressed in the articles of this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise, of the Royal Signals or the Ministry of Defence. This publication should be treated with discretion by the recipient.

© Crown Copyright

Disclaimer: No responsibility for the quality of goods or services advertised in this magazine can be accepted by the Publishers or their Agents. Advertisements are included 'in good faith'.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE POLICE

It wasn't the most auspicious of first meetings. **PC Steve Read**, of the Ministry of Defence Police, went round to offer crime prevention advice to **Sgt Fergus** 'Fergie' **Anderson**, of the Royal Corps of Signals, after his house was broken into. They got talking and came up with a fund-raising idea that helps people in two different countries, thousands of miles apart.

In 1992 'Fergie' fell in love – with Kathmandu and its people. Having been teaching Gurkhas in Catterick he applied for a job in their homeland of Nepal, attached to the Queen's Gurkha Signals. He got the job and he and his wife went to live in Nepal for five years. 'The people were so friendly and always smiling,' said 'Fergie'. However, there was poverty and 'Fergie' decided to help. His idea was to raise money for specific projects in smaller children's homes and orphanages, that didn't always benefit from the work of larger charities. So far he has raised more than £35,000 and returns to Nepal each year for a month to see what else he can do to help.

The money raising idea that the pair of them came up with is to sell personal safety alarms to women on the married quarters estates – or, indeed, to anyone who wants to buy one. 'Fergie' buys the alarms in bulk and sells them for £7, the profit going to help the children of Nepal. 'The alarms provide security to women in UK and their sale raises money for the people of Nepal,' said **PC Read**.

'Fergie' is due to leave the Army in July, when he intends to attend the School of Oriental and African Studies to do a Masters Degree in Development Studies. However, he won't stop thinking of schemes to help his friends in Nepal. Another of his ideas was to ask artist **Jan Slater**, who lives in Nepal, to paint a picture of the country that could be made into prints and sold. **Jan** has just completed her second exhibition of 26 paintings which, it is hoped, will be on show in the UK later this year. 'Fergie' hopes that the money raised will help the thousands of Nepalese girls who are sold into prostitution, only to be sent home after they have contracted HIV or AIDS.

63 (SAS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

The Squadron is a Royal Signals TA unit providing communications support to 21 and 23 SAS (V) Regiments. We can offer interested individuals leaving the Regular Army the chance to use the many skills acquired during their service, whilst at the same time maintaining their links with the Corps.

You will be expected to train for a minimum of 27 days a year, this includes a 15-day camp and a number of selected weekends. You can also volunteer to parachute should you so wish. You will have an unrivalled opportunity to travel abroad and last year we exercised in eight different countries. If you are interested and live in the South East or London area then telephone 0800 163925 for further details.

!WANTED!

Sidney L. Smith, Ex-Korean veteran and 'DON R' requires a pair of

Size 9 DR Boots
Two Blazer cuff buttons. The flat type with 'Jimmy' embossed on it.

He has tried all the ex-government shops without any luck
Hopefully someone can help. If you can help please contact him at:
34 Kingfisher Close
Hayling Island
PO11 9NS

242 SIGNAL SQUADRON PRINCESS ROYAL DAY AND OPEN DAY

On Wednesday 28 June, 2000, 242 Signal Squadron from Craigiehall, Edinburgh is to open its doors to all past members of the Squadron or Corps. Doors open at 1430hrs and there will be demonstrations/displays of our present working practices followed by a Bar-B-Q. Refreshments will be available during the day.

If you are interested in joining the personnel of the Squadron on Princess Royal Day please contact us on Edinburgh (0131) 3102267 or2272. Further details and an attendance proforma will then be sent to you.

ROYAL SIGNALS GRAVESTONES AT KANDY WAR CEMETERY - SRI LANKA

I have just received a number of photographs from **Col (Retd) John Bromley** who recently visited Sri Lanka. The photographs are of the headstones of the graves of the following late members of the Corps.

5493272	**Cpl E. J. Stamp**	Aged 33	1 October 1942
6026967	**Sig S. Campbell**	Aged 31	8 November 1942
2332514	**Sig T. L. Mitchell**	Aged 27	18 December 1942
2317028	**CQMS S. M. Taylor**	Aged 37	18 March 1943
4625992	**LCpl J. R. Floyd**	Aged 31	3 June 1943
2343372	**LCpl L. Jamieson**	Aged 26	25 November 1945

Anyone with a legitimate reason who would like a copy of the photograph should contact me: **Col (Retd) Cliff Walters**, Museum Director, RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, DORSET, DT11 8RH.

THE MAN FROM MANNING AND RECORDS

By Maj S. J. Turnbull
(with apologies to all my hard working comrades in the R SIGNALS and INT Corps MCM Div)

At long last the days have begun to lengthen here, north of the Border. No longer is it dark until 10am in the morning and dark again by 4pm. However, as with the rest of the country winter still holds us in it's icy grip and the hills and frequently the rest of us, are covered in snow .In the APC the lights and heaters are on and the 'busy bees' of the R SIGNALS and Int Corps MCM Div are working away at the promotion year.

The A1 (WO2 to WO1) and A2 (Staff Sergeant to WO2) Boards are complete as I sit to write this article, the B1 Board (Sergeant to Staff Sergeant - Part 1) has begun to sit. Congratulations to those that know they have been selected for promotion and fingers crossed for those waiting on the other boards of the year. As promised in earlier articles, in this edition of *The WIRE* we will continue our progress around the MCM Div, with a Focus on B Wing and take an in depth look at the second stage of the Promotion Board – the Grading.

FOCUS ON B WING

Just before I start my Focus on B Wing. I feel obliged to at least acknowledge an error that crept into the last article on A Wing .I would just like to say that I very much regret having inadvertently promoted **Maj (Retd) Bill Cochrane** from ex-TOT to Ex-Traffic Officer. Both **Bill** and myself were very pleased with the number of you that were kind enough to point out this mistake .At least someone reads this article! B Wing provides for the whole life career management of Royal Signal Soldiers in the Foreman of Signals, Tele Tech (Sys), Tele Tech (Radio), Tele Mech, Dvr Elec, Dvr Lmn rostas and for those soldiers in Unspecified posts.

B WING PERSONALITIES:

OIC A Wing: **Maj (Retd) Brian Campbell,** The Boss of B Wing The 'Bearded Wonder' keeps a close eye on the comings and goings in the Wing. **Brian** has a wealth of experience in the Manning world having completed his service as the SO2 Man Con, in the former Royal Signals Manning and Record Office. He wins the prize for the most difficult daily journey to work which includes: foot, train, boat and occasionally car .It also involves enforced 'staying at home' if the weather is too bad.

AO1: **Liz Mooney - Liz** is the new girl on the block in B Wing, having "come up stairs" from the PPPA at the end of last year. She has responsibility for all the Corp's technicians both Systems and Radio and has got up to speed in double quick time.

AO2: **Jack McLeod – Jack** is our man from the Highlands. Having travelled from the far flung reaches of the country to the bright lights of the big city, **Jack** found himself running a desk in the MCM Div. **Jack** has responsibility for the Telemechs and Driver Electricians and is the team leader of the Division Ethnic Minority Recruiting Team as a fluent Gaelic speaker.

AO3: "Big" **Dave Gorman – Dave Gorman** is ex – RAF, but saw the light and is now responsible for Foremen of Signals, Driver Lineman (what a combination!!!) and the Corps unspecified posts (SQMS, White Helmets etc. etc.). **Dave** is the Division thespian and does a mean "panto" ugly sister (allegedly).

AO4: **Denise Connell – Denise** "The hills are alive" **Connell** is an ex-patriot English person stranded here in the northern waste. Like all visitors to the wild highlands, **Denise** is a keen hill walker (rambler!) who doubles up as Division social secretary specialising in bowling and vodka (so she says). In her spare time she is the Wing Promotions Desk Officer and my consultant on all the hard work the promotions desk officers do to get the promotion boards organised.

AA: **Michelle McLean – Michelle** is the quiet one, well next to **Denise** she would have to be! The clerical support for the Wing, she can often be found helping out especially at board time and works hard to support all the rest of the team.

B Wing Personalities
In the Centre is Maj (Retd) Brian Campbell,
sitting on his knee!! is Denise Connell. In the back row from L-R:
Liz Mooney, Jack MacLeod, Michelle McLean and Dave Gormley

PROMOTION BOARDS
Part 2 Grading -

The day of the promotion board has arrived .A select band of Officers and in some cases Warrant Officers, assemble in Glasgow to select soldiers for promotion to the next rank in the range of CEQs across the Corps.

COMPOSITION

The Composition of the promotion boards is laid down in SOinC's PD No. 6 .The principle has always been that in addition to the staff of the MCM Div, the promotion board should consist of a majority of representatives from the wider Corps. Therefore, although the composition of each board is different, each board has most of it's members from outside the APC. The Chairman of each Board is provided from the MCM Div with the Colonel himself chairing the A1 and A2 boards and the SO1 Soldier Wing chairing the others. The OIC Wing and Desk Officers provide the secretariat for the Board, but are not involved in the promotion selection process themselves. Now the sequence of events for each board is made up of a number of sessions throughout the day and will comprise grading and then selection for each CEQ. These sessions tend to alternate to give the members of the board a break between the Grading sessions, which comprise the bulk of the work for the board.

GRADING

So what exactly is the Grading process?

The first stage of each board, for each CEQ, is the Grading. During this process every candidate, that has been submitted to the Board, will be marked out of ten (range from zero to ten) and half marks are acceptable, by each member of the board. The marking is based upon the candidates CR book .The books are circulated in piles to each member of the board until each member has had the opportunity to read and score each candidate .Once that has been completed the Grading is complete.

Next the scores from each member of the board are collected and added to a master score sheet. This collection is done by the secretariat (Wing Staff) .In any instance where the difference in score, for any candidate, between different members of the board is greater than two whole points, that candidate is graded again until the scores are within the two point range (you should be aware that this figure does vary from board to board, as some board have five members whilst others only have three) .This is to ensure that there is broad agreement within the board and any anomalies are investigated and resolved by the board.

THE PROMOTEBILITY LINE

Each member of the promotion board will then be asked to nominate a "promotebility score". This can be different for each member of the board, as each member will grade differently and is being asked for a score, according to his own grading, below which candidates should not be promoted. These promotebility scores are assimilated in the same way as the candidates results and provide a score below which candidates are not considered to be suitable for promotion.

THE RESULT

The product of all this work is a series of scores. An individual score for each candidate based on the scores given by the different members of the Board and resolved to a difference of less than two whole points and a promotability score. These figures are then taken forward to the grading process. These results are taken away by the Secretariat staff and while the Board continues with grading a second CEQ, these results are prepared for the next stage in the promotion Board which is the Selection.

SEE NEXT ARTICLE – FOCUS ON C WING AND AFTER BOARD ACTION FOR PROMOTION BOARDS

THE (NEW) MAN FROM R SIGNALS/INT CORPS MCM DIV

Maj S. G. Hutchinson MBE R SIGNALS

With Spring in the air there continues to be some fundamental manning changes within the Division. Firstly **Lt Col Wallis** is soon to be replaced as SO1 Officers by **Lt Col Richardson** and this will be followed by the replacement of **Lt Col Harwell**, with **Lt Col Hudson** assuming the mantle of SO1 Sldrs. In the meantime yours truly has been introduced to the SO2 Sldrs Post; the pace of life in Glasgow is never dull.

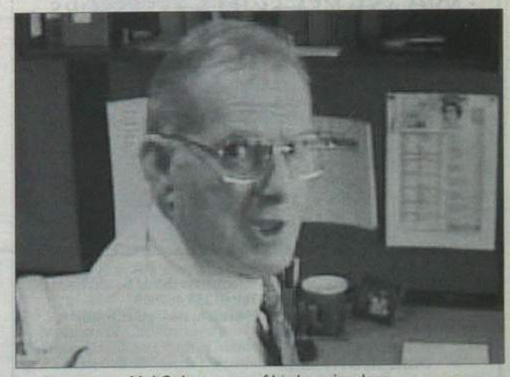
Lt Col Harwell contemplating his future as CO Edinburgh UOTC

FOCUS ON C WING

C Wing provides for the whole life career management of Royal Signal Soldiers in the Radio Sys Op, Tele Op (TG), Tele Op (Radio), Stores Accountant, RD, Linguist and Spec Op rostas. In terms of manpower responsibility it is the largest wing indeed the wing is responsible for 2% of the British Army, or so they say.

C WING PERSONALITIES

OIC C Wing: **Maj (Retd) Pat Cole** – is the original 'Mr Grumpy', however, he is also the resident Divisional IT expert. Having been within the Division since 1988 there is little that he does not know but make sure you catch him at the right time as he has been known to disappear with the SO1 to the darker recesses of Kentigern House to observe a strange ritual smoke inhalation.



Maj Cole on one of his happier days

AO1: **Carol-Anne Forrest - Carol-Anne** is the mischievous one; Adjutants watch out. Responsible for Radio Sys Op, Tele Op (TG) and Tele Op (R) Cpl to SSgt **Carol-Anne** presides over one of the largest areas. However, beware Monday mornings as **Carol-Anne** is one of our resident (fanatical) Celtic supporters and much depends on what happened the previous weekend.

AO2: **Linda Campbell** – Is the quiet one (at least from the outside) from the Islands; apparently there is life on Islay. She also has a passion for cats so if you are after that glamorous posting to the Far-East something feline would not go amiss.

Linda Campbell
responsible for Sig & LCpl Tele Op (R) and Tele Op (TG)

AO3: **Elaine Easton – Elaine** is the longest serving member of C-Wing, according to scripture she moved across with **Maj Cole. Elaine** is responsible for the postings of all Stores Accts, Tele Op (Ling), Tele Op (Spec) and RD.

AO4: **Donna McKay** – Who in the Corps does not know **Donna**? The promotions specialist for C Wing **Donna** is soon to get married. However, the question on everybody's lips is will the pictures on her board remain. We wish her all the best for the future.

AA: **Fiona Vincent – Fiona** is the new-girl on the block but don't let her quiet and mature telephone manner deceive you as here is somebody who likes to party with a capital P.

PROMOTION BOARDS

Part 3 After Board Action - The Promotion Board has sat and the gradings are complete, the next step is to identify and inform those who are to be selected for promotion; in many respects this is the most difficult and important area of the promotion board.

Selection - All the results are plotted on a graph with the score on the horizontal and age on the vertical. The promotability line is inserted along with an ideal promotion bracket based on age and ability (the individuals' points score). The size of the bracket will be based on the number of vacancies available within a specific trade. It is designed to take a small number of young thrusters, a high proportion of those within the ideal bracket and some who fall outside the ideal bracket because of age yet still fall consistently above the Promotability Line. Those who fall within the bracket are logged, however, it is not unusual for those just outside the bracket to be selected. Reserves are also identified at this stage. All results are then consolidated on a master score sheet which forms the basis of the notification. The final list is then forwarded to the Colonel MCM Div (dependant on the board) for final endorsement.

Notification - Results will be promulgated in signal format and are for promotion in the following promotion year. The system now is that we will try and notify all units on the Friday of the following week. A full list of boards is listed below.

NEXT ISSUE – FOCUS ON COURSES WING

TYPE OF BOARD	REPORTS TO MCM DIV BY	BOARD DATES	RESULTS PROMULGATED
E1 Promotion Board (LCpl to Cpl)	31 Jul 00	19-21 Sep 00	29 Sep 00
E2 Promotion Board (LCpl to Cpl)	31 Jul 00	3-5 Oct 00	13 Oct 00
F Promotion Board (Sig to LCpl)	30 Sep 00	30 Oct-1 Nov 00	10 Nov 00
A1 Promotion Board (WO2 to WO1)	30 Nov 00	30 Jan-1 Feb 01	9 Feb 01
A2 Promotion Board (SSgt to WO2)	30 Nov 00	13-15 Feb 01	23 Feb 01
B1 Promotion Board (Sgt to SSgt)	30 Nov 00	27Feb- 1Mar 01	9 Mar 01
B2 Promotion Board (Sgt to SSgt) FofS Selection	30 Nov 00	13-15 Mar 01	23 Mar 01
C1 Promotion Board (Cpl to Sgt) Supvr R Selection	30 Apr 01	7-11 May 01	18 May 01
C2 Promotion Board (Cpl to Sgt) YofS Selection	30 Apr 01	5-7 Jun 01	15 Jun 01
E1 Promotion Board (LCpl to Cpl)	31 Jul 01	14 Jun 01	22 Jun 01
E2 Promotion Board (LCpl to Cpl)	31 Jul 01	19-21 Jun 01	29 Jun 01
F Promotion Board (Sig to LCpl)	30 Sep 01	28 – 30 Aug 01	7 Sep 01
		18-20 Sep 01	28 Sep 01
		2-4 Oct 01	12 Oct 01
		5-9 Nov 01	16 Nov 01

TQ
TRAINING MANAGEMENT SERVICES
Limited

NVQ AND KEY SKILLS ASSESSORS ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

In order to provide a first class NVQ assessment service to the Royal School of Signals, TQ Ltd are seeking to recruit former members of the Royal Corps of Signals to individually manage, develop and assist Royal Signals personnel in the completion of high quality NVQs and Modern Apprenticeships. TQ Ltd will provide successful applicants with a comprehensive personal development programme leading to D32/33/34 and D36 qualifications.

Successful applicants will have enjoyed a military career within the Royal Signals (to ensure sector competence) and will have management and training experience. Rank attained is not an essential factor but it is likely that the applicant will have reached Senior NCO.

Applications and requests for further information should be addressed to :

Harry Griffin
NVQ Office
Royal School of Signals
Blandford Camp
DORSET, DT11 8RH

Tel: 01258 482968
E-mail: tq.rss@gtnet.gov.uk

SSAFA FORCES Help

THE LAST LINE OF DEFENCE

SSAFA Forces Help, a leading national Service charity, needs volunteers to assist Service and ex-Service people and their families in time of need.

We care for more than 80,000 people each year. In fact, up to 14 million people are eligible for our help and that means we have a long way to go. For many undergoing hardship, our volunteers are the last line of defence.

You could join that defence force as a caseworker, friendship visitor, team leader, treasurer or fund raiser. We offer training, out-of-pocket-expenses and a great deal of job satisfaction. Enlist today. For more information contact **Ann Needle** on 020 7463 9223 or write to her at 19 Queen Elizabeth Street, LONDON, SE1 2LP.

CLOSURE OF 39 INFANTRY BRIGADE WARRANT OFFICERS AND SERGEANTS' MESS

The 39 Inf Bde WOs and Sgts Mess will close on 31 July 2000 and all members will then join the Lisburn Garrison Mess. Anyone who has made a presentation to that Mess and would like that gift returned is to contact **WO2 (RQMS) J. B. Kay** on Lisburn Mil 42943 or 028 92 609943. All unclaimed presentations will be handed over to Lisburn Garrison Mess for display.

The White Helmets

OC RSMDT **Lt Col Jack Amberton**
Team Capt **Capt Gordon Newell**
Team SNCO **SSgt Paul Boughey**

TEAM OVERVIEW - *by Capt G. P. Newell*

By the time this article is published the Team will have begun the Millennium season and already completed the first few months out on the road. This winter saw the completion of the new motorcycle build - 30 classic Triumph Tiger 750s built in conjunction with a Team sponsor, L. F. Harris. This involved four Team members working away for the best part of ten weeks hand building these machines from scratch - an awesome task! Once the bikes had arrived we trained through initial teething problems. We are now riding the new machines and look forward to unveiling them at their first official engagement, the SOinC(A)'s Opening Show on 14 April 2000.

The selection and training of new Team members went very well and our thanks go out to all the units involved in detaching soldiers to the Team. Two induction courses were run, one in November 1999, one in February 2000. Both these courses were attended by soldiers from across the Corps, all trades and all ages. Twelve new riders were selected and they all look forward to their Team 'pass-off' at the Opening Show where they will receive their white helmets from the SOinC(A).

We also said goodbye to a long-serving Team member - the outgoing Team SNCO, **Sgt Donald Rawson Brebner**, his wife **Carol** and family who move to his new job at ACIO Bournemouth. **Sgt Brebner** spent six years in the Team and recently handed over the reins to **SSgt Paul Boughey. SSgt Boughey** arrives with his wife, **Trudie** and family from 30 Sig Regt. The Team also congratulate **LCpl V-Mal Hildreth** who recently married.

MY TIME IN 'THE WORLD PREMIER MOTORCYCLE DISPLAY TEAM' - *by Sgt D. R. Brebner*

It all started back in September 1993 when I was asked to return to the White Helmets as the new Team Senior - I jumped at the chance and joined them in the October. When I arrived at Catterick Garrison, I had an interview with the OC, Lt Col Tilson. I knew the Team was going to move down to Blandford and to my surprise the move was imminent. Before then we had to run the last selection course on the Gandale Training Area at Catterick. We left at Christmas, it was sad to go - the training areas and facilities were superb and we knew they would be hard to replace. On arrival in Blandford we took up residence in the old 30 Sig Regt QM compound which wasn't ideal but better than nothing. We made lots of friends initially being so close to RHQ! Due to the noise of the bikes we stayed there for about a year - then we were moved to a place away from everyone - into two garages behind the guardroom.

The first season was good, I inherited talented lads that were helpful in training up the new Team members that had just passed selection. The annual programme was packed with shows all over the UK and two trips to Germany - the RASS and the Rhindahlen show at JHQ. The new Team Captain was **Capt Richard Deans** who stayed with us for a year. There were a number of injuries sustained - seven below- the- knee injuries - I think this was due to a number of reasons, but mainly bad arenas and quality of kit the Team were using. This issue needed to be addressed so it didn't happen the following year.

After the shows that year we ran the yearly selection course in November - the problem was where to hold it after Catterick. Eventually I managed to secure Bovington Tank Training Area. The selection course went very well and before we knew it Christmas was upon us. The Team had their leave and came back in January 1995 ready to start training for the forthcoming season. That year was another good season - better since I had done a year 'in the chair', knowing what the Team were capable of. Again, another busy schedule, some of the shows were very high profile, but as always once the gauntlet was thrown, the Team picked it up and went out to produce an absolutely storming show.

This year the Team where given a challenge to appear on the TV programme YOU BET. The challenge was that six riders had to reverse ride through a slalom course releasing Team members to build a five bike fan and cross a line in under two minutes inside the studio. This was very difficult because the studio was small and it had shiny wooden floors that had gloss paint on them. To cut a long story short during the rehearsals we failed every one of the attempts but when the live part came we did it with seven seconds to spare.

The 1996 season was an exceptional year. The Team had a new OC, **Maj Keith Russell**, we were running with the bare minimum of manpower and again we were inundated with shows home and abroad. The height of this season would be The Royal Tournament at Earls Court in London. Some of the other shows were the big agricultural ones around the country that had massive crowds over a three-day period. This season took quite a bit out of the lads mainly due to the manpower problem.

Now onto the 1997 season which again was low on the manpower front. Yet again it was a packed show season - there was another Team Captain, **Lisa Giles**. The Team received more attention as she was the first female Team Captain. There was mixed reactions initially, but soon everything carried on as normal. The Team where having a magnificent season but this was rocked by the tragic loss of the Team Corporal - **Cpl Paul** 'Elly' **Ellson** in the August. **Cpl Paul Ellson** was killed in a road traffic accident in a small village, Shillingstone not far from Blandford. His death effected the Team and his influence and character were sorely missed. His funeral was a sad day for us all, but he was sent away in style, and will never be forgotten. The Team has a trophy named after him which is presented each year to the person who contributes the most to the Team. During this period the Team still had a third of the show season left to perform and it made it very difficult for me to come to terms with 'Elly's' death and get the Team back on track to finish the season.

The selection course again came round and yet again it was poorly attended. The Team trained from January to April when the show programme began. During this season we performed at the biggest shows throughout the country. These included the Royal Bath and West, the Royal Show, the East of England, the South of England and the Royal Lincolnshire Shows as well as shows in Germany and Belgium. During the six years I've spent with the Team, the 1998 season and the Royal Tournament of 1999 were the highlights, mainly because of the standard of display we produced.

The end of 1998 came and we said farewell to **Maj Keith Russell**, who was one of the best OC's I've worked for. He was a figure you looked up to and he was there when you needed him. He loved the Team and what it stood for and I think the soldiers that served under him enjoyed it. He had a big party on leaving.

The 1999 season was strange to start of with because we had two new bosses. **Lt Col Jack Amberton** and **Capt Gordon Newell** who had arrived in August 1998. The highlight for the season was the last Royal Tournament held at Earls Court, London. This was special and the Team stole the show with their breathtaking performances. It had record crowds topping over 250,000 people over a 17-day period. The Team finished off the year with an appearance at the NIA (National Indoor Arena) in Birmingham for the International Tattoo held in the November. After that we were ready for our annual leave but just before this there was one thing left to do - sell off all the bike fleet! Out of the 25 Triumph Tigers the Team sold 17. After Christmas the Team had to wait a while for the new bikes, so we had to do with the eight training fleet that was left. Eventually the new fleet arrived and the first thing was to get them run in before we could start riding on them. This took a few weeks, but was done prior to going to RAF Sealand for our Training Camp. It went very well, better than I expected because a lot of the Team were new, out of a Team of 29, twelve were novices.

Before I call it a day I would like to thank some of the guys that have been with me throughout the whole six years - **Cpl** 'Gypo' **Hooper, LCpl** 'Scotty' **Eccott, LCpl** 'Fozzy' **Forster** and **LCpl** 'Tonka' **Richardson**. These were the Team Cadre who helped me immensely in training and keeping the riding standards high. Best of luck to **SSgt Paul Boughey**, my successor who has just come from 30 Sig Regt. That's all from me, thank you and goodbye.'

Sgt Don Brebner with Triumph Tiger 750 back in 1997

RSA AREA TWO - *Maj (Retd) Brian Ivison*

Members of Chester, Liverpool, Manchester and Shropshire Branches, and members of the Cheshire Yeomanry Association visited RAF Sealand, near Chester, on 23 March to see the White Helmets training for their new season. Despite the fact that it drizzled most of the time, the Team put on

an excellent performance for the personnel of the RAF MU and the Association members.

Among the members attending was **Mr Albert Osborne**, who as a Royal Signals DR had served with the Cheshire Yeomanry (at the time 17 Line of Communications Signal Regiment), in North Africa and Northwest Europe. After the war ended he was posted to Iserlohn as one of the members of the White Helmets, who were reforming there. He was pleased to compare notes with **Sgt Don Brebner**, the present Team Seergeant, on the respective performances and related that one of their tricks was to change a side-car wheel whilst on the move. He also noted the absence of horses.

The visit was arranged by **Maj (Retd) Brian Ivison**, the Area Two Representative, with the present Team Captain, **Capt Gordon Newell.** All the members who attended would like to thank the Team for the show put on by them and wish them the best of luck in the 2000 season. We hope that the weather improves.

Mr Albert Osborne and Sgt Don Brebner

ROYAL SIGNALS THE WHITE HELMETS SHOW PROGRAMME - 2000

JUNE		
15	3 Div - Beating The Retreat	Tidworth (evening)
19-22	Army Schools Exhibition	Catterick
24, 25	RSA Weekend	Blandford
28, 29	Royal Norfolk Show	Norwich
JULY		
1, 2	Bath Truck Fest	Shepton Mallet
10-15	Royal Tatoo 2000 (Shows)	
16	Great Eccleston Show	
21,22,23	Northampton Show	
26	Nantwich Agricultural Show	
29	Sunderland Show	
30	Heckington Show	Lincolnshire
AUGUST		
3	Bovington Tank Museum	
4, 5, 6	Portsmouth and Southsea Show	
12, 13	Detling Transport Show	
16	Gillingham and Shaftesbury Show	
17	Cheltenham Young People's Project	
19, 20	Bolton Show	
24	Tank Museum	Bovington (prov)
27, 28	Sandwell Show	Wolverhampton
30	Defence Communications Service	Corsham
31	Tank Museum	Bovington (prov)
SEPTEMBER		
9	Lower Stoney Bank, Slaidburn	Lancashire
10	SW Motorcycle Expo	Blandford
24	Cheltenham College	
30	HQ Hereford Garrison Open Day	

NAAFI

Every penny Naafi makes is reinvested into its shops and clubs to improve the quality of facilities and services or returned in the form of a dividend.

Serving the Services and their families Worldwide.

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS
APRIL 2000

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col R. T. Hoole	G3 Training HQ LAND
Maj A. J. Bowering	SO2 SLDR TRG
Maj J. D. Carr	HQ Army CIS Engineering Group
Maj A. W. T. McComb	DMO
Maj A. P. Hudson MBE	R Sigs/Int Div
Maj C. A. Maycock	39 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Maj T. P. Langford	HQ 2 (NC) Signal Brigade
Maj D. W. Somerville	PJHQ (UK) ACOS J6
Maj A. D. Turner	NATO Comms School (BAE) Latina
Maj A. J. Wood	1 (UK)Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt P. D. Ashworth	14 Signal Regiment
Capt L. G. Bowlby	ACIS Sp Gp
Capt N. R. Coatsworth	7 Signal Regiment (Main Corps HQ)
Capt A. C. Cox	12 Mech Bde & Sig Sqn (228)
Capt K. E. Emmerson	LSP OMAN
Capt J. M. Evans	Army Apprentices College
Capt M. Godwin	HS 71 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Capt J. Gower	JSSU Oakley
Capt F. D. Guthrie	JSSU AN
Capt L. J. Hawkes	32 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Capt J. R. Jennings	1 (UK)Armd Dive HQ & Sig Regt
Capt A. S. McCole	2 Signal Brigade
Capt T. Malley	15 Signal Regiment
Capt C. J. Montgomery	243 Signal Squadron
Capt J. M. Osborne	280 Signal Squadron
Capt G. C. Porter	RMAS
Capt W. Simpson	243 Signal Squadron
Capt M. Smith	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt R. J. Stanton	11 Signal Regiment
Capt C. M. Vaudin	31 Signal Regiment
Lt R. M. Jones	ATR Bassingbourn
Lt J. E. Toze	30 (City of London) Sig Regt (V)

OFFICERS
MAY 2000

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col G. W. Bartliff	AD Info Assurance
Lt Col A. A. S. Harwell	City of Edinburgh UOTC
Lt Col R. B. Davis	DCIS (A)
A/Lt Col S. P. Wallis	SANGCOM
Maj R. V. J. Brannigan	Royal School of Signals (new post)
Maj A. D. Cathro	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Maj M. R. Complin	HQ 2 Div (Edinburgh)
Maj D. Drinkall	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Maj W. J. J. Brennan	JSSU Oakley
Maj M. C. Roberts	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (207)
Maj E. Doughty	HQ DSSS
Capt J. C. Boyle	Royal School of Signals
Capt R. J. Carter	RMAS
Capt A. C. Cox	37 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Capt P. A. Cutforth	2 (NC) Signal Brigade
Capt S. A. Donovan	Royal School of Signals
Capt A. R. Fawcett	16 Air Aslt Bde HQ Sig Sqn (216)
Capt A. M. Haresign	15 Signal Regiment
Capt M. J. Hanby	HQ ARRC
Capt G. R. Johnson	30 Signal Regiment
Capt M. J. McKenna	30 Cadet training Team
Capt R. S. Moir	16 Signal Regiment
Capt D. A. Stewart	JCU NI
Capt S. J. Stonier	30 Signal Regiment
Capt N. G. C. Yardley	RMAS
Lt S. J. W. Gunson	ATR Bassingbourn
Lt A. D. Shakespeare	Army ASpprentices College
Lt B. G. White	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (204)

Leaving the Forces Shortly?

real com

Your Future In Communications

We specialise in placing ex-service personnel within the Telecommunication and Broadcast industry. We are interested in all trades with experience of Satellite and Trunk Systems maintenance & operations.

The company is directed by ex-Royal Signals staff currently working within the industry. We provide permanent positions with telecommunications companies in the UK or abroad.

Interested?

Please contact Ed Massey or Brian O'Connor.

Tel: 01962 841 838

Fax: 01962 841 839

PO Box 288

Winchester

SO22 4WW

Email: enquiries@realcom-recruitment.co.uk

Battlefield Tours

for

Regimental Associations, TA's & Serving Units

Regimental Battle Honour Tours 4 days **£149**
Ypres, Somme, Arras, Cambrai 3 days **£99**
Normandy & Arnhem 4 days **£149**
Tailor-made & Self Drive Itineraries

Galina International Battlefield Tours
40 Bridge Street Row Chester CH1 1NN
Tel: 01244 340777

Official Tour Operators to the Normandy Veterans Association

Moffats School

Boys & Girls 7 to 13

at **Kinlet Hall, Kinlet, Bewdley, Worcs** DY12 3AY

Small Classes • Stability • Expert help for Dyslexia/SpLD • Sports & Riding in our 110-acre grounds • Many Artistic & Cultural Activities • Hospitality & fun for those in at exeats / half-terms • Our own escorts to all UK airports • An Ethos of Discipline, Kindness & Tolerance

Tel. 01299 841230 - www.moffats.co.uk

THE ARMY TAUGHT YOU NEVER TO GIVE UP, SO DON'T

So there you are in civvy street doing the same old thing day in, day out. But...why?...If it's the Army you're missing, then how about joining the TA? It's a vital part of the British Army.

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 cap badge and become a member of either an Independent Unit as above, or a TA Specialist Unit. In either, you can maintain and develop 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 2 weekends and a 15 day annual camp. In return, you will earn Army rates of pay and an annual tax-free bonus of up to £1050.

For an information brochure call **0845 603 32 32** quoting ref **WI005**, or send the coupon to: Freepost, The TA, CV37 9BR.

SURNAME _____ MR/MS
BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE CIRCLE

FIRST NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

_____

POSTCODE _____

TEL (STD) _____

DATE OF BIRTH ____ / ____ / ____

The TA is committed to Equal Opportunities.

http://www.army.mod.uk

TA TERRITORIAL ARMY

BE THE BEST

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

HEADQUARTERS ROYAL SIGNALS

EXERCISE SNOW DRAGON 4 – *by Maj Beet*

Exercise Snow Dragon 4 was a Pontrilas Army Training Area Alpine and Nordic Skiing Exercise held in the Three Valleys, France, from 29 January 2000-5 February 2000. Sixteen members of the unit participated inclusive of three members of the Signals Workshop **SSgt (YofS) Tim Williams, Sgt Clive Cunningham** and **Cpl Mick O'Connor.**

The party arrived at Meribel, France, at approximately 1600hrs after travelling for 13 hours. The first port of call was the accommodation. This was based on 16 persons sharing 3xAlpine apartments, which brought home the reality of the phrase 'living in each others pockets'. We would have swung a dead cat if we could have got it through the doors. However, this was a small price to pay for being located in an area that offered over 100km of pisted slopes.

As the first day dawned the poetic Alpine scenery unveiled its enormity to us. The anticipation and adrenaline reached optimum levels as the group gathered in the foot of the valley. The group instructor checked that we were all present before commencing on our first journey to the top. Only three members out of sixteen were complete novices so for the majority it was a case of revising the art. The format of instruction during the morning and practice during the afternoon was adopted throughout the Exercise. This gave the opportunity for the more advanced skiers in the group to venture further afield and to find those cheap French cafés where a small bottle of coke is a mere £3.00.

Cpl Mick O'Connor (advanced!) exploited his time to discover his full potential and ventured into the Three Valley circuit. The other two **SSgt (YofS) Tim Williams** and **Sgt Clive Cunningham** remained on the easier slopes scaring themselves and everybody around them. Later on in the week after gaining his confidence on the 'Planks of death', **SSgt (YofS) Tim Williams** partnered up with 'Flash (Short Swing Parallel)' **O'Connor** and acted as his side-kick 'Danger Boy (Get out of my way!)' **Williams**. Defying the grasp of the 'Grim Reaper' on many occasions, the motley duo decided that to enter into the realms of the Super Hero, flight would be required.

As we entered into the Snow Park that consisted of hideous jumps, half pipes and other types of kamikaze take off points, we noticed that medical teams were working on three other misguided individuals. This sight would normally bring people to their senses. However, this was not the case for our representatives of the Royal Signals, Mercury needed to fly!!! 'Flash' **O'Connor** took to the air like a sparrow on water-skis, obviously he'd been practicing behind closed doors. He was closely followed by 'Danger Boy' **Williams** who's style can only be described as the winning throw at a 'Welly Wanging Competition'. After finding bruises in areas that shouldn't have bruises the idea of flight was abandoned. Towards the end of the week 'The Flying Scotsman' **Cunningham** joined the duo and displayed his unique 'Straight Down The Black Slope' trick, which amazed even the most advanced skiers on the slope.

On the last day we underwent the Basic Ski Proficiency (Alpine) Test. Everybody passed less the MTWO who had to retire from the slopes due to an old war wound. Overall the entire exercise was both constructive and very enjoyable. Everybody that had attended dramatically improved their skiing ability which was directly due to the excellent instruction that was given at all levels

HEADQUARTERS 1st SIGNAL BRIGADE

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

26 January 2000 was a day, which combined happiness and sadness at HQ 1 Sig Bde. Firstly, those deployed on Op Agricola were presented with the NATO Medal, Kosovo by **Brig Robert Baxter** followed by a photograph session.

We then carried on the day by sampling some German fare and said our goodbyes to **Brig Baxter**. He has now bravely joined the band of commuters, enjoying pleasurable journeys on our highly reliable rail system. He is currently holding the appointment of Director Policy-Information and Communication Services, responsible for establishing a new Directorate General of Information and Structure to advance Joint Battlespace Digitization. He now has the difficult decision to make as to which shirt and tie to wear in the morning. Scottish born **Brig David McDowall MBE,** assumed command of HQ 1 Sig Bde, after being promoted during January 2000. His previous posting was at the Army Personnel Centre in Glasgow, responsible for the career management of all officers and soldiers in the Royal Signals and Intelligence Corps. He is an avid supporter of Stranraer Football Club.

Brig Robert Baxter hands over to Brig David McDowall

HQ 1 Sig Bde Staff after the medal ceremony

During March, we bade farewell to **Maj Jim Wood** (DCOS), who moves to Bielefeld to the post of 2IC at 1 ADSR. The G1/G4 staff will miss his enthusiasm and humour on the darker side of the corridor. As an expert skier and orienteer, he will test his abilities to the full when he goes on the forthcoming Antarctica expedition, if **Lt Col Jane** lets him go! We hope that the new house is large enough to stash all the money on the top floor! **Maj Jonathan** (executive class) **Turner** has moved a short distance from 16 Sig Regt to take up the post. A further farewell to **SSgt (YofS) John** '2 pints' **Broughton** who also moves to 1 ADSR.

EXERCISE JAVELIN BACKSTOP

Ex Javelin Backstop was the HQ 1 Sig Bde adventure training exercise held in the Allgau region of Southern Germany. The trip was conceptualised by **Maj Ben** 'Ski Fit' **Britton,** while the planning and donkey-work was done by **SSgt (YofS) John** 'Scapegoat' **Broughton.**

The adventure started with a 400-mile mini-bus trip from JHQ to Hindelang. The tedium of the journey was relieved by fascinating conversation and a musical selection offered from the private collection of **WO2 (FofS) Guy** 'Absinth' **Lewendon.** A PX shopping stop at the US facilities at Heidelberg provided a chance to load up with lager and subsequently increase journey time courtesy of the astonishingly small bladder capacity of **WO1 Martin** 'Ginja Ninja' **Healy**. The weary travellers arrived at Haus Schwaben with only enough time to enjoy a bijou meal and move their baggage into the deceptively spacious accommodation before falling asleep, perchance to dream of the impending snow based japes.

Monday morning was spent on the gentle slopes of the Jungholz separating the men from the boys. The men turned out to be **Maj Mike** 'Lt George' **Dooley, Capt Stu** 'Boggy' **Boyne** and **WO2 Guy Lewendon.** The boys, displaying varying levels of maturity, identified themselves as **Capt Jon** 'Scouse Git' **Townsend, WO1 Andy** 'I want to be alone' **Drummond, WO1 Martin Healy, SSgt John Broughton and Sgt Steve** 'Bomber' **Bennett.** The men were proven to be only boys pretending to be men by **Lt Col Bill White,** a remarkable skier and ski instructor, while the boys were made to feel inadequate themselves by the old man of the mountains himself, **Maj Ben Britton.** The following days, under the wing of our instructors, saw movement on to steeper and higher runs; the height of the mountains only darkened by the shadow of the tall stories pedalled of an evening by **Maj Mike Dooley** on his skiing ability. The days included skiing on the Jungholz, Fellhorn and Nebelhorn and an evening's floodlit skiing on the Oberjoch.

On Wednesday evening, a pale stranger appeared. With ludicrously narrow skis in his hand he told horror stories of avalanche death and the joy of being probed by rescue teams in deep snow. The time had come for our compulsory cross country ski-training day by **Maj** 'Mr Burns' **Jim Wood.** So, on perhaps the most perfect day for Nordic skiing ever seen in the Allgau, we sashayed around the base of the Fellhorn looking enviably up at the white slopes and blue sky where **Lt Col Bill White** and **Maj Ben Britton** were having the time of their lives without us. The day was, nevertheless, far from wasted. We learnt that snow is cold when forced down the front of your trousers, skiing uphill is harder than skiing downhill and that skiing downhill on cross country skis is a sure way of forcing snow down the front of your trousers.

The final day back on the slopes saw two members of the 'B' team, **Capt Jon Townsend** and **WO1 Andy Drummond,** join the big boys under **Lt Col Bill White** for some advanced skiing. Both coped admirably and in some cases better than the original 'A' Team. There was nothing left to do on Friday evening but eat well (out), share a few beers, bottles of wine and participate in the Bohemian ritual with a bottle of Absinth. The final night's entertainment meant a quiet journey back in the mini-bus, the quiet broken by the rumbling of avalanches all the way to JHQ. Special thanks for the week go to **Maj Ben Britton** (The Visionary), **SSgt (YofS) John Broughton** (The Worker) and **Lt Col Bill White** (Ski Instructor). Roll on next year.

XI HEADQUARTERS 11 SIGNAL BRIGADE

Life in sunny Shropshire continues at pace. Those deployed on the commercialisation of Pan-Balkans communications continue to oscillate between the Mediterranean seaside and the UK. Busy and engrossed in their work, one hears the odd complaint of, 'I got stuck in Vienna on the way home, but never managed to get out of the Hilton,' which of course fall on deaf ears. The Commander has now clocked up so many air miles that we have agreement in principle to the loan of his own Lear Jet. The DCOS is currently staffing the case (the way things have of coming true, I should add quickly that I am only joking). The remainder continue to do the work of 20 with such efficiency (honest!) that an establishment review will surely, in the future, half our number.

11 SIGNAL BRIGADE COMMERCIALISATION TEAM PROGRESS SO FAR - *by Capt (TOT) John Hiorns*

As we have reported previously, we are intimately involved in the projects in both Bosnia and Kosovo to commercialise the CIS facilities in both theatres with the aim of reducing the corps manpower and equipment liabilities in the Balkans.

Since I last cast my fingers across the keys of this dilapidated laptop (Brigade YofS take note!) things have moved on at a great pace, and we now find ourselves at week 10 of a 28 week programme for both Project Myra (Op Palatine) and Project Cleo (Op Agricola). The prime contractor, BAE Systems has moved swiftly, along with their sub-contractors, and now all is going to schedule according to the dreaded project plan. Both theatres are will soon be receiving their first consignments of containers which will be providing communications to three differing levels; UK Secret (Red), KFOR or SFOR Secret (Blue) and UK Unclassified (Black). The containers will be equipped with a suite of NET Promina digital multiplexers and a Siemens HICOM exchange. Project Myra will be utilising a Hub and Spoke arrangement interconnected by the existing Cable and Wireless Picton satellites with the addition of some more satellites from BT. Project Cleo will be using a microwave bearers, with the network designed to provide diverse routing for all major sites.

Both theatres will have access to the DFTS and Patron, thus providing vast improvements in capability and providing a means to significantly reduce costs of calls made to the UK or Germany. The Blue networks in both cases will be providing secure voice communications and will also be the bearer of the IS systems OATIS and OLTIS, both of which are NT4 architecture networks modelled closely on ISIS but running a single Secret domain.

Within Bosnia there are five other mobile elements to the commercialisation, some of which are destined to provide safety communications for both air and vehicle traffic, as well as deployable mobile elements, which can link into Project Myra should units leave their barrack locations. These are being run on behalf of the DPA by BAE Systems; the successful bidding companies are due to be announced in the very near future.

The size of the team has now increased somewhat from the three original members from 11 Signal Brigade. **Maj Jim Foulkes** and **Capt John Hiorns** have been joined by **Capt Al Garrett** replacing **Flt Lt Farid Khan** who has escaped to TCW. We also have **Maj Jamie Compston** in Bosnia who is ably supported by two Dutch LOs. Others involved in theatre are two CPDLOs, **WO2 (FofS) Colin Mackay** and **Capt Lloyd Bowlby, Maj Noddy Baugh** from ACPO who has a team of telemechs in each theatre, **SSgt (FofS) Ian Walling** who is the projects FofS in Kosovo. In Bosnia we also have **Maj Dennis Trayers, Capt Bill Dixon, WO1 (YofS) Hodge Arthurs** and **WO2 (FofS) Tosh Leyland**.

One of the essential elements of the programme is the regular update visits by the Commander, **Brig JRB Cook**, DPA, BAE Systems and EC(CC&II). On the latest trip to Kosovo on 12 April 2000, the Commander managed to recruit two new members of the team without having to resort to another trawl through LAND. We'll do anything to get a store-man to account for all of this kit.

BRIGADE DAY OUT 3 March 2000

by: WO2 (RQMS) Steve Sadler late - Grenadier Guards

Background: The Commander has decreed that the complete Headquarters will enjoy an organised day out once every 6 months. When the last event was cancelled I made the mistake of making a little too much noise at my disappointment; one does not need a size nine hat to calculate who was to be 'jiffed' to organise this one.

Situation: Following a furtive and lengthy reconnaissance, an appreciation was conducted to ascertain the most appropriate location and format for the Brigade Day Out. The Wing O having been issued, all troops, scribes and camp followers were informed that the day was to have a military flavour and the day was to be spent comparing Medieval and contemporary tactics in Warwick Castle.

Aim: As always the aim of such days was to achieve a closer understanding of each other, by examination of each person's reaction to shared experiences outside their normal working environment(phew!). Additionally it allows cultural bonding with those from ethnic minorities (Welsh Scots and Irish). It of course was not an excuse for a 'knees up'.

Execution: General outline: We paraded at 0845hrs (late to accommodate the civilian staff!) with **Cpl 'Nigel' Weir** as right marker. While the Chief Clerk, **WO2 Sean Flannery** AGC and **Cpl Phil Becall** AGC fell in at the rear in excused boots mode, the camp followers stood and admired the soldiery (as they have done for centuries) and the officers perambulated (or otherwise milled around). On my command, 'Get on parade.' the remainder, **Sgt Nigel Jones**, marched on as a fine body of men; I must say in the Guards we do not allow any soldier to be called 'Nigel', let alone have two of them.

Right Guard: Led by **Cpl** 'I wonder if they have castles like this in Norway' **Weir**, the Scribes and Camp Followers, Right Guard en-bussed to form the second half of the convoy.

Left Guard: Led by the COS, **Maj Steve Johns**, the remainder of us formed Left Guard and the first half of the convoy. Driving, don't I do just about everything, I was of course directed down that long short cut – but you know what they say about officers with maps or screwdrivers.

Reserve Guard: Led by the Commander they were in readiness somewhere near the Adriatic (I think).

Service Support: Timings: Having left at 0900hrs we returned at 1630 and some sad people actually went to their offices – In my Regiment we have no need of offices for officers, we find it interferes with their polo.

Rations: Packed, boxed, cardboard (container and contents) supplemented by foraging.

Transport: The loan of two of her Majesty's civilian white Landrovers.

Maj (QM) Rab Young, AO Fin – Mrs Tina Smith, Cpl Nigel Weir, EO Fin – Miss Davina Carter, Capt Dick Gamble, WO1 (YofS) Graham Pardew, PA to Comd – Mrs Jean Vince, Maj (Retd) Rollo Rumford, WO2 (RQMS) Steve Sadler, COS – Maj Steve Johns

Conclusion: Have you ever organised a group of officers? Well try it with Scribes and Camp Followers. Wellington did not seem to have this problem , I know 'cos we were there, unlike some we are not so young in the Army List (Kipling might have written an ode on that theme). The day was a great success I am told. While the 'Ops' staff took it all far to seriously, disappointed that they could not use their paint ball guns in the castle, the Loggies spent most of the day in search of alternative fodder and lubrication to that supplied by the Sutler. The Scribes out of place in the fresh air just criticised my written word and the general organisation, while the Camp Followers as always, stood, looked pretty and uttered 'Ohs' and 'Ahs' at all the wonderful things they saw. I hear our SO3 COMSEC, **Capt Dick Gamble** is keen to organise the next trip; fine chap.

EXERCISE SPRING EAGLE - *by WO1 (YofS) Graham Pardew*

Ex Spring Eagle was Comd 11 Sig Bde's FTX which took place during 17-19 March 2000. Units of the Brigade deployed to their local areas, connected by the Fixed Trunk Bearer Network (FTBN) and terrestrial radio relay communications they effectively formed a network covering the whole of the UK.

The aim of the exercise was to establish a large Ptarmigan/Euromux network using the FTBN, in order to practise the technical communications expertise of 11 Sig Bde. Thus proving the communications for the Brigade CPX (Ex Summer Eagle 2000). The Bde HQ, consisting of **WO2 (FofS)** 'Pete the Rat' **Stowell**, (yes that's all!) deployed to Newcastle-Under-Lyme in order to manage the establishment of FTBN links. The Brigade YofS, **WO1 Graham Pardew**, who oscillated, between Donnington and Newcastle in order to conduct a series of briefings, later joined him managing to double the number of exercise conducting staff. The remainder of the Brigade Staff being deployed on future planning and other concurrent activities offered their verbal support and appreciation. There is no truth in the rumour it was a ploy to see how tired they could get the FofS and YofS in as 48 hour period –but it worked! Communications were established in very good time, which was no mean feat, taking into account that there were ten Trunk Nodes, a number of Euromux Access Nodes, Secondary Access Nodes and SCRA(C) deployed. This was also the first Brigade deployment since last years Camp in June. Combat Net Radio (HF) and RATT communications were also established in good time across the UK, and remained stable throughout the exercise.

The Exercise, however, was a success overall, providing all units with the opportunity to practise the revised Brigade SOPs. As expected, many lessons were learned, in particular regarding the interfacing of Ptarmigan and Euromux and procedures for In Barracks Crypto Preparation (IBCP). 600 Sig Tp (RSSST(UK)) are thanked for their assistance throughout the exercise, and all PXR points will now be used to update our SOPs prior to the CPX in April. Next look forward the Brigade CPX – Ex Summer Eagle 2000, be there or be in the Balkans!

THE DINING OUT OF WO1 (YOFS) MONTGOMERY

by WO1 (YofS) Graham Pardew

I had the pleasure to preside over the dining out of two Donnington Station Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess Members on Saturday 25 March 2000, on commissioning. **WO1 (RSM) Sean Beresford** AGC RMP and **WO1 (YofS)** 'Monty' **Montgomery** of Sig Tp Donnington. Although 'Monty' was not actually part of the Headquarters, there are times when it has felt that he was! We thank him for his assistance and advice over the past two years; he will be sorely missed as a friend, work colleague and as a fellow living in member! The dining out was an excellent occasion due to the efforts of the PMC, **WO2 (YofS) Wilf Wedge** from 241 Sig Sqn. 'Monty's' after dinner speech was a classic and will be classed one of the more memorable. We can but hope that 'Monty' enjoyed his dining out as much as we did. **Capt** 'Clifford' **Montgomery** was congratulated on his commissioning and offered best wishes for the future (Where no doubt he will still be parking his feet in someone's in tray on regular occasions).

VISITS

On 8 March 2000 the Headquarters had an initial visit from our new GOC, **Maj Gen A. P. Grant Peterkin OBE**. After a briefing by the Brigade Commander on the role, organisation, mission and current tasking of the Brigade, the General joined all staff both military and civilian for a relaxed chat over coffee and cakes.

For the fortnight 1-16 April 2000 the Headquarters was lucky enough to have on attachment **Capt Susan Aitken** from Tayside UOTC; she has had time previously in 2 Sqn in Dundee. Apart from adding culture, class and style, she arrived at a very busy time and was very much thrown into the deep-end. If she was unsure about G2/G3 matters and exercise planning on arrival, she left as an expert! She was also amazed in what you can achieve by consistently working a 14 hour day. We thank her very much for her efforts, enthusiasm and enjoyable company – but there must be easier ways to earn a bounty!

COURT AND SOCIAL

We offer **Maj Mark Smith**, one of our TA Staff Officers, and his wife **Margaret** our congratulations on the birth of their son **Matthew Daniel** who was born 10 April 2000 at a weight of 8lb 3oz. All are well, although daddy is feeling a little tired!

HAIL AND FAREWELL

A quieter month - well one with less turmoil anyway. As our COS **Maj Dick Sparshatt** left us for promotion and Blandford (and now 'Richard'), our crypto NCO - **Cpl Nigel Weir** leaves us on promotion and Norway (and of course you are all welcome to come here on holiday). We wish them both well in their new jobs and future careers. From the small print of his posting order (that Expediency of the Service bit) **Maj Steve Johns** moved to be COS, a move he of course makes easily and readily; just do not ask him about Welsh Rugby and missed marathons! We welcome his replacement as DCOS, **Maj Steve Hunt** who joins us from the high society lifestyle of London and we wish him an enjoyable and rewarding tour. We also welcome our new Training NCO - **SSgt** 'Mac' **McNeill** and our new crypto NCO - **Cpl Stevie** 'Next posting Norway' **Piper** to the Headquarters. We wish them all an enjoyable, interesting and gratifying stay in Shropshire

THE BALD EAGLE BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY

JUST ABOUT TO LEAVE ROYAL SIGNALS?
DO YOU HOLD A TEM, BSC or other relevant qualification (such as PRINCE 2)?
Do you seek a fair reward for your talents?
Are you independent and confident of your abilities?
Are travel and variety still of interest?
Then why not consider

THE BALD EAGLE CONSULTANCY Ltd
For more details send your CV to me, Chris Harper at thebaldeagle9@hotmail.com

'EAGLES SOAR'

NEWS OF TRAINING

NATO COMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATIONS SYSTEMS SCHOOL (NCISS) - LATINA (ITALY

Chief Training Branch **Lt Col G. W. Bartliff** R SIGNALS
School Warrant Officer **WO1 A. Scott** R SIGNALS

It's been some time since the NCISS last had a mention in *The WIRE* and now that many members of the Corps attend courses at Latina, we thought it might be appropriate to provide an update on life in sunny Latina. The NCISS is located approximately 50km South of Rome and 175km North of HQ AFSOUTH (Naples). The school shares a site with an Italian Airforce radar repair facility, which is 6km to the North of the small town of Latina.

The UK military staff consists of **Lt Col Glenn Bartliff** who is Chief of Training and the Senior British Officer assisted by **WO1 Adrian** 'Scotty' **Scott** who is largely responsible for discipline, security and various national activities. The UK military instructors are predominantly RAF. However, **SSgt Keith Dwyer** involved in crypto equipment repair and **Sgt Chris Nelson** looking after the NATO crypto account also represent the R SIGNALS input to the school. Two members of the Corps, **Sgt Danny O'Neill** and **Sgt Dave Smith**, serve with the Multinational EW Support Group at Anzio, some 20 miles from Latina. We also now have our first Royal Navy instructor involved in the Maritime CIS instruction, bringing the school UK staff up to a full tri-service representation of 15. Having already welcomed **Sgt Nelson** into a new R SIGNALS slot, we have recently managed to change a further RAF slot to Army and will be welcoming **Sgt Pat Scantlebury** R SIGNALS from SHAPE in March.

The NCISS is commanded by **Col Van Den Hirk**, Netherlands Airforce, with 46 instructors and 35 supporting staff. As a result of digitisation and NATO involvement in FRY, training at the school has changed dramatically in the past six years. Through the procurement of COTS products to support IFOR, SFOR and now KFOR, the school student population has increased from 1400 to almost 2000 a year with 50 different types of course from IDNX, PABX, VTC, LAN Admin, SATCOM and all NATO CIS systems. The school is both dynamic and pro-active in its training support to static commands and national units (particularly from Germany) deploying on operational tours. Using modern multifunctional computer classrooms, we are able to offer traditional training methods supported by full CBT and CAI facilities. A full information Web Page is available on NATO Cronos and will shortly be on the Internet.

NATO CIS School, Latina - UK Military Staff

New courses such as NATO Core Switch, Fibre Optic Repair, INFOSEC, MMHS (ACP 127 replacement - at last), ACE ACCIS and NATO Routers are also courses planned for the future. The school is also studying the feasibility of introducing a form of 'virtual classroom' training to allow students to carry out pre-training from their units/commands prior to attending the more complex technical courses at the NCISS.

Like many training organisations both national and international, the NCISS is adapting rapidly to changes in CIS and looks forward to a bright future in the 21st century. Members of the Corps who attend courses at Latina can also look forward to excellent training facilities coupled with the opportunity to visit the many historical sites in the area. Fortunately, we have been able to acquire a small 'hire' car from the UK Support Unit at AFSOUTH to allow UK military students the opportunity to visit the local area - please ensure your bring your driving license.

Although life in the Southern part of Italy tends to be on the slow side compared with Northern Europe, there are many beautiful and historic areas to visit, both for the UK military instructors and students. For those who attended courses at Latina some six years ago and beyond, the town has changed dramatically. We now have two large shopping areas (and two McDonald's), many restaurants and a number of English style pubs - the students particularly like the latter. Even the driving has improved with less people going through red lights!!

UK personnel are located throughout Latina in hirings and thoroughly enjoy their tours in Italy. The UK community meet on a regular basis for social activities either in Latina or the surrounding area and also enjoy the international activities with our NATO colleagues and Italian civilian staff. Members of the Corps interested in a tour at the NCISS, should be aware that the nearest school for children is in Rome some one hours drive away and our full medical and dental support is at Naples two hours drive away. This can occasionally be a problem for the new members of staff arriving in Latina.

We recently said farewell to **Sgt** 'Lozz' **Hill** on his departure to NI and welcomed his replacement **Sgt Danny O'Neill**. We were very pleased to receive news that **WO1 Adrian Scott** has been selected for commissioning and expects to depart in August. Finally, we will be saying farewell to the SBO, **Lt Col Glenn Bartliff** and his wife **Mary** who depart to the MOD in May. They have both been excellent members of the community and will be missed on their departure. We would like to welcome **Lt Col Dave Turner** and his wife **Anne**, who are apparently looking forward to leaving sunny Blandford – we wonder why?

www.jprecruit.com

CAREERS IN COMMUNICATIONS

My clients are world leaders in the design, manufacture and operation of advanced radio, data and telecoms equipment and networks. Opportunities exist in:-

* System Design
* Network Planning
* Project Management
* Test Engineering
* Installation / Commissioning
* Technical Support
* Training

Contact John Darby, quoting ref: 42 on 01727 818704 or email to johnd@jprecruit.com

JOHN PRODGER PLC
The Courtyard, Alban Park, Hatfield Road,
St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL4 0LA
TEL 01727 841101 FAX 01727 838272

JOHN PRODGER

ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE OF SCIENCE SHRIVENHAM

EXERCISE SHRIVENHAM LOIPE 2000
A NORDIC SKIING EXPEDITION TO SERRE CHEVALIER, FRANCE

On 4 January 2000 eleven personnel from the Royal Military College of Science (RMCS) Shrivenham departed for Villeneuve, Serre Chevalier, France. The expedition was split into two phases, a training phase followed by a racing phase. The main aim of the expedition was to race in the HQ Land Command Championships.

The group consisted of nine novices; hence we were expecting to enter an inexperienced team in the Championship races. Although a Nordic Skiing Expedition goes annually from Shrivenham, Ex Shrivenham Loipe 2000 was the first expedition to include females. Due to the original team being six foot tall blokes, the kit was not suitable for the three girls. So in true girlie fashion, we went shopping! An afternoon later and a slightly smaller balance of the teams' funds, we had all the gear and absolutely no idea!

Which leads into the ten day training phase. This involved daily lessons with **Steve** 'Ned' **Kelly**, a BASI 2 Instructor, who we shared with a team from 1 Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment. The standard of coaching we received was excellent and very much needed by all. After having been shown one end of a ski from the other we were hard into the training and the aching muscles followed suit. All of the novices soon realised that it was definitely an expedition and not a holiday they had let themselves in for.

OCdt Sarah 'knickers' Clifford - Strutting my stuff!

A hard day at the office - 'Who told them lycra's fashionable?'

Ned first taught us how to classic ski, the technique used mainly for the longer distance races. Everyone started to pick it up very quickly, except for our resident 'entertainment on skis', **Bernard** 'Bucky' **O'Hare** who on every downhill could only stop if he ran into a stationary object! With only a few days left of the training phase we were introduced to skating. This was much the same as the roller-blade training we had done prior to the expedition. This technique is used in all biathlons and the patrol race. It can be likened to Marmite, you either love it or hate it, but this can probably be attributed to the fact that you can either do it or you can't. To round off the last few days of training the patrol race team decided to practice with the required weight for the race. Unfortunately the scales they used were broken and they later found out that they had been training with twice as much weight as was necessary.

After a day of rest and recuperation, it was time to put our expert training to the test. The first race of the Championships was the 10km Classic Novice race, quite a daunting task for all, especially those who find running ten kilometres rather uninviting, mentioning no names **OCdt Danny** 'Shep' **Sheppard**! The race went surprisingly well, with the worst bit being the second teams lycra racing suits, circa 1970 that would win every 'bad taste' party. The next race was the 4 X 7½km Relay, where the first two legs are Classic Skiing and the last two are freestyle (either Classic or Skating). As well as the first team, Shrivenham entered personnel in two Ad Hoc teams with the help of a RAF Officer and two girls from the Adjutant General Corps. This race was our first introduction to mass starts. Unluckily for our Commanding Officer, **Lt Col S P Owen** Irish Guards, the skier in front of him proved to be a bit of an obstacle when he fell a few metres from the start. For the 15km team and individual Classic race the location for the race moved further up the valley. An earlier recce found that the snow was sheet ice in places. This proved a bit of a problem when deciding what wax to put on the skis. Wax is used to help the skis stick to the snow when going uphill. There are various different types of wax to choose from depending on the snow or air temperature and the snow condition. The team captain, **Capt Bill Anderson** Royal Signals was first off from the team. After lots of experimenting and sending spies out around the other teams, he came to the conclusion to put some of every wax on. This waxing technique worked so well that he ended up having trouble going down hill.

The 4 X 7½km Biathlon was the first opportunity for most of the team to ski with a rifle on their back. The concept of a rifle barrel being inches from the back of your head really concentrates the mind. The race loop was round an area of Loipe we had trained on so we knew the terrain quite well. The basics of a Biathlon are that a distance is skied to a range where five targets are fired on in the prone position, another lap is skied, then another five targets are fired on whilst standing and a final lap is skied to the finish. If a target is missed, a penalty lap of two hundred metres is done; hence if all five are missed an extra kilometre has to be skied. It is amazing how focusing that type of pressure can be.

By now, a great rivalry had been struck up with The Royal Anglian team encouraged by our shared instructor **Steve** 'Ned' **Kelly**, who had been playing one team off against the other for the whole of the training phase. The positions and times were close and the competition was building. It was all down to the Patrol Race. Preparations were thorough, even down to the home embroidered RMCS cap badges. The hard work paid off; Shrivenham was awarded the highest points for the inspection. Then it was down to the real tough stuff, as dressed in their white 'leave nothing to the imagination' lycra suits they set off on the 25km challenge. The route is only marked by checkpoints, and it is up to the discretion of the leader to decide the method that the team uses to get to them. Some of the checkpoints involve doing a Command Task, which can include anything from reading a distant sign with binoculars or firing on a tactical range. The team were going strong when they came to a down hill off-piste section, hard enough to negotiate on a snowboard, definitely interesting on cross-country skis. **Lt Andy**

'Kamikaze' **Wyatt** RLC did an impressive head-plant almost managing to knock himself out. He went on dizzily to shoot impressively on all the ranges. The Royal Anglians would have beaten Shrivenham by one second but as Justice would have it, they were disqualified along with a couple of other teams for missing out the first checkpoint. The team was rewarded with a well-earned overall place of sixteenth for the Patrol Race.

To round off an excellent expedition, the final day was spent downhill skiing, which for **Bernard** 'Bucky' **O'Hare** was his worst nightmare. All that was left was the official prize giving where the biggest surprise of the expedition came when Shrivenham won the prize for best range shooting on the patrol race. It was agreed that **Lt Andy Wyatt** RLC should be knocked out more often. The final results showed a very impressive second place for Shrivenham's Combined Nordic and Alpine Teams in the 4th Divisional Championships. With the obligatory minibus breakdown and big plans for our return, we unhappily set off back to the real world, well Shrivenham anyway!

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT BASSINGBOURN

1 TRAINING SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj John Norris**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Tony Slaney**

THE VISIT OF SOINC(A) 7 FEBRUARY 2000

It was a bleak February day, brightened only by the dazzling wit of the OC, as he cracked timeless classic after classic to enchant the extravagant pipe puffing SOINC(A). Standing gracefully beside him, the towering and majestic figure of the SSM, powerful yet compassionate. Flitting amidst the darkened shadows darted the bronzed and elegantly cut Adonis known more informally as the 2IC.

It was after a well earned lunch break, where incidentally **SSM** 'Taff' **Jolly** embarrassed himself by stealing all the prawn vol-u-vents, that the SOINC(A) took a visit to Echo Tp who were in the process of conducting Weapon Handling Tests. From there he went on to the palace of Bravo Tp accommodation. Here he was subjected to recruits at their rawest, a scrawny bunch of men and women, who were in some cases meeting our Officer in Chief within 30 minutes of being in the Army. 'The future of the Corps is in safe hands, Sir!' cried the OC as he hurriedly ushered the SOINC(A) away whilst raising his fist to **Capt Karl Jeeves**, the Troop Commander. Following this awesome display the SOINC(A) moved on to witness newly promoted **Capt Alex Clixby** in the full throws of a map reading lesson with Charlie Tp, 'We are here……no here!'

The day was a huge success and had offered the SOINC(A) a real chance to meet Recruits, from the infant stages of training right up to soldiers who are about to pass out of Phase One. It also gave the permanent staff a chance to pass across their views and opinions of this environment. After a final wash up with the CO, **Lt Col Ian Condie** R SIGNALS, the big man was swiftly issued black masking tape and ushered away to Stansted airport to dig in.

Finally a farewell to 1 Squadron's longest term recruit who finally leaves us to join the REME on 21 February after passing out of Phase One over four months ago. All the best **Craftsman Bell**.

SOinC(A) presents Capt Clixby with his Captains slides, but advises him to keep hold of the set he's got on

RECENT CHARITY EVENTS

As well as getting on with the normal training programme Charlie Tp have also raised close to £1000 for the NSPCC. This money was raised in our 'Gym Marathon' where the Troop rowed the English Channel, ran a marathon, cycled to Scotland and climbed Everest (on a stepper!) Thankfully the totals were a combined Troop effort and not each individual doing all of the distances. This way it was a fun, but challenging event (especially as it was so soon after all the food and drink of Christmas!). Bravo Tp organised a day of Wheelchair basketball to raise funds for the Great Britain Wheelchair Basketball Association. The charity founder, **Gordon Perry** took the trouble to travel down to Bassingbourn armed with a number of wheelchairs which the Troop managed to fall out of on a regular basis. A competition was organised amongst the Recruits and the Training team, the rules are much the same and very quickly the Permanent staff team proved too much for the Recruits and romped home unbeaten. For everyone the day had been an insight into the challenges that face people with disabilities every day but also that with support these difficulties can be overcome. Bravo Tp managed to raise well over £1000 for **Gordon's** charity and he plans to spend the money to buy a nine year old boy a new sports wheelchair.

EXERCISE SPARTAN HIKE - *by Capt Liz Allan*
Maj John Norris Royal Signals
Capt Hugh Crowther SASC
Capt Liz Allan R Signals
Sgt 'Tucker' **Jenkins** RE
Cpl 'Wicksy' **Wicks** PWRR
Cpl Paul RE

After a long drive down to the Div Champs in Sierre Chievalier, France, a weary team finally managed to move into their accommodation on Saturday 8 January 2000. Day One of our grueling training programme was to start the following day. At least it would have been grueling had any of us actually been able to ski. Day One started with some basic skate techniques taught to us by our resident expert **Capt Hugh Crowther**. After some five hours on the flat we were able to manage a small circuit, although the hill still had us herring boning up it even though it was only 2mtrs high. Tired and sore bodies were dragged back to the 'Frog' that night in order to drown our sorrows. This skiing on the flat wasn't as easy as it looked. Day Two consisted of more skating this time over a hilly circuit, the day was completed with a very important waxing lesson, kindly administered by 'Craig' and 'Mark' from 3 RSME. This was a much needed lesson because now as we had skating cracked, it was time to move onto the 'classic' technique. We rested our now very tired and aching bodies on Day Three ready to learn' classic' skiing for the rest of the week. With 'classic' cracked and a few range days thrown in it was time for our first race, exactly a week since arriving. We had the experts scared and running for at least a milli second, and we all managed to complete our '10km classic' without killing ourselves. An impressive result without doubt, given that a week earlier we could hardly complete a 1km circuit. The races varied through the week from 10km to the 20km Patrol Race, and in both classic and skate styles, with a couple of Biathlon races thrown in for good measure. All in all fairly physical and demanding races. So what about all this Après Ski we had heard about, yes we managed to fit a bit of socialising in. Mostly out of principle since our Downhill team-mates had decided that their bodies were definitely temples, and that they would not be socialising. Luckily for them, the Nordic Team had pretty bruised and battered bodies but no temples, and so we were able to keep the good name of ATR(B). However, I will admit that we did have an orange juice on pre-race nights. A fantastic time was had by the Nordic Team, which had been put together the day before Xmas leave, because of some last minute dramas. We worked extremely hard , pushed our bodies and lungs to the limit, and we played extremely hard which is defiantly in the spirit of Adventurous Training.

WRAY COMPANY
Coy Comd **Maj Rick Licence MBE**
CSM **WO2 (CSM)** 'Taff' **Jolly**

Many of the Corps are unaware of Wray Coy's role within the ATR. At present we have two Army Foundation Scheme Platoons, 1 Rehabilitation Platoon and 1 Common Military Syllabus (Recruit) Platoon. Wray Coy's primary role is the Army Foundation Scheme, which is designed for those recruits who have failed to meet the initial joining standard.

THE CORPS ELEMENT

The hierarchy is predominately Royal Signals, spearheaded by **Maj Rick Licence** and ably supported by **CSM** 'Taff' **Jolly**. Although the 2IC post is normally that of an Infanteer, (currently RRF), it is shortly to be filled by **Capt Alun Crapper** Royal Signals, who will have to learn to juggle his balls as OC AFS and Coy 2IC. Welcome and the best of luck!

WINNING THE INTER COMPANY/SQUADRON BASKETBALL COMPETITION

On the sporting front, the 'minnows' of Wray Coy are doing remarkably well. With only half the manpower of the other Coy/Sqns the Company is in the top half of the table in the CO's Cup, and are the recent winners of the inter-Company/Squadron Basketball Competition. **Maj Rick Licence** - who will reach his half century this year - is still showing the youngsters of this multi cap-badge environment a thing or two on the sporting front. So much so, that along with the CSM he has been selected (requested) to represent the Regiment in the finals of the Divisional Minor Units Basketball Competition. **CSM** 'Taff' **Jolly** has come out of retirement, dusted his boots down and has started playing rugby again, captaining the Regimental side and even being called up for the Corps Team (desperate times). **Sgt Phil Graham** and **Cpl Rob Dawson** are part of the Regimental Football Squad who have reached the last eight in the Army Minor Units Cup.

HIGHLIGHTS

Raised £1,200 for the Royal Star and Garter Home for Disabled Servicemen and Servicewomen. The Company was tasked to organise the Regimental all Ranks Dance. This monumental task was handed to **WO2 (CSM)** 'Taff' **Jolly** who, through years of deft ball handling, took it in his stride and produced a memorable night. All profits from the bar and draw were presented to the Royal Star and Garter Home for Disabled Servicemen and Servicewomen.

Ken (in the green top) presents the Army hierarchy with a hair replacement cheque
Back Row (L-R): Maj R. A. Licence, WO1 (RSM) K. Lowerson, Lt Col I. A. J. Condie
Front Row (L-R): WO2 (CSM) M. Jolly and Ken
(a Senior Committee Member of the Royal Star & Garter Home)

BABY BOOM

The year 2000 is to be a baby boom year for the Company with **Marnie Slater** due any day now, **Angela Jolly** is expecting in August (the CSM hasn't stopped smiling since Christmas) and the OC is to be a grandfather again, in October.

LATE NEWS

It's been a relatively quiet few months in 1 Training Squadron. On 17 March 2000, 1 Sqn had their Millennium party. A little late, one might say, but none-the-less an excellent night. With the night taking place on St. Patrick's Day, the theme was of course Irish. There were some top outfits from the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Mick** 'Boyzone' **Boyle, Capt Karlos** 'Potato Famine' **Jeeves, WO2 Tony** 'Santa is Irish' **Slaney** and **Sgt Paula** 'Wilmaaaa' **Matheson**. This month we also say a big welcome to new Troop Commanders, **Lt Dave** 'Bungle' **Jackson** and **Capt Rhidian** 'Get up the Hill' **Jones**.

The Squadron Millenium celebration
(L-R): Cpl Daz Lythe, Cpl Percy Percival, Capt Karl Jeeves, SSM Tony Slaney, Mrs 'Capt Jeeves', Cpl Harry Ramsden and Sgt Paula Matheson

ALPHA TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Dave** 'Bungle' **Jackson**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Brian Clark**

This month Alpha Tp has enjoyed the delights of adventure training, where a week of cold water and spectacular views awaited them. **Sig Dongre** found that caves and cold water are not a combination he would like to encounter again, whilst **Sig Foley** found that a wet suit is a lot different to a dry suit. **Sig Keightley** who took well over 10mins to lower himself over the cliff edge wins no prizes for speed abseiling.

Alpha Tp says hello to **Lt Dave** 'JOTES' **Jackson** who has arrived to make the Troop office even more untidy and welcomes back **Cpl** 'Is my chest big enough' **Mitchell**. We say a short goodbye to **Cpl Nuttall** who enjoys Training Regiments so much he's gone to Litchfield for six months.

BRAVO TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Karl Jeeves**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Paula Matheson**

Bravo Tp continue to strike fear into timid hearts as their bold team of training gurus continue to transform six stone civilian weaklings, into powerful, industrious and 'square and erect to the front,' young soldiers. Huge congratulations go to **Sgt Matheson** who is shortly to become **SSgt Matheson** and a warm welcome to **Cpl Grandon** Royal Engineers, who joins us on attachment from 28 Sqn RE. Thank-you to the NCO's of Bravo Tp for organising the Squadron Christmas function which was held on the 17 March. Curiously enough that was St. Patrick's Day as well but the SSM was still convincing in his Santa Suit and **Sgt Matheson** still had 'Rosy Cheeks!'

The arrival of seven Fijian recruits into the Troop has been excellent. They have settled in very well and are providing an excellent cultural mix, which is greatly appreciated; especially at Church Parade when they provide their 'Barber-shop' style singing to entertain the congregation. The Fijian recruits gave the Squadron Second-in-Command, **Capt Mick** 'Triathlon King?' **Boyle** a bit of a shock on the Week Five Drill Test. After the test had finished they approached **Capt Boyle** and started to do the Fijian Haka! If they hadn't passed the drill test before this, they had certainly passed it now. Who would dare tell them they had failed - Not **Capt Boyle**, who was already donning his running spikes to make a quick escape!

CHARLIE TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Alex Clixby**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Dave Honeyman**

Charlie Tp has had another large manpower turnaround over the last few weeks. Leaving the Troop has been **Cpl Sidney** 'Meek and Mild' **Cleworth**, who has now begun his Class One Course at Blandford, and **Cpl Dave** 'New Boy' **Knowler**, who has been posted to ATR Litchfield for a short time to undertake recruit selection. With the loss of these two bastions of the troop, we are due to receive **Cpl** 'Smudge - When I was in the EOD!' **Smith** who has been busy working with 28 Sqn RE. Welcome also to new girl, **Cpl Lindsay Payton** posted in from 30 Sig Regt. The 'old guard' consisting of **Capt Alex Clixby**, **Sgt Dave** 'Go Celtic' **Honeyman** and **Cpl** 'Taff - Where's my Pension?' **Baynham** remain to give the Troop its continuity.

During January Charlie Tp completed a challenging gym marathon that consisted of running, cycling, stepping and rowing on gymnasium machinery. It was a fun day and Charlie Tp managed to raise £1000 for the NSPCC, which was presented at the Troop's Parents Evening on 2 March, the night before pass-off. **Mrs Brenda Alexander**, Community Fund Raising Manager from the NSPCC, was present to receive the cheque. The pass-off parade went exceptionally well, as did the celebrations afterwards. **Sig Wesley** 'Yes Sir, anything you say' **Doyle** scooping prizes for Best Recruit and Best Shot; **Sig Gary** 'Run Forrest' **Oakes** gaining the Best PT Prize and **Sig Anthony Caswell** achieving prize for Best Endeavour. The training team has now just finished a much needed training break and picked up a massive Troop of 43 recruits - fun times ahead!

DELTA TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Kate Simmonds**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Sam Parke**

DELTA TROOP
RAISE £3000 IN AID OF LEUKAEMIA RESEARCH

Recruits from Delta Tp (Intake 679) have recently taken part in an arduous and fun charity event, to raise money for Leukaemia research. Delta Tp from 1 Trg Sqn has over the years taken part in some hair-raising events and raised a substantial amount for various charities. For this particular charity event the recruits had to make their way to Calais, France (in the confines of a gymnasium!) for a GIANT SUPER MARKET SWEEP. Unfortunately for the recruits they had to make their own way there and under their own steam. The journey was broken down into a run, row and lastly a bike ride. The run consisted of a two mile run each in a relay to make up the distance from Bassingbourn to the Dover ferries port. The distance rowed by each individual was one kilometre to represent - crossing the Channel. They then finally had to cycle the remaining distance of 2km to Calais. The 36 members of the Troop raised just under £3000 for the charity and perhaps a few drops of perspiration were shed in doing it! The recruits have also competed in an inter-section competition using both there mental and physical agility. The competitions included a cross country race, their final RMT times, Map reading tests, football games, drill tests and also their APWT results. It was a close competition throughout the eleven weeks, with both Two and Three Sections lying

neck to neck until the final drill test. Two Section lead by **Cpl Lythe** had the edge and won the competition overall. Well done, to all those who took part. The training team now look forward to starting afresh with intake 728 for another gruelling twelve week programme!!

FOXTROT TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Liz** 'On her way to Wales' **Allan**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Craig Purdon**

Foxtrot Tp would firstly like to wish a big fair well to Troop Commander, **Capt Liz Allan** who has just been posted to 14 Sig Regt, where she will assume the role as Squadron Second-in-Command. She will be missed by the Troop and it is hoped that she manages to stay awake whilst navigating. Welcome back to **Capt Craig Thompson-Smith**, who returns from attachment to 28 Sqn RE and rejoins us, replacing **Capt Allan**.

Huge CONGRATULATIONS to **Cpl Tez** 'Hat' **Blakeley** on his promotion to Sergeant. We wish him and his family all the very best in their move to 32 Regt RA, Larkhill.

Foxtrot Tp currently consists of 46 recruits. They are currently in Week Five of training, about to undertake their Week Five Drill Test, hoping that they will be awarded their long weekend. It's been a very busy, but enjoyable five weeks. The highlight of which was the Week Three activity when the Troop went bowling at Stevenage. It was a really good night, with recruits and permanent staff letting their hair down. **Sgt Craig** 'King Pin' **Purdon** was the star of the night with a score of 65 (massive or what!), which was beaten by all but one of the recruits. I don't think there'll be many calls on **Sgt Purdon's** answering machine asking him to play in the major league.

ROYAL SIGNALS PASS OFF PARADE ATR BASSINGBOURN
by Capt Liz Allan

With the band playing, the sun shining and the proud parents and friends clapping, it was time for another Pass Off Parade for the Army Training Regiment Bassingbourn. Three Troops passed off which included Royal Engineers, Infantry from the Queen's Division and the 22 members of Foxtrot Troop Royal Signals.

The Army is a small organisation and often as people are posted from unit to unit they are reunited with old friends and colleagues. This time it was the turn of the Parade Commander, **Maj Rick Licence MBE** and the Inspecting Officer, **Maj Gen A. E. G. Truluck CBE** late Royal Signals. The two had served together 14 years previously as Regimental Sergeant Major and Commanding Officer respectively, of 3 Division Signals Regiment, then based in Germany. **Maj Gen Truluck** was greeted on to the parade square by his old Sergeant Major, (now Officer Commanding Wray Company) where he inspected the troops.

Foxtrot Troop, Royal Signals, commanded by **Capt Liz Allan** with her Troop SNCO, **Sgt Craig Purdon**, were second to be inspected and despite the long wait there were no light-headed recruits. After inspecting the troops, **Maj Gen Truluck** then took the salute on the march past, which gave the recruits a chance to stretch their legs. The presentation of the prizes followed, with each prize winning recruit marching out in front of the spectators to have their prize presented to them by the General. The prize winners in Foxtrot Troop included **Sig Alun Dyde** for Best Recruit, **Sig James Wilby** for best at Physical Training, **Sig Robert Gilbey** for Best Shot and **Sig Daniel Edge** for Best Endeavour. Following the General's speech, thanking friends and family for their support, it was time for the troops to march off. The final march past is possibly the most moving moment for the proud parents and friends, many of whom have never seen their sons and daughters so well turned out.

Pass Off Day is without doubt the most enjoyable day of training for both the recruits and permanent staff and is a fitting end to their Phase 1 training. This day was made extra special with a late Commanding Officer being presented the parade by his former Regimental Sergeant Major, just like the good old days! (Rumour has it that a large dent was made in **Maj Rick Licence's** malt collection the evening prior to the parade. However, these rumours are yet to be verified).

Maj Gen A. E. G. Truluck CBE (L) and Maj Rick Licence MBE outside the Sergeants' Mess at Bassingbourn

ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM

Blandford Camp, Blandford, DORSET DT11 8RH Tel; 01258 482 248 Fax; 01258 482 084

Communications, Science and Technology

Interactive Displays

Science & Technology of Communications

Enigma Codes & Code-breaking
Special Operations Executive

New for 2000 -"Who Dares Wins"

An interactive display telling the story of the Long Range Desert Group and SAS

Blandford Camp
Blandford
DORSET DT11 8RH
Tel: 01258 482 248

Opening Times;
Mon – Fri (All Year)10.00 – 5.00.
Weekends (Mar-Oct)10.00 – 4.00.

263 (HARROGATE) SIGNAL SQUADRON ARMY APPRENTICES COLLEGE

Sqn Comd **Maj Steve France**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Mike Senior**

RAWSON TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Colin** 'George' **Alexander**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Mark** 'Robbo' **Roberts**

FIRST IMPRESSIONS - *by AT Jordan Powell*

When I first arrived at the Army Apprentice College I was shown to my accommodation by one of the senior apprentices. Although he was a senior apprentice he couldn't have been more than fourteen years old! This instantly stuck in my mind. What was this place going to be like? Then I got a bed space opposite an absolutely huge bold Geordie, who looked about twenty, and had such a strong accent it took almost a week before anyone could understand anything he said. Fortunately I had to change rooms, as there had been some mistake, and I was saved from his endless mumblings about something or other.

It did not take long before I had settled in and our training was underway. The first seven weeks were a mix of Drill, Skill at Arms, First Aid, Map Reading and Fieldcraft. The majority of this training was conducted by our section commander, **Cpl Bob Ayres** (SB) from 2 PARA. He arrived after the first week of induction by which time we had been led to believe that he was a psychopathic, mad para whose reputation was infamous. When **Cpl Ayres**, or 'Psycho Bob' as we have now come to know him, arrived he was a lot of what we expected. However, as our training progressed he became more approachable, which gave us a feeling that we had earned his respect. Our first seven weeks peaked with Ex Milk Teeth, our first exercise, on which we put into practice everything we had learnt. Before we knew it the exercise was all over and it was time to go on leave. This, I felt, was an achievement as this was supposed to be the make or break point of our training. On return to camp, after a refreshing week long drinking session, we were treated with a bit more respect and given a few privileges such as civilian clothing!

The second half or the term saw the start of our education in the form of maths and Military Studies. These lessons quickly got very boring and with only the thought of External Leadership to keep us motivated we soldiered on. External Leadership involves one week in Wales going Hill Walking, Rock Climbing and Canoeing. More than this it is a good break from the College. The week was great, especially the walking expedition, as it snowed on the first which created some excellent opportunities for some snowball section attacks and just generally throwing ourselves around the Welsh hillsides. This more or less brings us to the end of the first term and the mid point of our training. Only fourteen more weeks to go!

SCOTT TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Simon Collyer AGC (ETS)**
Tp Sgt **Sgt** 'Waggy' **Wagstaff**

EXERCISE DRAGONS TEETH - *by AT Boothman*

After a kit inspection and dinner we departed camp equipped for the long three nights that were to follow. We all tried to get some sleep on the coach, but were a little anxious about what lay ahead. We arrived at the drop-off point and following a quick session of battle prep we deployed as a Troop to find our harbour location. This was the first time that the Troop had gone very far with full kit, and you could see that people were finding it very difficult. Once we had occupied the harbour area some of us were given our first responsibilities as apprentice tradesman section commanders and Section 2ICs. We coped well with our tasks and the first night went smoothly, but I still had the same old stag duties. After being briefed on timings and locations the following morning we were tested on camouflage and concealment, target indication, judging distance and observation. The next day we watched a fire and movement demonstration, after which we completed our own fire and movement tests, under the direction of **Cpl** 'Smudge' **Smith** and **Sgt** 'Waggy' **Wagstaff**. In the afternoon we were given a brief on the concept of orders, before receiving a brief set of orders for the tactical occupation of a new patrol harbour.

After we tabbed to our new harbour location we completed our harbour routine, stood to and went on our first tactical night patrol with actions on light and different movement formations. On the final day we bugged out at 0415hrs. It was freezing cold and our ponchos were stiff with ice, we got to our ERV and began our administration tests. Everyone was very cold and so were made to do exercises to keep warm. Following an extensive litter sweep of an entire wood, where each of us collected a sandbag full of other people's rubbish, we tabbed back to the pick up point. Our exercise was over and everyone is now looking forward to Ex Sarah Sands.

GENESIS CONSULTANCY
Providing Recruitment Solutions

TECHNICIANS, OPERATORS AND TELEMECHS REQUIRED

Genesis Consultancy specialise in placing ex-Corps members of all ranks and trades with the telecomms industry nationwide.

A wide variety of opportunities currently exist for Class 2 and Class 1 Techs, Operators and Telemechs as well as Foreman of Signals and Yeoman of Signals of all ranks who have decided to leave the Corps.

In addition to immediate requirements, we have medium and long-term requirements from our clients and can assist in all matters concerning these opportunities throughout the period running up to the date of discharge.

If you have decided to leave the Corps call us today or forward a detailed C.V.

Genesis Consultancy Ltd.
12-50 Kingsgate Road, Kingston, Surrey KT2 5AA
Tel: 020 8547 4141 Fax: 020 8547 4181
e-mail: admin@genesisconsultancy.co.uk
www.genesisconsultancy.co.uk

CHANGE OF ADDRESS?
DON'T FORGET TO LET US KNOW

SONIC
COMMUNICATIONS

SKILLED ELECTRONICS TECHNICIANS LEAVING THE FORCES – PLEASE COME AND TALK TO US!

We have immediate vacancies for hands-on bench technicians familiar with handportable and mobile radio accessories, video, microwave, telemetry, black boxes, prototype projects, and vehicle fits that can provide a high level of job satisfaction.

Please send brief letter with C.V. to:-

David J. Bryan – Managing Director
SONIC COMMUNICATIONS (INT) LTD
Birmingham International Park
Starley Way
Bickenhill
Birmingham
B37 7HB
ENGLAND

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT

REMEMBRANCE OF WO2 (PC) PAUL COLLINS

On Tuesday 29 February 2000, a short service of remembrance was held by **Padre Moss** in the Blandford Garrison church in respect of the late **WO2 Paul Collins** R Signals. It was a sombre period for old friends to pay their respects to a dear friend who had passed away . **Paul** was a great character who was well respected by all who remembered him when 30 Sig Regt was based at Blandford. Our thoughts and condolences are sent out to his loving wife **Tina** and also to **Paul's** family

3 SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Andy Duncan**
SSM **WO2 Pete Tasker**

Tp Comd L&U Tp **WO1 Tony Sartorius**
Tp SSgt L Tp **SSgt Chippy Chapman**

EXERCISE LIGHTNING FOLLY

Lightning Tp have recently conducted another weekend exercise on Salisbury Plain introducing soldiers to the delights of living in a basha. Unfortunately for the Troop cadre the weather was incredibly mild for early March and we did not see any rain at all. The young technicians under the guidance of most of the re-traders enhanced their military skills at some of the more demanding stands including mine clearance, unarmed combat and the mandatory survival stands. A special mention must go to **Sig** 'Frankie' **Smart** for the way in which she dispatched the section chicken without a care in the world.

Having participated in all the stands and having cooked themselves a gourmet meal from their 24-hour ration packs, the potential technicians embarked on their night navigation exercise. The sight of a tech with a map in their hands instilled fear into **SSgt** 'Chippy' **Chapman** and **Cpl** 'Dad' **Delaney** (the resident Radio Relay Ops). Spookily all of the techs managed to find their way around the course and were in bed before midnight. Slumber was short lived with a rather rude awakening at 0500hrs by the Tp OC demanding to know where the location of the ERV and the soldiers to take him there. The re-traders were the only soldiers to question why the ERV was a mile away from the harbour area. The exercise concluded with an excellent morning on the ranges with the soldiers being introduced to the 9mm Browning, followed with a tab back to the armoury.

EXERCISE LIGHTNING FOLLY - *by Sig Brown*

Lightning Folly was an interesting exercise. I have never been on an exercise where we have to look after and care for an innocent chicken – only to kill the poor little thing the following morning! Then again it did defecate down my jacket (revenge is sweet)! We had the privilege of handling the Browning 9mm pistol under the watchful eye of **SSgt** 'Chippy' **Chapman**, which made a change from firing the SA80. The best part of the whole exercise was the Unarmed Combat stand instructed by **LCpl** 'Chelsea' **Reynolds**. We were taught a variety of techniques from disarming weapons to pressure points, followed by a two-minute battle with an opponent. It's something I'd like to have another go at given the chance. Fortunately, the weather held out for the night navigation, which was a good job because I think we'd have got more lost had it been raining. Over all Lightning Folly was a worthwhile experience enjoyed by most people there.

EXERCISE LIGHTNING FOLLY - BATTLEFIELD UNARMED COMBAT

by Sig Marsh, Lightning Troop

On Friday 10 March 80 members of Lightning Tp, 3 Sqn deployed to Salisbury Plain for Exercise Lightning Folly. Various stands were set up of which one was the Battlefield Unarmed Combat stand instructed by **LCpl** 'Marquis de Sade' **Reynolds** of Lightning Tp, and assisted by **Sigs Dent** and **Marsh**.

Before the exercise got underway on the Saturday **Sig** 'It hurts' **Dent** and **Sig** 'Vikki' **Marsh** were taught the basic skills required for the days activities and were to act out a scenario in which **Sig Dent** would attempt to mug or restrain **Sig Marsh** with a pistol. **Sig Marsh** would then disarm and contain **Sig Dent** using the techniques taught by **LCpl Reynolds**. Throughout the day all eight sections were taught a series of defensive manoeuvres. They were shown a few pressure points, a variety of restraints, and at the end of each lesson the section had a quick grappling session using as many holds and pressure points they could remember from the lesson. The only casualty, **Sig Nichols,** was evacuated to Blandford with a shoulder injury and consequently missed out on the fun. All in all it was apparent that each member of each section (and the demonstration puppets) enjoyed the Battlefield Unarmed Combat and at the same time benefited from the new skills they had learnt.

DRIVER TRAINING

Mr Norman Harrison, HIO Driver Training at 11 Sig Regt congratulates **Sig Pitamber Thapa,** QGS, on passing his driving test first time after only 13hrs of tuition. His instructor was **Mr Dave Moyes** of Driver Training Partnership. The average time for a Ghurka soldier to pass their test is 28hrs. **Sig Pitamber** arrived in Blandford in January to train as a technician.

OUTSTANDING SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

Sig Helen Caplin is shown here with some of the trophies she has amassed during her time in Lightning Tp. Not only has she recently qualified as a Systems Technician but she has managed to enjoy all sports available to her here at Blandford, excelling in most! She has represented the Squadron in the Harrogate Cup Competition in basketball, netball, swimming and athletics and due to her outstanding ability she was selected to represent the Regiment at most of these disciplines. To begin the list of her accomplishments **Sig Caplin** competed with the Regimental basketball team which achieved the runners up position in the 5th Division Championships and was selected for the Army Championships. She has been selected to represent the Corps in netball and cross-country running. As an exceptionally talented cross-country runner she has been a prominent member of the very successful Corps Team. She is currently the 5th Division Junior Champion and was awarded the Junior Female Runner-Up in the Army Cross-Country Championships. More recently **Sig Caplin** competed in the Blandford Tower Half Marathon and went on to win the Individual Junior Race. She was also a member of the successful Royal Signals female team. **Sig Caplin** has had an outstanding tour at Blandford and for someone so young she is a role model for all the young soldiers.

ARMY MILLENNIUM CHAMPIONSHIP 2000

by Ishwor Prasad Gurung

The Army Martial Arts Championship 2000 were held on 18 March in the P & RTC gymnasium, Aldershot. More than 100 participants from different units and battalions took part in Martial Arts events which included: Tae Kwon Do (WTF & ITF), Karate, and Pattern Shows with and without various sorts of weapons.

15 soldiers from the Regiment, including our Tae Kwon Do Master - **Cpl Harka Gurung** took part in the competition. Everyone participated in the coloured belts category in both the Sparring and Pattern Show competition except **Cpl Harka** who was part of senior belt category. Although it was a first time for all of us in such a competition we all fought and achieved our best performances in the respective events. At the end, we managed to win the entire individual and team events and received trophies as 5 Division and Army Champions in the coloured belts categories. **Tulsi Shahi**, **Milan Rai** and **Ishwor Prasad Gurung**, **Ratna Gurung**, **Bal Krishna Rai**, **Pawan Sherchan**, **Emett** and **Rolle** won various Sparring and Pattern Show competition events. **Deepak**, **Ratna**, **Gopal**, **Prithi**, **Bhim** and **Mekhman** also took part in the competition from 11 Sig Regt. All the winners received prizes from the President of the Army Martial Arts Association, **Brig G. O. Hopkins**. **Master Cpl Harka** also officiated a different competition.

Even though it was the team's first competition they achieved outstanding results. It certainly was an unforgettable and encouraging experience in the world of Martial Arts. The team has shown plenty of potential for the future and the whole Tae Kwon Do squad would like to thank the Regimental Martial Arts OIC, **WO2 Tasker** for his contribution to our team in providing various arrangements and encouragement throughout our training period.

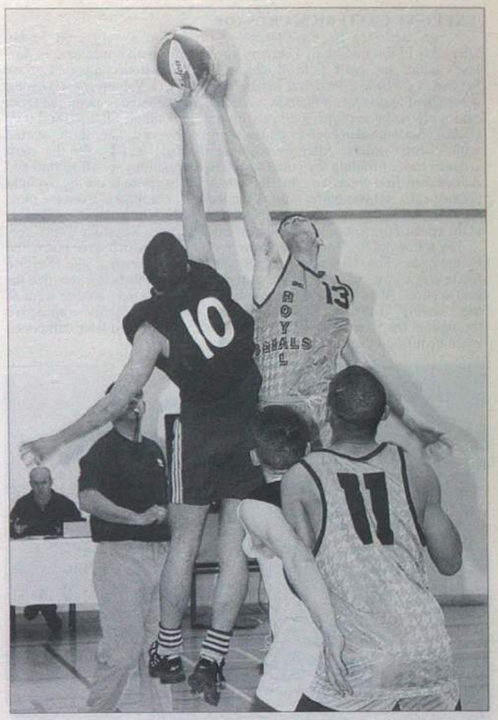
11 Sig Regt Tae Kwon Do team with their trophies

HARROGATE CUP – BASKETBALL COMPETITION

by WO1 G. Waters

The Harrogate Cup got off to a new start with the Inter-Squadron Basketball Competition which took place in the Garrison P&RT centre over the period 22-24 February 2000. Each Troop played two games in the preliminaries and Lightning Troop, 3 Sqn emerged the favourites, winning both the A & B strings. On Wednesday 23 February the third place playoff was contested between both teams from 1 Sqn, Kohima Tp versus Fighting Rhino Tp. The Rhinos held off a very offensive Kohima Tp with some good skilful play by **Sigs** 'Space Jam' **Rutter** and 'Herbie' **Hancox.** The semi-finals were also competed that evening - the first with a very convincing win by Lightning (A) over Beaufighter Tp 24-5. **Sigs Way** and 'Jock' **Miller** played magnificent, impressing the NBA scouts. The second semi-final contest was Lightning (B) vs Iron Tp. During a closely matched game Iron Tp edged Lightning by a score of 8–7. **Sigs Barton** and **Royal** are to be congratulated for motivating the 2 Sqn Team. Thursday 24 February, Beaufighter Tp managed to stop Lightning (B) in the fl playoff – preventing a 3 Sqn landslide. The referees had a hard time to keep up with the speed of play from one key to the other and Beaufighter eventually emerged victorious with the score 6-5.

Winners of The Harrogate Basketball Cup
Lightning Troop 'A' Team



Lightning v Iron Troop

The final was expected to be a close shave between Lightning (A) and Iron Tp but **Sigs Way** and 'Jock' **Miller** had different ideas, penetrating the 2 Sqn defence with some superb passing and shooting. Mid-way through the second half Iron Tp had to substitute **Sig Barton** with a leg injury. The 2 Sqn team were not able to capitalise on some golden rebound opportunities hitting their fair share of the ring and backboard. Lightning Tp were the clear champions with an outstanding win 33 – 7. After the final whistle was blown, the prizes were presented by the Commander RSS, **Col K. J. Hatfield** who praised all players and officials for a magnificent sporting competition. The three days was also a time to scout for the Regimental Basketball Team who picked up a few strong players to go on and compete well in the Inter Unit/Divisional games.

WESTHAVEN PRE-SCHOOL INVASION BY 2 SQUADRON

by Sig Wilkie 2 Sqn

When I first arrived at Westhaven Pre-School, I had imagined a derelict building. The crew from 2 Sqn selected for the task included **WO1 Fisher MBE** and **Cpl** 'Trigger' **Smith.** After a recce of the site they realized the amount of work that was required, increased the size of the working party and lengthened the time scale until completion (so no change to MOD projects then). 20 tins of brightly coloured paints would ensure that rooms would be greatly improved. **Sig** 'Prim and Proper' **Lucking** and **Sig** 'Grafter' **Wilkie** suggested that one of the rooms should be a Beach theme. **Sigs** 'Jock' **Aitken**, **Clark**, 'Moaning' **Moaghan** and 'Nail file' **Foster** set about painting the sand, clouds and the biggest sun going which brightened up the room with it's glowing smile. It created the exact atmosphere that we had hoped. Bright and cheerful was exactly what they were going to get! What made it even better was that there were always a couple of kids around to voice their opinions - thankfully they liked it. There was a real buzz in the air after we had finished that room and already plans were underway for the next. Suggestions ranged from dinosaurs in a tropical rainforest to Star Wars. In the end we decided that the last room was so bright (perhaps a little too bright) that we ought to go for something a little different (subdued). We settled on a starry night, interspersed with cartoon characters to make the room a bit more interesting. **Sig** 'Bonkers' **Bladen** led the charge with paintroller in hand and within a day it was done and looking the business.

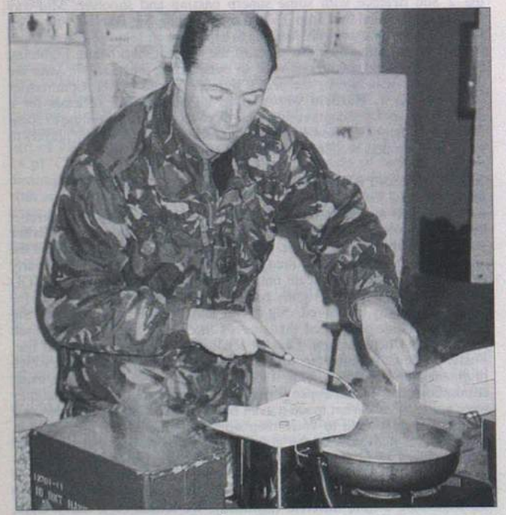
WO1 Fisher MBE had the ingenious idea of bringing along an OHP and some cartoon sketches. We projected them onto the wall so they could then be traced and painted. When we had finished, we had Rugrats, Buzz Lightyear and a whole host of other children's characters plastered all over the walls. Overall, the five days we spent decorating were good fun, and it also brought a lot of people together in achieving this goal. The most rewarding experience was seeing the little children's faces light up when they saw the completed rooms. I'm sure it is now the best painted Pre-School in England!

EXERCISE CATTERICK CRUSADE

2 Sqn deployed on Ex Catterick Crusade on a very cold Friday afternoon in the middle of February for an informative weekend of low level tactics and basic field discipline. The Squadron comprised of six Sections of Phase 2 soldiers, led by eager JNCO Volunteers who were determined to command the best Sections. The daunted look on the faces said it all as the sections were met by the 'Screaming Skulls' (or Troop Cadre) who were also keen to get the show on the road. The 'show' started with Platoon orders. After overcoming the first and by far the most arduous task of finding the correct bergen, the sections set off to find and defend their first objective - the Harbour Area! Everything during daylight seemed easy and straightforward. Then there was darkness! Even the most mundane task of getting onto the metal track (which had now disappeared) at the edge of the wood, looked like an extract from a Keystone Cop video.

The following day consisted of a series of stands which were instructed by the cadre. The training was beneficial for all concerned. The Exercise finale was a series of command task stands, with points being awarded for best section. (Won by Section 6 – Iron Troop). Best field soldier went to **Sig** 'Gunny' **Ellis** of Beaufighter Tp, who was highly impressive throughout the Exercise for his admin skills, which were later dampened when he mislaid the trophy!

The SSM, **WO2 Neil** 'Hockey Hot Legs' **Fisher**, showed us his skills as a chef (which is why he is a SSM in the Signals!) and even tried to get the lads to taste his culinary delights. The delights came in handy for propping up the Landrover on the recovery stand.



BLANDFORD CYBER CAFÉ

At last the Royal School of Signals has caught up with the internet age! The 25th February saw the Grand Opening of a Cyber Café in the WRVS lounge in the Semaphore Arms. The project team, **Maj Louise Tomkins** and **Lt Col (Retd) MacDonald,** ensured that in spite of a number of roadblocks (wrong paint or faulty routers?) the Café was able to open as planned. Now, thanks to funding which was available to the RSS at short notice, soldiers can improve their computer literacy and surf. The café is open Mon to Fri and on Sundays and terminals can be booked in fi hour and 1 hour slots at a cost of only 75 pence per fi hour. So next time you are at the RSS keep in touch with email and surf the net for the latest edition of course exam questions!

The Comd, Col Ken Hadfield opens the Cyber Café with the touch of a button

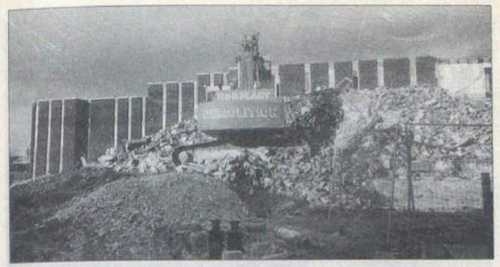
The Comd looks on as Sig MacPhee surfs the net

DEMOLITION
OF ANSON and BENBOW ACCOMMODATION BLOCKS

For the many soldiers of the Corps, past and present, who have 'done time' in the Anson and Benbow accommodation blocks - some good news for you all! Both blocks are being raised to the ground as part of the modernisation plans for Blandford garrison. Formerly built in the 1960's the towers have been a talking point for all of us who have had the pleasure. Benbow was finally laid to rest in January 2000 and Anson is scheduled to follow by the end of the year. Go to it!!

'Going'

'Going'



'Gone'

11 SIGNAL REGT LADIES HOCKEY

by Sig 'Tiggy' Burke-Smith

It is Wednesday 29 March and we are at Aldershot awaiting our first game against the SEME Ladies team. Just to put you in the picture we, 11 Signal Regt Ladies, are here to play in the Warrior Army Cup. The weather, of course, is miserable. We drew 2-2 against the SEME Ladies in a warm-up match. **SSgt Graham**, who was a defender in the match, made an outstanding run from our defensive position down to the other end of the pitch taking out all of the opposition players along the way to finish nicely with a goal.

Next we played 22 Fd Regt RA. We beat them 4 – 0. It was midfielder, **SSgt Nicky Thomas**, AGC, who led the way during this game scoring all four of the goals. However, this would not have been possible without the efforts of **Sig Amanda Wright** and **Sgt Pam Mitchell** who were constantly storming through the other teams midfield and defence. At the end of the first very productive day, we were through to the semi-finals – higher than our expectations. The next day the team rose bright and early in anticipation of the first match of the day at 1000hrs against Haslar. They were a good team and put our defence and midfield through a bit of hard work. We did however, have **Sig Donald** in the midfield running around like the Energizer Bunny and **WO2 (QMSI) Helen Sleightholme** kept the ball away from our goal. We went on to win this game 1 – 0 with **Sgt Angie Sparling** and **SSgt Thomas** engineering a lovely goal. This win put us through to the finals - can you believe it? We couldn't!! The match was against 3 Div who fielded a very strong team. Moral was high and we were hoping for a good game.

This was one of the toughest matches that I, as an inexperienced player, had ever played. However, with some amazing goalkeeping from **Sig Ali Sabiston** (she even saved a penalty flick) we managed to keep the score to a respectable 3 – 0 in the opposition's favour. As a final note I would just like to say thank you to **SSgt Moore** and **WO2 (SSM) Fisher** for helping us with the coaching and for looking so professional on the sidelines.

11 Signal Regiment's Ladies' Hockey Team
Army Finalists 2000
(Coached by SSgt Andy Moore – he's the one with no hair!

3 SQUADRON FOOTBALL COMPETITION - *by Sig Simpson*

On 27 February, sixteen 5-a-side teams turned up on a wet, cold Sunday morning to play in the first annual 3 Squadron Football Tournament, the brainchild of **LCpl** 'Chelsea' **Reynolds** of Lightning Troop Cadre. The competition format was a knockout with the first round winners going on to play for the 3 Squadron Cup and the losers competing for the highly honourable Lightning Plate.

Sadly the 'Troop Cadre' team weren't informed of the regulation team size and tended to play with five, six or sometimes seven players. However, their sporting efforts were in vain after being knocked out in the semi-finals by 'The HotShots' 7-0. The other semifinal was played by the pre-tournament favourites, the 'Celtic Warriors' (pronounced Keltic as not to offend its mainly Scottish contingent) and the 'Stav's Kebabs'. This was the best game of the competition and was finally decided on penalties by 2 excellent strikes by **Sig O'Connor** and team captain **Sig Simpson.** 'The Lightning Bolts', **Sigs Thorburn, Miller, Gilbert, Stevenson, Igo,** and female **Sig Chivers** also narrowly won on penalties eventually winning the coveted Lightning Plate.

The competition final was between the 'Celtic Warriors' and the 'Hot Shots'. The highly motivated Warriors started off impressively running away to a 6-2 lead and with only two minutes remaining felt it was time to take their foot of the gas. The Hot Shots clawed their way back to 6-5 but narrowly failed in their efforts, leaving the 'Celtic Warriors' captain **Sig Simpson** to collect the trophy from the 3 SQN 2IC, **Capt McAnulty** (who had, might I add, been a member of the permanent staff team). The members of the victorious 'Celtic Warriors' were **Sigs** 'Greedy' **Simpson,** 'Do ya ken' **Hanlon,** 'Wes' **O'Connor,** 'Scouse' **Conroy,** 'I made parade' **Baker,** and finally female "Helen" **Coupe**. Congratulations.

OBLIVION MARATHON 2000

On 14 April 2000 a group of Soldiers and SNCOs departed for Alton Towers to take part in a Roller coaster marathon on Oblivion, the World's first vertical roller coaster in aid of the Newman Trust (Charity No. 326429). Oblivion has a fearsome reputation with passengers accelerating from 0 to 110kph in less than a second and pulling 4.5G's. The idea was conceived in a public establishment not long before closing time and consisted of a team of twelve people on the first ride of the day and then one person on every ride until the last ride of the day.

Quote 'It was a good idea at the time' Unquote.

The Newman Trust is a registered charity who provide week long holidays for children and young adults with special needs. Emphasis is placed on selecting children who would not otherwise have a holiday. Because the Newman Trust is run entirely by volunteers all of the money raised goes directly into running the holidays. The holidays are held in four locations throughout England and there are plans to expand to a fifth holiday soon. The holidays come in two main types – outward bound or just plain fun. The fun holidays involve trips to Zoos, Theme Parks, Cinemas, Horse-riding, Swimming visits from local Army, Fire Brigade and Police units and a lot, lot more.

One of the Newman Trust children enjoying a taste of military life

The twelve man team for Oblivion Marathon 2000 consisted of **Sgts Sid Barrass, Rick Davey, Dave Davis, Dom Graham, Mary Hessell, John O'Brien, Sigs James Brant, Craig Fulton, Matt Hebdon, Martin Sloan, Ian Walker** and **Mr Kev Hessell**. Completing the team was **Jackie Simpson** who had to put up with us for the journey up and down as the driver and looked after us during the day at Alton Towers. Who would have thought twelve guys about to go through with a 110km/h, 4.5G(astronauts pull 3G on take-off) roller coaster marathon would whinge so much about taking a corner a bit fast! We all started off at 10a.m. on the 15 April raring to go, up the long climb to the top of Oblivion. Just as we reach the edge the carriage suddenly jolts to a standstill and we hang over a 180ft drop. 'DON'T LOOK DOWN', a voice tells us over the speakers. Then it's pure adrenaline as we hurtle towards and through a big hole in the ground and out the other side. As we exit the camera catches the emotions. We've selected the photo with the whole range, from 'Way Aye Mun, this is greet!' to 'What the hell am I doing here?!'

We then took it in turns to subject ourselves to the same delights for the next seven hours. Everyone completed around 30 rides during the day, with no injuries apart from twelve rosy faced cases of windburn. 360 rides later we all boarded again to complete a victory lap.

So far we have collected £1200 and are looking good to hit the £2000 mark when all the pledges have been collected. That is enough to take 10 Children on a holiday. A big Thank You goes out from all team members to the many people who have donated money or sponsored us. A special Thank You goes to HQ Royal Signals WO's & Sgts Mess, Humph Bahadur's Restaurant, The Dorset Steam Fair, 11 Sig Regt PRI, Mike & Milenda Lee's Tattoo Studio, Blandford Video Centre, Im-pressed Dry Cleaners and Tesco.

If you would like further information about the Newman Trust, would like to send a donation, or want to become a helper on the holidays please contact **Sgt Dave Davis** on (9)4371 2835.

Sgts Sid Barrass & Dom Graham

Publish it in
The WIRE

The Editor is always pleased to receive interesting articles.

NEWS FROM THE BALKANS

MULTINATIONAL BRIGADE (CENTRE) HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

Sqn Comd **Maj Andy Bristow**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Colin Milne**

So here we are, Multi National Brigade (Centre) Headquarters and Signal Squadron (207). After almost two months in theatre the Desert Rats have settled in and begun to leave their mark (not to mention the six foot Rat at the front of Brigade Headquarters). Thanks to 19 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (209) for their help during the hand-over, we look forward to seeing you again, in similar circumstances next year! The locals must have known we were coming. Within days of our arrival, even before the follow on party of the Squadron had deployed, elements were 'getting amongst it' in Mitrovica providing comms support to the Green Jackets, amidst the rioting and CS gas. Following that, there has been much border activity and a number of search operations, in which we have been involved in one way or other. Fortunately life has begun to settle down a bit since the initial burst of activity, but the momentum remains. The focus now turns to actively encouraging the dwindling Serb population to remain, whilst also maintaining and improving MNB(C) HQ in lieu of the move to TFA. (Rumour has it that by the time you read this we will have moved in). With film nights, sporting activities and 'the Sunday night quiz', and a flying visit from **Jim Davidson** and **Gladiator 'Rio'** (Sorry guys, the RSM has confiscated the picture of **Rio**), life is comfortable and the days are beginning to fly. The R & R plot has now kicked in, and there are plans afoot to put in place a 36hr pass to somewhere exotic (lake Orid probably), once the weather settles and the wind drops to less than 70kph!
Has anyone seen the OC's beret……?

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Adam Corkery**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Dave Sloane**

Well, what a start to the new millennium it has been for us all. The vehicles left Germany a month before the troop but were met by 207's elite guard force in Thessaloniki. The guard force, led by its trusty leader, **Cpl Andy** 'No Responsibilities' **Allen**, then stagged on for ten days until the main body of the squadron arrived. On arrival in Kosovo, all were in high spirits and prepared for a good tour. With Rover Tp mostly deployed to the out-dets we had the business of taking over the comms for HQ MNB(C). After a week, the HQ was starting to look the part and everyone was pretty pleased with what had been achieved. Over the subsequent couple of weeks, the troop deployed on three operational readiness exercises the last of which being part of the multi-national exercise Dynamic Response 2000. All went well apart from an unfortunate injury to ED extraordinaire **LCpl Si** 'Juan Carlos Rimerez' **Periera** – we hope you're back in action soon. There has also been the arrival of a few new faces to Comms Tp and we would like to welcome **Cpl Mick Clark**, **LCpl Mark Angus** and **LCpl Mike Jennings** – we hope you enjoy yourselves. We would also like to thank **LCpl** 'The King' **Ross** and trusty crewman **LCpl** 'Smelly Feet' **Bithell** AKA the 'Ptarmigan Gods' for coming over to Comms Tp to help with the Ptarmigan. They reckon they deserve a couple of weeks R and R, but as they're so invaluable, we think we may have to cancel their R and R altogether! Well done guys.

ROVER TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Andy Hill**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Andy Buckle**

With almost seven weeks gone, Rover Tp has settled down to life in Kosovo. With just a few of us living in the Headquarters in Pristina (still in tents!) the rest of us are living in luxury with either the Rear Link Detachments or one of the two hill top sites. Up at Goles, one of the hilltop sites, **Sgt** 'Ritchie' **Richmond** has created his own little empire where he looks after many soldiers such as **LCpl Nikki Thompson** and **Sig Chris Brogan**. Up at Suvi Bunar, **Cpls Rob Luke** and **Andy Allen** are left pretty much to themselves, sharing with 19 Regt RA. Under their reigns are **Sig** 'Lurch' **Wilson** (who still can't find any cows to scare), **Sig Pam Dunkerly** and new arrival **Sig** 'Where's Kosovo?' **Holt**.

Experiencing life with other nationalities are the seven Rear Link Detachments. **Sig Khrissie Strain** has enjoyed eating plenty of cabbage with the Czechs, **Sig Grace Howard** has enjoyed eating fish three times a day with the Swedes and **Sig Stu Hill** and **LCpl Stu Codack** have enjoyed watching late night Finnish TV. With three detachments living with the Canadians, **Sig Tony Muers** and 'Biceps' **Sharman** have been looking after the Battalion HQ while **Cpl** 'Ginty' **McTurk** has been back in UK winning yet more trophies for Army Badminton. **Sigs Daz Jardine** and **Michelle Cowley** have been looking after their recce elements while their poor aviators have had to put up **Cpl** 'Pants' **Underwood**, **LCpl Tony Marsh** and **Sig** 'I love PT' **Cannon**.

To ensure the out-dets have some sort of normality, **Sgt Dave** 'Happy with that' **Alleyne** and **LCpl** 'Fluffy' **Cloughton** – both from the UK, have been re-supplying them with all the essentials. Living it rough in the tented accommodation back at Brigade HQ, **Sig** 'Magic' **McDermot** has been clocking up the mileage with **Capt Steve Abram**, looking for deployable HQ locations. **Sig Stevie Homer** is now driving the OC around, while **Cpl Greg Dick** is acting as the Troop fleet manager. The augmentees from 1 Div Sig Regt have fitted in extremely well and are all a good laugh. We look forward to more coming out to cover the hectic R&R period.

1 (UK) ARMD DIV HQ & SIG REGT AUGMENTEES TO 7 ARMD BDE HQ & SIG SQN (207)

All arrived safely after flying backwards on the plane and then driving up from Thesseloniki. There aren't many people who can say they've done 3 countries in less than 12 hours, but again the 'Div' triumph and conquer. **Sigs Trevor Raw** and 'Big Phil' **Lofthouse**, and **Cpl** 'Cas' **Castano** are living a cushy life in Pristina, along with **Cpls Boris Lynn** and **Nikki Dyson**, **LCpls Maggi Sinclair** and **Peter Hunsburger** but not forgetting **Sgts Peter Finnigan** and **Paul Garret**. **Sig** 'Edshward' **McSharry**, and **LCpls Gabriel Rudge** and 'Johnny Bravo' **Wakeling** all went playing soldiers with the US Marines, showing them how to do it properly. **LCpl** 'Fish' **Fisher** and **SSgt**…yes **SSgt Sinclair** are driving everyone around Kosovo and around the bend! **LCpls** 'Prince of Darkness' **Harkness** and 'Taff' **Lewis** together with **Cpl** 'Smiler' **Breaks** are all unheard of and unseen as they are all hiding up in the hills along with **Cpl** 'Demi' **Moore**. **LCpl** 'Mondeo' **Ford** is using the hills as a holiday camp as he keeps on going back to the UK to represent the Army at Badminton. **LCpl** 'I love war' **Pearson** and **Sig Kevin Wilson** are enjoying their stay with the Czechs but have resorted to cooking their own food as cabbage three times a day is a little tiresome. **Sig** 'Hiya' **Ashcroft** and **LCpl** 'Trout' **Lannie** are enjoying working with the Norwegians and are working hard at getting fit - although Trout has definitely won the Golden Blanket award for staying in bed for both his days off. **LCpl Nikki Roberts** is at Swed Bat and has recently received some mail from 2 RRF for having a lovely voice on the net! **Sigs** 'Psycho' **Smith**, 'I love myself' **Peck**, 'Bomber' **Mills**, 'Monkey boy' **Goddard** and 'Dizzy liney' **Evans** all turned up safely in sunny Kosovo alive and well. Everyone out here is missing everyone back at Div and wish you all well.

TECHS, LINE AND POWER

Tp FofS **WO2 (FofS)** 'Mac' **McCallum**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Dave Baddeley**

Well, here we are in Kosovo. The Troop has been supplemented with 'willing volunteers' from 1 (UK) ADSR. One of these new recruits, **Cpl Lynn**, used his vast driving experience and almost drove his Land Rover straight into a minefield! Our tech guru, **LCpl** 'Daff - I'm the Best' **Ellis**, filled out his new post as Troop MT rep admirably with only one minor drawback - he's not even qualified to drive a Rover! Telemech exraordinaire, **Sig** 'Scouse, wannabe 'Taff' **Hughes**, managed to display his skills to the fullest by wiring up a mains extension using a new convention, not previously seen in the electrical world, and still wondered why it didn't work! Our days are long and hard, especially when PT starts at 6a.m. and the nights are even longer as we always seem to get called out just as the bar opens. Congratulations to the Tech football team for winning the 5-a-side Competition. The prizes included: a hand-warmer, Silver Shadow Trainers, cam cream and to top it all, the trophy was a bottle of mineral water wrapped in Silver foil - no expense spared by the QM's department! Welcome to **Sgt Lee** 'I'll fix all your radios' **Clark**, whose incredible rate of turnover is a god-send, even if they are the same radios every day!

MULTINATIONAL DIVISION (SOUTH WEST) HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT OPERATION PALATINE

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

CO **Lt Col D. A. Hargreaves**
RSM **WO1 Jackson**

1 April 2000 marked a significant change in the Royal Signals commitment to Op Palatine. Multinational Division (South West) Headquarters and Signal Regiment paraded for the last time in its eight year history. The SOinC(A), **Brig C. J. Burton OBE ADC**, presided over the disbandment parade which marked an end to the provision of life support to the Banja Luka Metal Factory and the birth of BRITFOR Signal Squadron and the Commercialisation Implementation Team. Royal Signals in BLMF can now truly focus on the provision of communications to the Division and on the implementation of CIS commercialisation, bringing Royal Signals a step closer to the desired end state of Troop strength. Accompanied by the CRSM, **WO1 Hodgson**, the SOinC (A) presented OC BRITFOR Sig Sqn, **Maj S. R. Workman** with the new Squadron Colours before meeting R Signals soldiers in BLMF and at the surrounding Hill Top Sites. That evening the Officers', WO's and SSgts of the disbanded Regiment enjoyed the first and last Regimental Dinner Night and farewelled the CO, **Lt Col** ' Tiggel?' **Hargreaves** who returns to command his 'other' regiment, 34 Sig Regt (V) Middlesbrough. Also being dined out were the Adjutant, **Capt** 'Hyacinth Bucket' ' **Lloyd** returning to 2 Sig Regt prior to JCSC 48, the Camp Comdt, Maj ' Choppe?' **Aspinall** to 71 Sig Regt (V) and the RSM, **WO1 Jackson** back to Aldershot.

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

Sqn Comd **Maj S. R. Workman**
SSM **WO2 M. Neighbour**

Life goes on apace with the disbandment of the Regiment and the formation of BRITFOR Sig Sqn. The loss of the CO and Adjt has increased the in-trays of the Sqn Comd - **Maj Workman** and the 2IC - **Capt Lee Hendricks,** however it is **Capt Roddy Wilson** who will feel the pain as he take's up the reins from **Capt Hendricks** (about time after his skive in UK). Meantime the pressures of operating a Mechanised Brigade Signal Sqn with all the kit back in Aldershot is continuing to provide a major challenge to 228 Sig Sqn in Banja Luka. **SSM Mark Neighbour** is suffering from rugby withdrawal symptoms, not having played yet this tour, but plans are afoot for a team to form up and take on a local side. Meantime **WO2 (FofS) Lance** 'The maroon Pimpernel' **Marshall,** currently on R&R, changed half the radio frequencies, much to the disgust of **WO2 (YofS)** 'Stan the man' **Winstanley** who returned from R&R to discover the changes.

COMMS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt T. W. Day**
Tp SSgt **Sgt D. Dyer**

As the weather hots up in the Balkans the hill top site crews have shaved their beards off in preparation for tanning. The 'draw down' and extraction of R Signals from Ivovik and Sjertekosvic hill top sites has finally come to fruition. With the closure of the COMMCENS at TornislavGrad and Kupres imminent, **SSgt** 'Magpie' **Dyer** and **Lt** 'Doris' **Day** are putting their procurement skills to use in their relocated office; re-furnishing it into a Fagin style den! Sadly, 'Slapper' the cat's visits have been less frequent following an unfortunate incident involving electricity and singed whiskers. **Sig** 'KR' **Kelly-Rutherford** has moved to the 'village of the damned' and **LCpl** Ross 'Big-Daddy' **Williams** and **Sig Paul** 'The Cat' **Hick** are now at Lisina West. **LCpl** 'Greeny' **Green** heads for Gola P and **LCpl Jim O'Mahony** has packed up his skidoo driving and returned to UK for his Class One. **Cpl Dave Briscoe** continues his quest to deplete the worlds water table, whilst **LCpl Dave Reid** failed to achieve instant promotion to General after serving up Lobster and Swans eyelids to VIP visits to his site.

Congratulations to **SSgt** 'Dimebar' **Dyer** on passing his EFP at the seaside resort of Split; he reputedly spent an incredible 3DM during the three weeks he was being educated. Salutations to **Sig** 'Bone-crusher' **McGeorge** on his recent victory at the inter-Balkans wrestling championship, successfully slam-dunking five contestants from units in the former Yugoslavia. Special mention for our illustrious leader, **Lt** 'Doris' **Day** on the announcement of his engagement to **Jane**; she won't be marrying you for sensible conversation!

HEADQUARTERS TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt R. McCleod**
Tp SSgt **SSgt J. Howe**

'Grounday Day' has set in at Banja Luka - 72 days and counting remaining in theatre. Early escapees include **Cpl Jace** 'BLMF-expert' **McBain,** back 1 UK Civ Div, who intends to return to Banja Luka in August to work for SFM Radio (masochist). **LCpl** 'Pom King' **Burnside** has made good his escape from theatre, virtually no one knew that he was going until he was mid-air en-route to the UK. Improved weather and obvious increased skill has reduced the tempo in the Tech Wksps, or is it the absence of **Sgt Ian** 'I'm so Airborne it hurts' **Dickinson,** who is on an extended R&R. In his absence **Sgt Trev** 'in my next life I'll be a Zagreb tour guide' **McSween**, has been holding the fort.

Following his recent promotions success **SSgt Paul** 'Staff Sergeant' **Gardener** has picked up all available 'jif jobs', including that of the SQMS. The real SQMS, **SSgt Spence** 'Hello civvie-street' **Cave** is in the UK handing over his accounts before leaving the army in July. The resulting musical chairs have resulted **in Cpl Claire** 'NLT' **Rutter** running Syscon. **LCpl** (Sig??) **Paul** 'Justin' **Heywood** almost succeeded in closing the junior ranks bar, permanently. Hope the face recovers soon.

The COMMCEN continues to prove that escape from BLMF is not impossible. Regular readers will remember **Cpl** 'MiniMe' **McMullen** managed to con the Squadron into a seven-week jolly, alias a Skill At Arms course in the UK, and **LCpl** 'Jankers' **Brooks** (successfully) attempted 1 Sqn selection to get away. **Sig** 'Tomo' **Thompson** returns to UK shortly for the Lanyard Trophy, along with **Sig Steve** 'Airborne Warrior' **Andrews, LCpl Dave** 'Rubb shelter' **Wesson** and **LCpl Nick Constable**. The mass exodus is joined by OC, **2Lt Ross** 'Razor Wire' **McCleod** to attempt 'P' Company, and **SSgt John** 'Multitasking' **Howe,** to take up the appointment of Regimental YofS at 34 Sig Regt (V). Don't worry 4 Bde - we'll leave the key under the mat, and hand-over notes on the desk.

MOBILE TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt D. A. Haslewood**
Tp SSgt **Sgt H. Wilcox**

Passed the half way-point in the tour and morale is good. The SOinC(A) toured the squadron, allowing the troop to confirm their PhD in tent erection setting up the Tac HQ (again) and showing off the Spec Tasks, Rebro and IRO. The change to BRITFOR Sig Sqn has little impact at our level and it is business as usual, ie: more tents! Several exercises are planned for the next two months to Glamoc and Coralici. **Cpl Si** 'Hernroyd' **Holroyd** is busy preparing 228 Sig Sqn kit for back-loading. The Troop is looking forward to the resulting decrease in our workload and increase in time to concentrate on other tasks, more tents! The Troop recently deployed on Ex Market Garden organised by the best (apparently) Signaller in the Troop, **Sig** 'Stealth' **Stone**, which unlike its famous predecessor, was an excuse to spend a day falling off mountain bikes and getting sunburnt. **Sgt** 'Toyah' **Wilcox** was unable to grasp the concept of riding so ran back; must be an ex-216 thing. Our last minute volleyball team won the cup thanks to **Sig** 'Madmad' **Kama** who achieved Olympic standard after only five minutes play.

(L-R): Sig Allerdyce, LCpl Slade, Sir Kama, Cpl Wallace, Sig Lawrence, Sgt Barker, kneeling Cpl Gallagher

The notorious **Cpl** 'Yukka' **Simmons** is back and reunited with his twin **Sig** 'Leper' **Soraine. Sigs** 'Golden shower' **Davy** and **Al** 'Alky' **Allerdyce** returned from their 96hr pass, after accidentally missing their flight from Split. **LCpl** 'Alien-heed' **Appleyard** returned from holiday in Morocco with **Pte** 'Charlie' **Smith. Sig** 'Basher' **Fox** excelled himself during the riots by laying out an entire Italian riot squad.

2Lt D. A. Haslewood and Sig 'Leper' Soraine
Erecting masts on Ex Tomb Raider at Glomer Artillery Ranges

MAINTENANCE TROOP
Tp Comd **Maj Holmes**
SSgt **SSgt G. Greaves**

With the snow now melted and the RTA register decreasing the MT has settled down into the last third of the tour. The department is still busier than ever attempting to please so many with so little for no thanks; no change there. The CSE show went well especially in the eyes of **LCpl Mark** 'Sniffer' **Warrington** who took a shine to the dancers hockey sticks and **LCpl 'Mac' McArthur** who was left with a minibus full of swag when the actors left theatre. Congratulations to **Sgt Dean Whitworth** who was selected for promotion and has assumed the post of MT SSgt and farewell to **SSgt Gaz Greaves** who has taken over at HQ BRITFOR in the black art of SQMS. The MT has two hopefuls for the forthcoming boxing tournament in the shapes of **LCpl** 'POL gimp' **Jackson** and **Sig** 'Clegster' **Cleghorn** we wish them well. With two months left to push and the transition of handing the MT over to a Dutch and Canadian contingent the Department looks forward to end of tour and the much deserved post tour leave.

ULTIMATE CHALLENGE 30KM RACE

Eleven members of BRITFOR Sig Sqn took part in the 'Ultimate Challenge' 30km race on Sunday 2 April 2000. The race, organised by the Dutch Battalion based at Sisava had 120 participants and saw an overwhelming number of the Signal Squadron finish in the top ten. The team consisted of **Lt** 'Doris' **Day, SSgt** 'Dicky' **Dyer, SSgt Dean Whitworth, Cpl** 'Dog' **Barker, LCpl Russ Sharpe, LCpl Brett Appleyard, LCpl** 'Sub' **Subarna, LCpl Nick Constable, Sig Steve Andrews, Sig Ben Stone** and **Craftsman Coates.** Special mention to **Sig Steve Andrews** for finishing in third place overall and also to **Craftsman Coates** for his exceptionally fast start which he succeeded in failing to maintain. **LCpl Russ Sharpe** and **LCpl Kelly Thompson** from Sisava COMMCEN arranged for the team to take part in the race, accommodated the guys in their chalet and hosted them at a party the night before. The team, sponsored by personnel based at 'Banja Luka Mental Factory,' raised £523.00, which has been donated to the Princess Diana Children's Hospital in Birmingham, in memory of **LCpl Katie Tranter** AGC (SPS).

EXERCISE SNOW DANCE (TIGER)

Ten soldiers braved the Swiss Mountains on the arduous ski mountaineering expedition in the middle of February. The expedition consisted of a mixture of soldiers from 228 Sig Sqn and other members who are currently on operations in Bosnia. From the very home of the British Army Aldershot, we set of for the journey which was to last us

over 24 hours. When we finally arrived at our destination it was off to sleep for the first days activities. On the first day we split into two groups, an experienced group instructed by a Civilian instructor, **Peter Cliff,** and a beginners group which was instructed by 228 Sigs Sqn's very own **LCpl** 'Robbo' **Robertson.**

The experienced group went straight into safety procedures in case of avalanches, which seemed highly likely from the state of **Lt Maskell-Pedersen's** down hill efforts on the first day. The beginners group advanced with amazing speed, all the way down the mountain. The end of the first day ended in true expedition style with a few jars to warm the blood after a hard day's work. Both groups progressed at a great rate, with the beginners moving on to gain the ability to stop. **LCpl Blanchard** even mastered the art of how, without the traditional aid of a seven year old child to act as the brakes and the advanced group moving on to carry out day tours of the mountains. The main tour of the expedition had to cancelled due to poor weather which meant that both groups got to a day together, at this point it was getting harder to see the gap between the two groups. After the bad weather had passed it was back to the ski mountaineering for the experienced group and back to razzing it down the mountain at a rapid speed of knots for the beginners' group.

As with all good things it was finally the end and time to return to The UK after the 24hour drive. That's what we thought. After driving for a few hours we arrived at the border, it should have taken an extra hour but we were all happy with the progress, until we noticed the hats of the border guards. Instead of the German uniforms we were expecting they were wearing Italian. After the little diversion via Italy we saw the error of our ways and back to the UK for the ten expedition members. Finally we arrived at Aldershot, a bit later than we expected but all in one piece at least.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

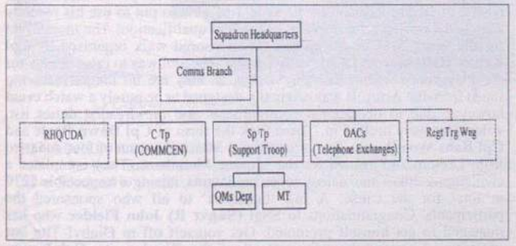
XV HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND & 15 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col G. J. T. Rafferty**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Balsdon**

Operating within an ever-challenging, and politically fluid environment, The Regiment continues to work hard and achieve a great deal. The past few months have been busy for all of the diverse sub-units that work together under the Regimental umbrella.....

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON
Sqn Comd/QM **Maj J. Mullender**
RQMS/Tp Comd Sp Tp **WO2 A. Frost**

Life in the Squadron continues at a frenetic pace, with the Board of Officers, the receipt and issue of the new Rigging System, and the ever increasing supply of IT Systems. The move of the COMMCEN and Telephone Exchanges from 233 Sig Sqn to HQ Sqn went smoothly and they all now have their feet firmly under the HQ Sqn table. As a result of the move the Squadron required restructuring. The new ORBAT is shown below



The changes presented the Squadron with interesting challenges to which all members responded with professionalism and spirit. It has not been all work and no play though; personal development remains an important and integral part of the Squadron ethos. Everybody within the Squadron has been given the opportunity and encouragement to complete all courses that they require and ample opportunity to partake in Adventure Training, Military Training and sport (from Fell Running to Sailing).

CO'S CUP

The CO's Cup consists of a variety of sporting activities throughout the training year, this challenging event ensures that sport is played by all and not just the gladiators. Despite the workload all members of the Squadron acquitted themselves very well during the year in the competition (Drawing with 225 Sig Sqn on 21 points but lost out on a count back of first places). Rest assured that we will win this year.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj R. P. Giles**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Dunseith**

Yet another hectic period for the Squadron highlighted by various visits and end of year reviews. The highlight (presumably!) for the SSM has been his marriage to **Cpl Vicky Molyneax** - with congratulations and best wishes from the entire Squadron. **Capt Annabel Taylor** has arrived (with **Bruno**), all the way up the hill from 39 Bde Sig Sqn, to take over as 2IC. **Capt Gareth Oliver** has done a stirling job standing in and has quite happily handed over the paper mountain and returned to I Troop. Battle camp is this week's priority, and as Spring is sprung the Squadron is preparing for Easter in the Province.

The NCC Team

INDIA TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Gareth Oliver**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Craig Marlowe**

The Troop have experienced an extremely busy period over the last months with the birth of NCC Tp. The technical team are to be congratulated for their sterling efforts, especially **SSgt (FofS) Andy Paton** for IDA, **Sgts Al Newman** and **John Ault** for their tireless efforts and **Sgt** 'Selly' **Selkirk** for his overall installation guidance. The Tp would like to congratulate the following for being selected for promotion: **WO2 Ray Neal** off to 21 Sig Regt, **SSgt Andy Paton** to 3 Div, **SSgt Si Graham** to 21 Sig Regt, **SSgt John** 'Bouffant' **Ramsdale** to 1 Div, **Sgt Mick Scanlon** staying at I Tp and **Sgt Nige Smith** going somewhere.

DATA ENGINEERING SECTION

The Section would like to welcome the following new arrivals: **Sgt** 'Micky' **Knowles, Cpl** 'I love this place' **MacDonald, Cpl MacArthur,** the huge **LCpl** 'Mini me' **Smith, LCpl** 'George' **Lucas** and last but by no means least **Sig Manifield.** We have said goodbye to **Sgt** 'John Boy' **Ault** and **Sgt** 'Big Al' **Newman**, who spent their last six months in the Projects Section playing with the latest technology and working with numerous civilian agencies. **Cpl Matt** 'Jonah' **Williams** and his family have recently left for 7 Sig Regt, where he will probably have broken things just by coming within 50 feet of them. Our place of work was thought to be 'Matt proof' with 36 inches of concrete surrounding it, but this proved to be inadequate protection. **Cpl Carl Gaber** has managed to escape at last to sunny Cyprus. Overall a very busy period in the section with the three main IS Systems being upgraded at the same time.

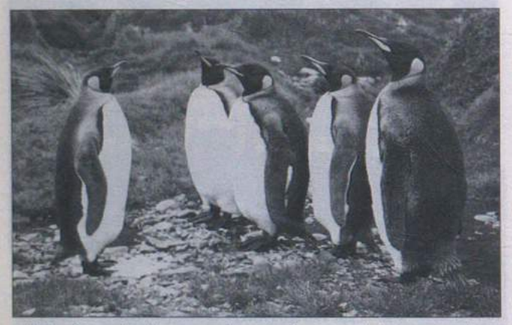
MCKELVIE SWIMMING COMPETITION - *by LCpl Waring*

The inter-troop competition was with us once again, and with all the usual enthusiasm I Tp displays everyone jumped at the opportunity to join

in. The competition entailed the usual events - freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and professional drowning (butterfly) as well as the three relay events. First unto the breach was **SSgt John Ramsdale**, who put up a valiant effort in the 50m freestyle. He let **Sig Goulty** (our non-swimmer) do the 100m event, in which he managed a very creditable third. Our backstroke entry was **FofS Andy Paton**, who was very keen on this competition and, not wanting the Troop to finish last again, had our Captain of the Team, **Sig Kenny Waring**, do time trials. **Cpl** 'Plod' **Wardle** had entered to do the relay events, only to 'volunteer' for the dreaded butterfly. All the spectators were soaked by the swimmers and in the end 'Plod' finished in an excellent second. Last to go was our Team Captain ,**Sig Waring** in the 100m breaststroke, who having told TM Tp that he could not even swim, finished second although he had to be pulled out of the pool exhausted. Just the relays to go and the Team went into the freestyle knowing that they might finish better than last for once. The team did extremely well coming in second. The breaststroke relay was to be the Team's best relay event, with all level at the halfway stage, **Sig Waring** set up a good lead for **SSgt John Ramsdale** to bring us home in first place. With only the medley to go **Cpl Wardle** 'volunteered' his services once again to do the butterfly leg. We finished second in the medley, which gave us an overall win by two points; at last we'd won something. A fantastic performance by all the lads.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP - *by Cpl Micky Lake*

We would like to say farewell to a few members of TM Tp, **Cpl Andy Carter** who is off to 16 Sig Regt (say hello to Kosovo), **Sig Steve Allen** who is off to start a new job in Civ Div and **Cpl Amanda Verrall** who is off to Bassingbourn for the training side of life. We would also like to say welcome to the new arrivals that have come to the Troop, especially **2Lt Elisabeth McLellan**, hope you find the Troop adventurous! Also welcome to **Sgt's Nick Goodwin** and **Martin Farnfield, Cpl Karl Hannah, LCpls Steve Hicklin, Shaun Barton** and **Andy Widdup.** There have also been a few promotions in the Troop, so congratulations to **LCpls** 'Mac' **Macmillan, Ritchie Hill** and **Paul Harris** for getting their full Corporal. Congratulations also to **SSgt Daz Ware** on passing his Foreman's entrance exam. A big thanks goes out to everyone in TM Tp who was involved in the Y2K which took place on 28 and 29 February, working all through the night as well as normal working hours. In the last couple of months TM Tp have been working very hard creating a new Network within the province, and at the moment we are very busy decommissioning Brinton network's province wide. This is a picture of members from TM Tp on parade looking at the new mast outside the workshops.



'Listen in you lot, I know you're not guinea pigs but some one has to test our new mast!'

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. R. Tod**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Downie**

The uncertain political situation has affected everyone's workload and this Squadron is no exception. Even so, life goes on and Squadron members have been kept busy on the sporting, social and adventurous training front whenever possible. The boys in blue have also reinforced the Squadron as the RAF arrived to show us how to really do things. Notable sporting successes have been achieved, including winning the CO's Cup Shooting competition and the overall CO's Cup trophy, narrowly beating Headquarters Squadron into a creditable second place. Congratulations go to all those involved that have helped to achieve this success throughout the whole year. This year's competition has started well with a success in the Potted Sports Event (Football, Hockey, Rugby and Netball). Busy operational activity meant that personnel had to pitch in to help where they could. We suspect that there are not many SSMs who can (or would) list representative Netball on their CVs!

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Helen Murphy**
RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Hartley**

As ever Support Tp has had a very busy period. There have been hand-over/take-over's to carry out, internal and external courses to attend and leave to squeeze in plus the normal day to day work. Recently the Troop has said goodbye to one of its characters **Sgt Jimmy Fox**, who after 12 years colour service, is off to pastures new in Civilian Street. In his place we have welcomed **Sgt Al Bolton,** who has moved across from HQ Sqn to take on the role of the Squadron Stores SNCO. Another farewell and welcome has taken place, although not in the normal manner. The Squadron Chief Clerk, **Sgt Iain Frame** has recently transferred from the AGC(SPS) and has re-traded into the Royal Signals and is posted to .... 225 Sig Sqn, goodbye old, hello new.

The majority of Support Tp have been involved with courses in one way or another, either in attendance as a student, as an instructor or as admin staff. Immediately after the Christmas break the whole Squadron took part in a potential leaders weekend. They bravely fought the weather and arduous conditions set before them, completing each task with confidence, bravery and agility (well, some anyway). **LCpl Lafferty** even 'gave up his life' in order to save his comrades by diving into the piranha infested water (actually falling into the emergency water supply tank whilst crossing an obstacle; given the freezing temperatures, piranhas may have been preferable).

GOLF TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt I. R. Hargreaves**
FofS **WO2 (FofS) Tony Jenkins**

We warmly welcome new arrivals **Sgt Lyndon Box** and also **Cpl Ryan Lang** back in after a harrowing 14 months on his T1. On the departure front, a sorrowful farewell to **Cpl Dave Morgan** off to Blandford to attend his T1 course. A special mention has to go out to **Sgt Chris Warren** who after producing his CV, has left us in some confusion. Is he going for a job in communications or was the document an example of his fiction writing prowess? Good Luck in either job!

ECHO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Jamie Balfour**
OpsWO **WO2 (Supvr R) Paul Gardner**

BRAVO WATCH - *by LCpl Kerry Sly*

Firstly welcome to the newest member of Bravo Watch, **Cpl Steve Burton** who has come to join us all the way from…Alpha Watch. The Watch Manning was also bumped up at the beginning of the year with the arrival of RAF personnel **Cpl Lee Cartwright** and **JT Danny Bradley**. Congratulations on the well-deserved promotions of **Cpl's Colin West** and **Byron Marshall**. Best wishes from all on the Watch to **Cpl Heather Smart** and **Sgt Justin Carter** for their forthcoming marriage in July this year. As always the watch has been hard at work, especially in this last month with it being the end of the military year. Its been a mad rush for those who have been away on detachments etc to complete ACFTs, BPFA's, ITD's and the other necessary military tasks.

CHARLIE WATCH

A quiet period for Charlie Watch with the new arrivals and departures recently we are in a period of changing most of the personnel on the watch. Welcome back to **LCpl Howard** who has successfully completed his unit Fire NCO's course and is now capable of putting out chip pan fires, an obvious asset to the Squadron's safety. Also a warm welcome back to **Sgt Mike Foster** who has braved the four seasons of Ballykinler during a recent Regimental pre RSSC. Goodbye to **LCpl Baz Keen** who is posted to 14 Sig Regt where he should be able to put to use his recently achieved Conduct after Capture Instructors qualification! The main event for the watch was in the guise of a sponsored walk organised by **Cpl Kenny Halliday** and **LCpl Andy Liddle**. The aim was to raise money for the Playgroups within Lisburn Station, as they are no longer receiving funds from the Army. It was originally designed to be purely a watch event however, due to operational commitments and the dreaded duties list, volunteers were drafted in. These took the form of **Cpl Dawn Poole** and **Cpl Babs Woodhouse**. So on Saturday 4 March the team of four departed from Lisburn and headed for the Mourne Mountains. They completed a challenging 20km hike across seven mountains, raising a respectable £270 in total for the cause. A big 'thankyou' to all who sponsored the participants. Congratulations to **SSgt (Supvr R) John Fielder** who has managed to get himself promoted. Get yourself off to Digby! The last message of congratulations from all of the Watch is to **Cpl Kenny Halliday** who has finally deployed out on a detachment, totalling a whopping 19 days and most certainly earning his General Service Medal.

PAYMENT OF SUBSCRIPTION BY DIRECT DEBIT

If you would prefer to pay for your WIRE by Direct Debit please telephone RHQ Accounts for the necessary form.
Telephone: Blandford Military 2087
or 01258 482087

40th (ULSTER) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col A. P. R. Roberts MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) C. G. McGinley**

After the hectic festive and Millennium period the Regiment has quickly settled back into its routine and has been busy preparing for several exercises that will culminate with a demanding Brigade concentration Exercise in May and Summer Camp in June. January and February saw the start of a comprehensive Trade Training programme that will run throughout as well as the Regiment passing the demands and rigours of the RSIT and PRE Teams. In amongst all of this, several of the Squadrons have been able to undertake their annual Skiing pilgrimages to Scotland. March saw the Regiment deploy on Ex Millenum Muster which was our first exercise for some months and allowed personnel at all levels to blow away those cobwebs and begin our build up training for Summer Camp.

On the sporting front the Regiment has been successful in the 107 (U) Bde X-Country and Orienteering Competitions. **Lt Deirdre Caldwell** won the Female X-Country competition completing the 4.4Mile course in just over 26 minutes whilst the Adjt, **Capt Andy Lucas,** finished a credible fourth in the male competition completing the 5 fl mile course in a little over 31 minutes. This was followed by an outstanding set of results in the Orienteering competition:

Male 'A' Course Winner – **Maj Robert Kelly (Ops Offr)**
Male 'B' Course Winner – **Lt Dave Wilson (Tp Comd)**
Female 'B' Course Winner – **Lt Deirdre Caldwell (Tp Comd)**
Female Team Runner Up – 40 Sig Regt (V)

Lt Caldwell receiving the Winners Plaque from Comd 107 (U) Bde at the Bde X-Country Competition

SQUADRON ADVENTURE TRAINING

Yes! Its that time of year again when most of the Squadrons disappear off to Scotland to the Ski slopes of the Cairngorms and the Lecht.

EXERCISE SCOTTIE FINN – SUPPORT SQUADRON

The Snow reports were not too optimistic for any good skiing, but nevertheless off we went to try our luck. The Squadron had decided to use the STOPOVER Hostel in Grantown on Spey, near Aviemore being centrally located for all activities both on and off the slopes!

Although the snow was in short supply, the lower and top slopes were sufficiently covered to allow all levels of skiers the opportunity to show what they could do with notable performances from **Cpl Lisa Irwin, SSgt Jim Hagan** and **Sgt's Pete Youll** and **Dave McCardle.** After just two days on the slopes it was time for our traditional 'Aprés Ski' Dinner Night where **SSgt Jim** 'Any excuse to make a speech' **Hagan** was awarded with his Best Achievement Award.

On a slighter sadder note the Squadron would like to say a fond farewell to **Dvr** 'Pezza' **Stitt** who served his last day in the TA during the Exercise. **Pte Stitt** has served for almost 29 years with the Regiment and we wish him and his wife **Lynn** all the best for the future.

EXERCISE FIFTH FALL FINN – 66 SQUADRON

The above exercise is 66 Sqn's annual pilgrimage to the slopes of Lecht and the Cairngorms and this year we based ourselves in the Hostel at Grantown on Spey. This year the Squadron was spoilt for choice with excellent skiing conditions and an abundance of snow. This was further complimented by excellent instruction from **WO2 Mick Kemp** and **WO2 Mark Henderson**. The standard of skiing as ever varied considerably but credit must be given to **Sgt Stevie Chambers** who despite spending more time falling over than actually skiing persevered and was rewarded for his efforts by being voted the most improved skier. The exercise almost passed off without incident until the arrival of **Lt Barry Skinner (ex-SVWO)** who quickly won the prize for 'Most Comical Fall' and two broken knuckles into the bargain.

66 Sqn Advance Party in Grantown on Spey

EXERCISE JIMMY MAC FINN V – 85 SQUADRON

This year's winter adventure training took place in and around the Cairngorm area of Scotland and consisted of Winter Mountaineering, cross-country Skiing and Downhill Skiing. As ever the weather changed frequently and proved at times to be extremely testing for all especially during a number of whiteouts!! The exercise was extremely successful with too many accounts to recall both on and of the slopes and we are all looking forward to next year already.

3 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (203)

OC **Maj S. K. MacRostie MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. Cheslett**

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt F. D. Guthrie**
Tp SSgt **SSgt R. Wallace**

OPERATORS SECTION: 'THE SENDERS'

Starting off with the obligatory farewells from the operators. First of all a sad goodbye to **Cpl, Dave** 'Tiger' **Bartlett** who leaves the fold for a new life in civvy street. Tandragee Golf Course will miss his custom. Also leaving us for a new life in civvy street is **Sig Lee Mellor,** the 'House of Sin's' favourite little boy. Finally on the farewells roll call, **Sig Si** 'The Pest' **Frost.** All the best and have a good time at 14 Sig Regt. On the hellos front, welcome on board to **LCpl Matt** 'Been there' **Page.** A warm welcome also goes to **Sig** 'Slim Jim' **Brown** from 30 Sig Regt and **Cpl Dom Garner** from 20 Armd Bde. The Section is now getting back into the swing of things after the festive leave period. Prior to then, the section had a grand old shindig at the Comms Tp Xmas function. Tales a plenty, but not suitable for publishing folks. **Lt Forbes Guthrie** blew away the myth that Jocks are tight by donating his evening's winning to the bar and a big thank you goes to **Cpl Si Vital** link for organising an excellent function thoroughly enjoyed by all and sundry.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE SECTION: 'THE MENDERS'

It has been a busy last three months in TM Section with lots of comings and goings. Welcome to **Sgt Lee Calvert** posting in from DISC, yes it is PT time again. **Cpl Si Hurst** from 249 Sig Sqn and **Cpl Sein Hunter** from

Germany. We will be saying farewell to some of the section soon: **Cpl Dean** 'I will earn more than the RSM' **Morgan, Cpl Gaz** 'Burger King is a career' **Hobson** and **Sgt Billy** 'South Africa' **Boston.** Special mention must go to the recent arrival to all the System Technicians, who join us from 15 Sig Regt, time to be introduced to the black magic of radio waves.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP - GROWS FURTHER

For some time now 15 Sig Regt has supplied manning, administration and equipment resources for three Data Systems Forward Repair Teams. These were situated with 3, 39 and 8 Brigades with responsibilities in maintaining a large variety of data comms systems in province. However, due to province-wide rationalisation, these FRTs have now been handed over to their associated Signal Squadrons. Comms Tp now holds five new personnel. **Cpl** 'Crusty' **Craddock, Cpl Oscar Searle, Cpl** 'Budgie' **Cree** (token Yorkshire bloke), **LCpl Dave** 'No car' **Knox** and **LCpl** 'Smiley' **Khair.**

The hand-over took place on the 1 December 1999 after a lot of meetings between the Data FRT and 3 Bde Ops, training programs were set up to ensure all radio and systems technicians personnel would be conversant with both types of communication equipment. The training for the most part has gone to plan, but hard work. This will continue up until April when both teams will combine, all then able to deploy on any of their previously individual taskings. **Lt Guthrie** and **Sgt Gaz Mathieson** have been working hard to procure further real estate at Portadown, to accommodate all the additional resources. We are a little concerned, the new accommodation is sound proofed, has no windows and can only be locked from the outside.

Thanks from goes to all members of 233 Sig Sqn at Lisburn, especially **FofS Goreman, SSgt Gillies** and **SSgt Ware**, who have kept in touch and offered occasional and welcome advice. Thanks to all at 3 Bde HQ and Sig Sqn for their support before, during and after the hand-over: **FofS Cowie** for his specialist use of red ink, **YofS Ewart** for being there and **SSgt Noble** for his spirit level.

THE SQUADRON BATTLECAMP

The Squadron Battlecamp took place from 20 November 1999 to 5 December 1999 at Barrybudden Training Area, near Dundee in Scotland. It was organised by **SSgt Bob Wallace** with help from **WO2 (RQMS) Andy Strudwick, SSgt** 'Taff' **Drew** and **Sgt Paul Coates.** The aim of the exercise was to practice the Squadron in low level platoon tactics and to allow them to take part in field firing. The Exercise was split into two phases, with half the Squadron taking part during the first week and the other half on the second. This allowed the maximum involvement from members of the Squadron. Considering that for the majority of the exercising troops, this was their first non ITD military training for a long time, they did remarkably well. The platoons were commanded by **Capt Helen Bosley** (Sqn 2IC) during week one and **Lt Forbes Guthrie** (OC Comms Troop) during week two.

MY BATTLECAMP! - *Cpl Si Link*

I had been nominated as the Platoon Sergeant for Week Two of the Squadron Battle-camp. We finally arrived after being held up by bad weather, to participate in 'Wallace's World' and I suddenly realised that I had a lot to do in a relatively short space of time. I looked around and hoped that I could rely on the three Section Commanders, namely **Cpl Chris Dee, Cpl Ritchie Birch** and **Cpl Dave Tweddell.** We were deployment into a field at Cowbyres Farm (only two hours after arriving in Barrybudden). Things started off with a few lessons that evening. The following day was spent on the IBSR and then back to the farmhouse for what we thought would be a quiet night. However, the DS had other ideas and we were bugged out after coming under attack. From then on it was hectic with patrols, resupplies and anything else the DS could think of. Even though it was hard work, we all got a lot out of it and by the end of the field exercise everyone was extremely tired. On the final day we had live section attacks and withdrawals, with the Platoon Commander and I commanding reduced sections. This was exhausting but well worth the adrenaline rush of having a section of young soldiers, each with eight magazines of live ammunition, behind us. Then came the reality of cleaning weapons until late evening, but this was soon put right with a few beers and a curry to make a fitting end to the week.

EXERCISE MAORI FINN

It all started back in November 98. Keen to organise an ambitious adventure training expedition I confronted the OC, **Maj MacRostie,** with the question of 'What are my limits?' to which he answered 'The globe.' Excellent I thought, red rag to a bull, 'Let's go to New Zealand!'

A year later after a considerable amount of help from various colleagues in the Corps and the New Zealand army, nine enthusiastic punters left Northern Ireland bound for the Southern Hemisphere. The main activities for the trip were to be trekking and Sea Kayaking. However, additional activities such as white water rafting, power boating and bungee jumping (which I later found out is illegal in the Army) filled the agenda. Extensive coverage of the South Island was completed. The expedition started in Christchurch, moved onto complete a four day trek in Fiordland followed by a stop over in Queenstown to take part in extreme sports. The team then drove up to the north coast of the South Island to complete a four-day trek in two days across the Abel Tasman coast. Two days sea kayaking was followed by a long drive down to the Mount Cook region where we completed a demanding trek of three days up beyond the snow line. R & R was the final phase, conducted in Queenstown and most definitely enjoyed by all.

The New Zealand Army were massively helpful and supportive. The variety of activities offered to us was immense. New Zealand must be recognised as the Adventure Training Capital of the world. Don't miss out, organise a trip there yourself If you want any ideas, contact, advice drop me a line - **Capt Helen Bosley** 2IC/Ops Officer.

YEAR 2000

What better way than to spend the introduction of the Millennium than with your finger on the pulse in the Operations Room. Here at 3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn the entire Ops team, SYSCON and COMMCEN crew and boosted up FRT teams were poised ready to react to whatever Year 2000 fault came our way. Unfortunately the teams ended up responding to problems on the Signal Engineering Net set up for the evening, as opposed to any real-time problems. The only other problem being morale due to the continuous calls from less sober members of the Squadron reminding us all what we were missing. The RSM most generously donated considerable sums of money to charity by singing various songs down his mobile phone throughout the night. I have no doubt that he will not welcome that bill! Following a number of empty report formats that evening, activities culminated in a Champagne Breakfast where the chefs, as ever,produced enough food to feed a large starving African tribe.

8TH INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

Sqn Comd **Maj Jake Thackray**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Paul Fleming**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS - *by WO1 (RSM) Paul Fleming*

Things in SHQ have been relatively quiet, well it was for a while as the RSM was away on his Golf Skills Course. We say farewell to the Chief Clerk, **SSgt John Hughes,** who leaves us on posting to MOD London, we wish John and his family all the best. That leads us on to welcoming the new Chief Clerk, **SSgt Dave Palmer**. Also a big well done to our two civilian staff for all their hard work over the last few months. **Sue** who has somehow ensured that all soldiers' leave passes and flight tickets are 100% and **Lesley** our typist who must have a degree in the ancient art of Scottish shorthand. Don't worry **Lesley** we only sponsor the province Cadre Course every four years but a big thanks from the RSM. We wish a speedy recovery to **Sgt Andy** 'The bunion no more' **Snowdin.** Valentine's day came and went for the majority of SHQ and a card was sufficient for most unless you are **LCpl Karen** '12 red roses' **Page**. However, things in Training Wing have been more hectic with all the planning and recces for the Royal Signals (NI) Cadre Course in May. Well done to **Cpl Tom Stewart** for an excellent performance on the Corporals' Study Day showing the other Corporals in the Squadron exactly how it should be done.

OPS /PLANS

Ops Offr **Capt Gareth Lamb**
YofS **WO2 (YofS)** 'Bill' **Barnes**
FofS **WO2 (FofS)** 'Tez' **Brown**

Goodbye to the Foreman, **WO2 (FofS)** 'Tez' **Brown** and family who are posted to 1 Sig Bde, good luck and thanks for all the hard work. Hello to **WO2 (FofS) Bob Vowles** and welcome to the pleasure dome. Also farewell to the Siteman, **SSgt Ian Burton,** after only a short stay he is off to JSSU Digby, good luck to you and the growing family! Also worthy of a mention is **Capt Jo Stewart**, OC Comms Tp who also forms part of the DCO roster, recently promoted and soon to be posted to RSS Blandford to impart some of her knowledge at SORLS. The Ops/Plans cell continues to be busy, the YofS has tried to turn the office into an adventure training cell with maps of the Yorkshire Dales adorning every spare piece of map board. The FofS is eagerly anticipating his return to German soil where food production should now be increased to cope with the expected rise in Giros consumption. The Ops Offr is currently away for three weeks on the piste and will no doubt return with great tales of daring-do. Marching Season 2000 is approaching fast and much preparation is ongoing to ensure that comms are maintained throughout the Brigade area of responsibility. SYSCON is currently going through a much needed re-vamp which will hopefully drag it into the new millennium with a bang and the BART teams continue to be heavily tasked by the Ops/Plans team to ensure that boredom never becomes an issue. On the social side, the FofS recently edged a win in golf against the YofS, but revenge will soon be had.

MOTOR TRANDPORT

MTWO **WO2 Tom Hair**

This has been a busy period again for the MT, especially trying to get the Troops away on leave as per the OC's policy. No one has taken the OC by his word more than the MTWO, **WO2** 'Do I really work here?' **Hair,** who managed to put an appearance in for four days in January before taking most of February off. In fact if he hadn't made a second appearance at the beginning of March to release **Sgt** 'Do I get a leave entitlement' **Stanley** to get away on a well earned golf skills course, I doubt we would have seen him until April. The Troop would like to say farewell and good luck to **LCpl Andy Green** and **Sig** 'Geordie' **Harrison** both leaving on promotion to Corporal and Lance Corporal respectively to 2 Sig Regt in York, also to **Pte Ronnie Barker** to 11 EOD and **Pte Ross Milkins** to 3 CS Regt RLC both on promotion to Lance Corporal and finally to **LCpl Kenneth** 'Biffa' **McCall** to 30 Sig Regt. Welcome to **Sig Jay Nelson** and **Sig Dave McClennon** and his family we hope you all settle in well. The Troop would like to congratulate **Sgt** 'I want to follow the MTWO to Cyprus' **Stanley** on his promotion to Staff Sergeant and to **LCpl Amanda Rowland** on her promotion to Corporal.

LCpl Amanda Rowland 'Haircut 2000'

The MTWO ran a range day in March and has put forward this photo for a new hairstyle for women in the Army. As you can see **LCpl Rowland** covered the center patch with black paper to prove that she did hit the target at least twice, so she says, obviously she doesn't know it should be white patches. Seeing as these are my last *WIRE* notes before being extradited to TSU Dhekelia to take up my new post in May, I would like to thank all the people that I have served with in 3 Inf Bde Sig Sqn in my capacity as MT Staff Sergeant and in 8 Bde as the MTWO. I have had three and a half-great years with the Signals and worked with some great people. I have made some wonderful friends, although not everyone might agree, and I wish you all well for the future and hope to see some of you over in sunny Cyprus.

KIDS CORNER PLAYGROUP/CRÈCHE CHARITY DINNER

by RSM (WO1) Paul Fleming

Just picture the scene, the OC Squadron in his element with ten ladies at the Playgroup monthly meeting
OC: 'Ladies, we are rapidly running out of money for wages due to the lack of children. Any good ideas for raising money.'
Heather Fleming: 'Why not hold a dinner and dance.'
OC: 'Great idea.'

The following day in Squadron HQ
OC: 'RSM we will hold a charity dinner on Fri 03 Mar to raise funds for the playgroup.'
RSM: 'Yes Sir.'

It was all systems go to arrange this prestigious dinner which was to be held in the exclusive Waterside Club. Then it was down to some hard sales techniques to sell the tickets which were £15 per head, but who could refuse to part with a mere £15 when the sales reps were the OC and the RSM. A wopping 80 tickets later and the selling was complete. The OC then had a brilliant idea of holding an auction after the dinner. Well it was back to begging letters for auction material, but to our surprise we received 42 lots to auction ranging from a decorative toilet seat painted by the OC's wife, a cheque for £500 from News International to Easter eggs from Nestle. The bidding was fast and furious but it was expertly controlled by **Maj** 'The Hammer' **Thackray** eat your heart out Christies. The most prestigious lots, or should I say the most ludicrous bidding, were as follows:

a.	Buzz Lightyear	Retail £25 Sold for £106
b.	Painted toilet seat	Retail £20 Sold for £110
c.	Mobile Phone	Retail £30 Sold for £55
d.	Easter Eggs	Retail £10 Sold for £35

The highlights of the evening were two water-colour paintings one painted by **Capt Jo Stewart** of Londonderry which sold for a whopping £160. The second was donated by the Brigade Commander, a water-colour of the Walls of Derry which sold for £120. All in all it was a great evening and a special thanks should go to the chefs and waiters who were all willing volunteers. The total sum raised was £3078.00 to keep the Clooney North Playgroup open. Well done to all those involved!

The OC and SSgt Tony Taylor presenting the cheque to the Crèche

ARE YOU RECEIVING YOUR COPY OF THE WIRE?

EXERCISE PELOPOR FINN - *by Cpl Ian Taylor*

Ex Pelopor Finn was a Royal Engineers Millennium expedition to Sabah, Eastern Malaysia on which I had the pleasure of being, as the Engineers affectionately called me, the 'Bleep'. The brief given to me at the start of October was that in early February 40 people, both military and civilian, were to deploy out to Sabah into two locations. The first location was Tawau Hills Park Nature reserve where a 12km trail was to be cut. The second location was 60km at Dammun Valley Research Center, where a team would be building two scientific observation towers 60m off the ground in two trees. Within that local area two survey teams would also be mapping the road network using GPS equipment. The Defence Evolution Research Agency would be conducting a multitude of tests on us to see the effects of arduous work in a tropical climate. I asked the Expedition IC, **Capt Mark Workman** (RE), what the communications plan was and what equipment they were planning to take. It transpired that that they were still in the early planning stages and I was going to be 'the man with the plan'. That was the start of a couple of very busy months devising a communications plan, requesting frequencies and speaking to other units to try and scrounge equipment. This all had to be done by the beginning of December as all the equipment was to be shipped off to Malaysia. After Christmas we had a couple of weeks training in Antrim to try and cover every aspect of jungle life and as much communications training as I could squeeze into two lessons. As a result some very quick work was required to piece together idiots guides into HF and satellite communications and training on the PRC320 and PRO 319, to which a little trip to 264 Sig Sqn (many thanks again) by myself was needed.

Next stop was Aldershot where we met up with the DERA scientists, where they carried out their initial tests to give them a base line for the expedition. Everyone's height, weight, body fat content, hand grip and fitness were recorded which was the first of many tests performed throughout the expedition. Eventually the day had arrived and we were off to Malaysia. After a 13 hour flight we arrived to be told that we were to be involved in a welcoming parade in which all drill movements would be given in Malaysian. This resulted in, as you can imagine, some amusing consequences. After being totally humiliated and as the skies darkened we deployed to our respective locations. My first job was to set up communications with the ranger station and once in and working we loaded the Bergens, which in my case included a radio, to tab 2km to the first location. The 2km felt like 20km as we were all still trying to acclimatize. Still, eventually we arrived at first base just in time for the heavens to open for the rest of the night. Typical, it could have waited five minutes until I had my poncho up. The main task in this location was to cut the 12km trail. It was not on flat ground as I originally thought but the trail was to be cut up to the summit of a mountain. Lots of up and very little down. With communications up and running the Engineers were happy for me to join them on the trail to do a recce for the next base location and also help with the hard physical work. That was me for the remainder of the expedition in one of the Engineer cutting teams, trogging up hill with the heaviest Bergen I've ever had the misfortune to carry.

By the end of the three weeks on the trail we had cleared a 12km path through the jungle, constructed three bridges and I dread to think how many hundred steps we had laid. However, it was all worthwhile and all that was left to be done was a final set of DERA tests at which I found out I had lost a stone in weight. Anyone who knows me knows that I really don't need to loose that amount of weight. I had a fantastic time with the Engineers and I would like to thank them for giving me the opportunity to assist on their expedition.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

by Capt Jo Stewart and LCpl Mary Anderson

Tp Comd **Capt Jo Stewart**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Tony Taylor**

Since the last *WIRE* notes the Troop has been exceptionally busy. We are coming up to the first marching season of the year which means that the Troop is tasked to various locations around province to provide different communications and surveillance support. There is also the annual inspections of the sites in the Brigade area and on top of all of this the whole troop is trying to get their leave in before the end of March. It has been an especially busy time for the Syscon, with some people putting in a huge number of hours. They have also had to put up with a large amount of noise and upheaval as Syscon is being renovated, however, it will be worth it in the long run. The province has been fairly quiet until recently when we had an incident in camp. Some new arrivals thought that an early morning IED was a regular occurrence in Londonderry, luckily they are wrong. With the upcoming Ex Richmond Challenge, our annual ITD camp, everybody is getting in plenty of training for their ACFT and preparing themselves for a healthy dose of Moral Understanding from the Padre.

As it seems appropriate for these articles here are a few hellos, goodbyes and congratulations. Firstly hello to **Lt Ian Lowther** from 7 Sig Regt who will be taking on the mantle as Tp OC which means a sad farewell to **Capt Jo Stewart** who is off to re-live her students days by working for SORLS in Blandford. Hello also to **Sgt Tony** 'Rudolph' **Caulfield** and his wife **Kelly, LCpl Mick** 'I've been in a couple of years, I can tell you' **Breydin, LCpl Adele Murray, LCpl Sam Applegarth, LCpl Paul Bone** and **Sig Chris Howell, Sig Idris Davies, Sig Chris Fielding, Sig Stuart Plant** and **Sig Carl Brown**. Goodbye and all the best to **Cpl Eddie Stojanovic, Cpl** 'Mac' **MacDonald, LCpl Matt Thomas** who is going on promotion and **LCpl Danni** 'Beast Mistress' **Critchlow**, we hope you both do well. Finally, congratulations to **Sig Andy** 'Dingle' **Gibson** and his wife **Katrina** on their recent arrival in the shape of baby **Nicole**, and his recent promotion to Lance Corporal and to **LCpl Craig Law** and his wife on their bouncing baby boy **Connor.** Congratulations to **Sig Lee Fearon** and **Sig Carl Stephenson** who have made the first rung on the ladder and been promoted to Lance Corporal.

THE REGIMENTAL QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

by LCpl Ball

RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Kev Tunstall**

The Department would like to welcome **SSgt Garth Hood**, who has arrived from sunny Worthy Down and to **LCpl** 'Brains' **Ball** from 23 Mess Tin Repair Unit (Pie and ear) Bicester. We would also like to welcome back **Sig** 'Jack of all trades' **Fowler** who has been returned to the fold yet again. A big well done to **Cpl** 'Where is my next tape' **North** on passing the not so hard MPC (A) and to **Sgt** 'Edmund Blackadder' **Porter** for passing the RMQ. Lord Edmund running a range - a bullet proof vest please. A big thank you to **Cpl** 'Petrol or Diesel' **May** and **Pte** 'I've got more tattoos than you' **Morris** for giving us a well earned break and going away on leave, together, it's okay it's legal now. To **LCpl Kev Rattray** for investing so much time and money into the squadron bar without him the bar would have closed a long time ago. Hello again to **WO2 (RQMS)** 'Now you see him now you don't' **Tunstall** who has just got to take all of his leave in the same month, 'Off again are we Sir, Oh! Suits You Sir!' This one goes out to the lover in the department, **LCpl Collin** 'Cupid' **Shillito** and his bride to be, you know who you are! This ends our thrilling installment for this month, speak to you all again in the next issue. Note from the RQ. 'Ball, my office now!'

EXERCISE VIKING FINN - *by Sig Alan Oliver*

Ex Viking Finn was a 1 R Anglian led skiing exercise to Les Arcs in the French Alps. As they share the barracks with the Brigade Headquarters and Signal Squadron they kindly offered up their last few places to members of the Squadron. 'Anyone want to go skiing? It's a week off work, you stay in civvy apartments, there is no cross country skiing and there won't be any living in snow holes. Okay, okay. One at a time' It was an excellent opportunity to learn how to ski or improve on previous experience and of course there would be copious amounts of apres ski! Nine members of the Squadron took them up on the offer and they all had a fantastic week. The third group and unfortunately the one I was in had some lengthy holdups due to flight delays but we eventually arrived at Les Arcs Ski 1800. Expecting to receive the usual squaddie issue of kit we were pleasantly surprised to find that everything was very good quality and brand new, apart from being used by the previous two groups. We all looked the part now. Time to hit the slopes. We were split into groups depending on our skiing ability, the beginners with **Sgt Ian Roach** the intermediates with either **CSgt Andy Buxton** or **Lt Nick Charlwood**. Being a complete novice I spent the majority of my first few days falling over or shouting the following. 'Arghhh! Get out of my way!!! What do you mean STOP!!! Ouch that hurts...' But eventually everything fell into place. **Cpl Andy Ward** due to a shoulder injury spent a considerable amount of time clutching his shoulder and sitting in mountain cafes enjoying the apres ski a little bit earlier than most. The highlight of the week was a moonlight and torch lit ski down from a restaurant high on the slopes back to the resort. This would have been fine if it was just the darkness to contend with but unfortunately we were fed copious wine, beer and local spirits. **LCpl Duncan Gourlay** who had not quite mastered the art of snow boarding, especially in the dark, just used it as a sledge. Time off the slope also had the usual injuries the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Gareth Lamb** not only got lost on his way back from a local pub on the first night but lost his footing as well. For me the bunkbeds were a natural hazard along with any other wooden furniture in the apartment. A huge thank-you to 1 R ANGLIAN for letting us join your exercise and.....can I book my place for next year.

INTERESTED IN OFFSHORE SAILING?

INTERESTED IN RACING?

Skippers and Crews are required
Army Sailing Association Regatta 23-26 June 2000
Services Offshore Regatta 27 June - 1 July 2000
NO experience needed

contact: **Maj P. G. M. Atkinson**
(9) 4331 3043
01722 433043
patkinson@yachtclub.swinternet.co.uk

ARMY

FAMILIES EMPLOYMENT ADVISORY TEAM EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING SERVICES BRANCH HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND

FAMILIES EMPLOYMENT ADVISORY TEAM (FEAT) NORTHERN IRELAND

Rt Hon Adam Ingram JP MP presents the plaque to Mrs Gillian McGhee (Senior Advisor) at the launch of the Families Employment Advisory Team

The 1998 Strategic Defence Review highlighted the concerns that service life in Northern Ireland can have for the families, one of which is employment. Spouses invariably give up jobs in the United Kingdom and then find that they cannot get an equivalent job in Northern Ireland. This results in the loss of the second income and interrupts career opportunities When a service family is posted to Northern Ireland the spouse may have concerns about personal security, suitability of vacancies and in some locations, remoteness of the married quarters and a possible lack of public transport. This can lead to a reluctance to seek employment.

FEAT was established in September 1999 and officially launched on Tuesday 22 February 2000 by **The Rt Hon Adam Ingram JP MP**, Minister of State. The team's aim is to provide a support network for those individuals who wish to seek employment, thus encouraging more spouses to accompany their serving partner to Northern Ireland.

The Terms of Reference of FEAT are to proactively identify employment opportunities for the dependants of serving personnel living in Northern Ireland. The team will achieve this by liasing with internal employers, external employers and agencies. Dependants will also be interviewed and briefed in Province and prior to arrival (where appropriate) the team will also visit units to speak to interested groups. This will ensure that the specific job requirements are identified. All information for job opportunities will be collated and provided to Stations. There will be a manned help desk providing a unit-based information service. Individuals can arrange to discuss their job priorities and training needs, thus capitalising on their opportunities.

The objective is to provide dedicated job opportunities information, in each location, which is accessible to every individual who is seeking employment. However, it is emphasised that FEAT has an **advisory role** to help spouses who are actively seeking employment. It is not going to succeed in this role without the elements of self-help and motivation of the individual who is seeking employment.

FEAT can be contacted on: Civil: 028 9260 8802 028 9260 9127
Mil: 9491 41802 9491 42127

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1ST (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS & SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col E. M. Flint**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) C. Hymas**

201 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj C. Lawrence**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Simmons**

EAGLE TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Michele Hanlon**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Gaz Davies**

As the year progresses, this month sees Eagle Tp working even harder than usual. Top priority being Ex Premier Link 1, the first of many exercises planned for this year. With UWIs, STIs and PREs on top of us like an infectious rash, it leaves very little time for exercise prep, so it's all hands to the helm, and it is a cold one at that. The thought of working in the cold is obviously too much for certain members of the Troop, with **LCpl Steptoe** firmly welded into his office only to be prised out for lunch and knockoff.

Congratulations go to **Cpl Wayne Scarrott** and his wife **Joanne** on the birth of their second daughter **Demmi. Sig Damon Legg** mentioned that his name hadn't appeared in *The WIRE* for some time so to put amends to it, **Sig Damon Legg** got married, got promoted and got himself a posting. Congratulations go to **Sig Legg** and his new wife and good luck at 1 Mech Bde. We have to say goodbye to **Sig Nicola Burnip**, who gains her Lance Corporal on posting to 2 Sig Regt. She left Germany with one last good night out under her belt with the Troop and **Sig Burnip** going on a mission to drink the bar dry. This proved a bit too much for **Sig** 'Geordie' **Barber** who must have started a lot earlier than the rest of the Troop and left early. Congratulation must go to **LCpl John** (mines a pint) **Doran** on his recent promotion. Let's hope at **Sig Leggs** leaving bash he'll last a bit longer!

New arrivals ready to soar with the Eagle include **Cpl Paul Lester**, wife **Tracy** and family, fresh from 3 (UK) Div. Also from 3 (UK) Div is **LCpl Chamberlain** who has already made an impact on the Squadron after just 12 hours!

HAWK TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Angie Aylward**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Neil Pollitt**

After a busy month of UWIs, some of the Troop are now relaxing either on leave or adventure training in Bavaria on Ex Snowy Solstice. The few of us who are left behind are kept busy with more UWI preparation (Not that we are complaining!). In between leave and the Exercise we managed to say farewell to **Sig** 'Ally' **Skene,** who leaves us for the easy life at HQ AFCENT, New to the Troop is **Sgt** 'Gill' **Ralley** who joins us from RSS in Blandford; we hope she enjoys her time with the Troop. Congratulations to **Sgt** 'Steve' **Davies** on his recent marriage to **Sharon**, we hope she has an enjoyable stay with the Troop.

KESTREL TP - *By Sig Howarth and Sig Brown*

Tp Comd **2Lt Alan Foote**
Tp SSgt **SSgt 'China' Cooper**

For Kestrel Tp, February and March has been a busy time preparing for Ex Premier Link 1 & 2 (well, for the three people who didn't decide to go on leave or skiing). Ex Premier Link 1 tested the Troop to the max and even the hardiest of soldiers were close to tears. **Sig** 'The Dog' **Elcock** has recently returned to say goodbye to the Troop, as he now has to walk around with black tape over his eyes, good luck in 264. Goodbye to **Sig** 'Slug' **Gallagher** who has now gone to whinge constantly at 2 Sig Regt. A fond farewell must go to **LCpl Vickers**, who has also departed the Troop to be posted to 7 Sign Regt. Welcome to **Cpl** 'Jonno' **Johnson**, and **LCpl** 'Tommo' **Tompson** (original nicknames!). Also hello to our newest sprog, **Sig** 'Jism Monkey' **Jasjew** who is hoping to learn his trade from the illustrious Kestrel Tp. (Two hopes and Bobs Dead).

211 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Julian Bunce**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Stan Kelly**

Congratulations must go to **SSgts Hook, Innes, Lothian** and **Thomas** who came off the WO2s board. The Squadron has also had success in the Sergeants to Staff Sergeants board with both **Sgt Giles** and **Sgt Kitchner** coming off the board. Well done to all.

COMMAND TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Mike Morton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Kev Innes**

MY JUMP - *By Sig Jo Thomas*

On 14 February **LCpl Nicki Roberts** and myself left Hammersmith Bks to embark on a ten-day parachuting course at the parachuting centre in Bad Lippspringe. Every two weeks the centre holds courses for all BFG personnel for a DM 50 fee. When we arrived we were shown to the centre's café, Uncle Toms, where we met all the other people who were planning on throwing themselves out of a perfectly good aircraft. After an introduction to the course by the OC and SSM, we were split up into syndicates and taken away by our respective leader. **LCpl Roberts** and I were in Syndicate 3, where our leader was **SSgt Paul Worthing**, who has been parachuting for around 30 years and was very reassuring to us all.

After we were issued our kit we started on our first lesson, which was exiting the aircraft. This had us lying on the floor face down then at the word 'GO' we were to create a starfish shape while shouting, '1000, 2000, 3000, 4000, check canopy'. It took a bit of time to master but we all got there in the end. Then it was on to learn about the position we had to be in when we boarded the aircraft and how we would jump, which again took time to master. The drills that we would have to carry out if our chute didn't open were next and I knew if I didn't get anything else right I'd make sure I'd get this one right.

After two days of all the training we all expected to jump, but due to bad weather we couldn't until Sunday. So after a lot of extra training and packing of chutes and very nerve racking days. I eventually got on to the flight line and donned my orange jumps suit and parachute. We were given an order of how we had to be when jumping and made our way to the aircraft. Everyone was nervous, but when we got to 3000ft and it was time to jump I think I nearly had a heart attack. I was number six so after seeing the first five jump I was sure I would do it. I was asked to get in the door and into the position and off I went. I don't remember much of my fall, but when my canopy opened and I'd done my drills I started to relax a little and enjoy myself. I did another four jumps after that and can't wait to go again although it was a shame the weather was so bad.

BASIC WINTER TRAINING - *By Sig Leona Caulfield*

On 14 February **Sig Stu McCrone, Cfn Lee Hart, Sig** 'Pshap' **Smith, LCpl Jack** and myself departed for the Engelho Lodge in Bavaria for two weeks of skiing holiday or so we thought. We soon realised it was actually a strenuous exercise but apart from that small fact it was still a brilliant expedition. We spent five days on Nordic (cross country) skiing which was hard work but we knew we had the alpine skiing to come which everyone was looking forward to. The only problem was building my courage up and learning not to fall off the chair lift on to my face. I really enjoyed it, and in the future I hope to do another BWT as it is a good chance to meet people from other units and of course enjoy the après ski.

COMMAND TROOP FUNCTION - *by LBdr Mik Crowson*

After the majority of Command Troop had returned from near and far it was the ideal opportunity for the Troop to have a function. This started with an afternoon at the Bowling Ally where **Sig** 'Loopy Leona' **Caulfield** managed to hit more gutters than pins and **LCpl** 'Gaz' **Pilkington** spent more time on his backside than on his feet. Spirits were high so we proceeded to a Chinese Restaurant where everybody ate too much. We then headed off to the local German pubs where we danced and drank until the early hours of the morning. The whole Troop managed to be up the next day for parade bright eyed and bushy tailed but on the inside feeling slightly the worse for wear.

RADIO REBROADCAST TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Kathy Burgoine**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Deano Cox**

The past month was quite quiet for RRB Tp with the usual preparation for the numerous exercises ahead. Mast maintenance appeared to be top of the agenda for the Troop after the techs UWI, which actually went relatively well. The old Troop OC, **Lt** 'Shakey' **Shakespeare** had a close call when he thought he was deploying on a six month tour of Kosovo in KFOR Main, but the powers that be decided to bless him with a posting to Army Apprentices College Arborfield instead. Congratulations to **Cpl** 'Trev' **Allen** on his promotion to Sergeant and his posting to 12 Mech Bde and another well done must goes to **Sig** 'Johnny La Mule' **Carroll** on passing his Football Referees Course, you never know it might come in handy one day!

Welcome back to **Cpl** 'Tom' **Murray** who has just returned to us, complete with suntan, after exercise in Kenya with the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders. Welcome to **LCpl** 'Jen' **Teague** from 1 Mech Bde and a fond farewell to **LCpl** 'Cockeye' **Kingshott** who has moved along the garages to Command Troop. Finally the Troop would like to wish **Sig** 'Eddie' **Kerr** good luck to on his CADRE course, we hope you come top.

212 SIGNAL SQUADRON - *by LCpl Sharon Johns (Acting Clerk)*

Sqn Comd **Capt Jason Nichols**
SSM **SSgt Greenwood**

It has been a fairly busy month with lots of preparation for Exercise Premier Link 1, 2 & 3, and the return of the long lost members of the Squadron back from their exploits in the Falklands Islands. This has been especially evident in the clerk's office, which everyone else seems to pass his or her work on to! The main culprit being **Sgt** 'Scholly (1 Para roll down stairs)' **Martwich**, who expects his work to be done whilst he goes on leave and does remedial walking down the stairs training. The acting SSM **SSgt** 'Arfur Daily' **Greenwood**, actually spent a whole week in work (did anyone get photographic evidence?), after swanning off to Denmark to play football. This man's dedication to the sport has been his downfall as after a serious accident picking up the football pump he badly injured his back and has been relegated to the sideline as the orange bowl attendant, but he talks a good game! We all hope he recovers soon. The OC rear Party - **Capt Nichols** has departed on his last bachelor leave en route for the bliss of married life (Don't do it Sir!). People will do anything to get off an exercise! Our best wishes go out to both his bride to be and himself. Congratulations go out to **WO2 (FofS) Mick Solomons, SSgt (YofS) Mark Bentley** and **SSgt (SQMS)** 'Chalky' **White** on their well-deserved promotions. We bid farewell to **Capt Rob Francis** on his departure to 7 Sig Regt (maybe he'll get a medal there!) and to **Sig** 'Jimmy' **Hendricks** who has abandoned ship to be posted to Civ Div and to the TA as a YofS. We are all looking forward to the return of the JCUFI personnel so that we may return to some semblance of normality and get stuck into the reformation/ welcome home party, finnaar, finnaar!

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP - *by LCpl Cunnington*

Tp SSgt **SSgt Kleppang**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Wilson**

The last couple of months have been a long hard haul for Comms Tp. With the reforming of the Troop and the preparation for the forthcoming exercises, which will keep us fairly occupied throughout the year (and we thought the training year would be a rest, bring back all the Op tours!), everybody has been very busy and the year has only begun! Hopefully with the hard work and determination of the lads and lasses the major preparation has been now completed and we keep our fingers crossed that every thing goes well in the forthcoming exercises. The Troop would like to welcome **Sig Chris Lane** and **Sig Keith Candler** direct from the factory. **Sig** 'Not a Jock' **McPhie** joins us from the emerald isles, **Cpl Ian Brown** and **Sig** 'Sniper' **Sims** both from 30 Sig Regt and **SSgt** 'Del Boy, me and my photos' **Kleppang** who we think has come from Herford. He seems to have spent most of his life here, but he says that he has come from 20 Bde, what do we believe? **LCpl Dave Vakalala** has seen the light and has gone AWOL from (Geeky) Comd Tp and joined the working realms of Comms Tp we congratulate him on his wise decision. Sadly we have a farewells, **Sig** 'Stinky' **Howland** has departed for the Bright lights of the City of London joining 238 (How much is a beer?) Sig Sqn, good luck in your new posting.

COMMAND TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Henderson**
Tp Sgts **Cpl McCallum**
Cpl Carty

Well we have had a busy start to the New Year with people changing Troops and also two interesting 'It's the Knock Out' plug ups which provided a chance for those wannabe designers in the clouds, to change the shape of the BFOT for the millionth time! The manufacturers will be chuffed to bits with the money they will be saving in research courtesy of the Army! We had said our farewells to our old leader of the pack **Sgt** 'Adi (the stick insect)' **Sims** to HQ KFOR. However, it was felt that he would miss 212 so much and the chance of him putting weight on would be too great. It was therefore decided that he would stay with his favourite Squadron. Don't say that we don't look after our people (IIP). We would like to give a big welcome back to the lads and lasses who have just completed a six month tour in the Falklands Islands and also welcome back **Cpl Ian Fowler** on the Completion and passing of his Class 1. Finally we must wish our luck for **Cpl** 'Mac' **McCallum** who leaves us with tears in his eyes en route for his Class 1. God help Blandford and lock up yer daughters the oldest swinger is in town!

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp SSgt **SSgt Matless**
Tp Sgts **Sgt Millington**
Sgt Ribed

This year so far has been a busy one, due to most of our manpower being away down the Falklands Islands, however we have still managed to keep more generators on the road than 211! Who have a battalion's worth of ED's. The 'Gene' bay would like to welcome back **Cpl Dave** 'Where's the spark plug on this computer' **Turton**, and his Generator 'repair' Team. We would also like to congratulate **LCpl Humphreys** on passing his Class 1. Hellos go to **Cpl** 'Paper work' **Blacklock**. Sadly we have to say good bye to **LCpl** 'I smoke loads' **Russel** who has been the back-bone of the gene bay and will be deeply missed. The 212 Techs have been extremely busy preparing for the forth coming exercises with **LCpl Ally** 'Stud' **Cage** being stretched to his physical extreme once again, getting ready for action that others would carry off calmly. The Techs would like to welcome **LCpl** 'Jack' **Hawkins** to the Regiment, who has recently completed the Squadron induction course in Bavarian skiing, learning about life in a Div Sig Regt in Germany.

Congratulations go out to **Cpl** 'Wilf' **Williams** and his wife on the arrival of their newly born son, **Dylan** and we are very proud of **LCpl** 'Cheesy' **Rodgers** for being presented with the Harrogate Hockey Cup in last month's *WIRE*. Don't forget the beers mate! The Sqn MT/ Line Section would like to give a warm (because it's soooo cold out there) welcome back to **Sgt Chris** 'Trip switch' **Leader** and **LCpl** 'Monty' **Montgomery** back from the Falklands. We also have a very overdue welcome to **Sgt Paul Millington** who has come to us all 'spit shined and polished' from AAC Arborfield. Direct from MATTEL (the factory) we welcome the latest off the production line. **Sigs Gail Evans** and **Amanda Mackenzie** who are the first female 'Lineys' here in the Division.

TOUR LEADER TRAINING - *by Sgt 'I want a tour not a course' Sims*

The TLT course is designed to train personnel in the skills required to instruct skiing and lead ski tours. This is a new course and all qualified ski instructors now have to complete this course to enable them to continue instructing. Wanting to pursue this line of adventure training I booked myself on the course and made the 'death' journey by the bus to Sonthofen.

The first morning was the obligatory welcome and a short period of background to the requirements of the course and the aims of adventure training. Next it was the kit issue and then off to the slopes where the instructors tested our ski ability by finding the steepest slope and saying 'follow me!' (Sounds familiar!) Once we had found our ski legs the next few days were spent ski touring and learning new skills about the weather and environment in preparation for the three-day expedition. The expedition consisted of three days touring with two nights out, one night in a snow hole and the following night in a ski hut. The emphasis being on map reading in difficult conditions and putting together our newly learnt skills. The first day went very well with temperatures starting at –10°C, but once we got going we soon warmed up! Once in our final location it was snow hole time and what a bonus ours collapsed! With a few mods, we were soon cosy for the night.

The following day we toured to our hut for the night learning hut etiquette and enjoying a three course meal and a few beers. The last day we were left to our own devices and to reflect on an excellent package. The course taught me a lot about the cold weather environment and anyone wishing to pursue being a ski instructor will find this course well worth it!.

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col I. Cameron-Mowat**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. C. Keilty**

Lt Col Wakerley
is escorted out of Imphal Barracks by the Regiment

A huge spate of goodbyes have been taking place here in York over the last three months with the recent departure of the Commanding Officer, **Lt Col Wakerley MBE** to take up a post in PJHQ. Thursday is not a good night for a dining out, as the WOs and SNCOs found out on Friday morning. We welcome the new Commanding Officer, **Lt Col I. Cameron-Mowat** arriving from a tour in London.

A farewell lunch was held in the Sgts' Mess on Friday 11 February, 2000, to say farewell to the GOC, **Maj Gen R. D. S. Gordon CBE**, and the staff at HQ 2 Division on their pending move to Scotland. Thirteen leaving gifts were presented after the lunch, with a further seven WO1's dined out the following Friday (must be a record). We wish all our friends from the Divisional Staff a fond farewell and good luck up north.

Presentation by RSM S C Keilty to the GOC
Maj Gen R. D. S. Gordon

Lt Col Cameron-Mowat welcomes
Comd In Chief Land, Gen Sir Mike Jackson KCB MBE
on a recent visit to Imphal Barracks

Friday 31 March, 2000, saw the end of an era as the 2 Division flag was lowered, completing the move of the HQ from its home here in York for the past 17 years, to Scotland. The parade saw the GOC invite the Garrison Commander to fly the 15 Brigade flag in place of his own, in what was a very emotional moment for the 200 or so spectators. **Capt Anderton-Brown**, Adjutant 2 Sig Regt commanded the parade, with 30 other members of the Regiment acting as the honour guard.

ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS CROSS-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS 2000

This year's Cross-Country Championships were held at Bulford Camp on 9 February, this was the first time the Championship had been held for some ten years. The Regiment entered a male team of seven, comprising of **SSgt McNairn, Cpl Cadywould, LCpl Clark, LCpl Thomas, Sig Shepard, Sig Tucker** and **SSgt Needham,** from 216 Sig Sqn, who volunteered to run for us as **LCpl Wilkinson** was attending his PTI course at Aldershot. **Capt Tyndale** competed individually in the female event. The event was run over approximately six miles with a few punishing hills to contend with. All of our runners ran well, especially **Cpl Cadywould** who came first in the male event, winning the Senior Men's first prize. **Sig Tucker** won the Junior Men's first prize and **Capt Tyndale** collected the Senior Ladies third prize. This gave all three runners the opportunity to run for the Army team. As a team the men finished a close fourth, and with **Sig Grady** posted into the regiment, a member of the Army cross-county team, and **LCpl Wilkinson** back from his PTI course the future looks bright for the team next season. Members of the team are now in training for next season, which starts in September, some of the team have just

attended a training camp in sunny Portugal for two weeks, whilst others are using the break between seasons to compete in athletic events and half marathons. In all a good result with the team looking to do that bit better next year, so any up and coming runners should make their way to 2 Signal Regiment.

QUARTERMASTER DEPARTMENT
QM **Maj B. J. Dalton**
RQMS (GEN) **WO2 T. S. Hague**
RQMS (Tech) **WO2 D. G. Simpson**

Since the last *WIRE* the pace has not changed in the department. The new year started with the Unit's annual Logistics Support Inspection (LSI), followed by deployment of the department on Ex Key Flight. This was quickly followed by PRE and RSIT, however **SSgt Angus MacPherson** still managed to arrange Squadron Adventure Training to the Pyrenees for later in the year. With the HO/TO of CO's , the last three weeks have heavily involved the Department in the Regimental Board of Officers. Congratulations to **WO2 (RQMS) Dave Simpson** on passing his RQMS Course even though he missed the LSI. We say farewell to **WO2** 'Best Boots and Pace Stick' **(SSM) Kev Smith** an inter squardon posting to 214 Sig Sqn and **LCpl Sarah Horton** who left the Army for Civ Div. Warm welcomes to **WO2 (RQMS) Terry Hague** from the Trg Wing and congratulations to **Sig** now **LCpl Claire Dawson** posted in from 1 (UK) Div.

MIKE TROOP - *by LCpl Gaz Edmondson*

With everyone finally back in York after tours in the Falklands, and Kosovo life is slowly getting back to normality, despite several members of the Troop still on tour in Bosnia. It has been a busy period since Christmas with Ex Key Flight 1, closely followed by Ex Eagles Flight, allowing us all to shake out the cobwebs and to let a lot of the Troop deploy for the first time. With the RSIT team visiting in March the system technicians, ably lead by **Sgt** 'Bertie' **Hoyle**, were rushing around making sure that everything was up to speed and trying to match the Radio Technicians performance on PRE. Eventually it all went off with no major dramas.

Congratulations to **LCpl Dave** 'Who shall I marry this week?' **Dodds**, on his forthcoming wedding to **Zoe**. We wish them the best of luck. We say goodbye to **Cpl Craig Graham** who left for Civ Div, after nine years service and **Cpl** 'Si' **Aunger** who has left for Blandord to do his T1. We are preparing to say good bye to **Cpls Dave Randall, Lee Rumford** and **John McKeown** leaving for Blandford and their class ones, and **WO1 (FofS) Mark Hardy** who is finally leaving for a cushy job in Civ Div after a full 22 years service. We wish all those leaving the best of luck. We say hello to **LCpls Russell, Holmes** and **Gillard** fresh from the Blandford factory, all bright eyed and bushy tailed.

LIGHT AID DETACHMENT by **Cpl Jobson**
Regt Gen Bay **Sgt Wyatt**
2IC **Cpl Jobson**

Last year turned out to be extremely busy with Kosovo rearing its ugly head. With **Sgt Andy Wyatt, Cpl Hari, LCpl Weeston, Sig Cinnamond, Sig Hughes** and **Sig Mitchell** all going off to get a sun tan in the Balkans it left **Cpl Jobson** and his crew to do all the pleasures around camp. Once they had returned three wise Signallers, **Sig Clegghorn, Tinker** and **Sworowski** were selected to attend the other in the Balkans and jumped at the chance. Welcome to **LCpl Syria** from 30 Sig Regt and goodbye to **Sig Clarke** who has gone to Civ Div and **Sig Cinnamond** who has gone on promotion to a tough posting at RAF Digby.

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj D. W. Somerville**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) K. R. J. Smith**

We start by saying farewell to **Maj David Somerville** who is leaving the squadron on posting to PJHQ. He has served with the squadron for well over two years both on a busy exercise schedule and also whilst deployed on operations to Kosovo. His strive for excellence and enormous Ptarmigan knowledge were his trademarks and both will be sorely missed. We wish him the best of luck in the future from all of 214 Sig Sqn.

TN 021 ROMAN TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Stu Whittley**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Chris Symonds**

The new Millennium clearout has continued uninterrupted here in Roman Tp. Our latest line of deportees includes **Sigs Chris Beevers, Chris Blackett, Ben Munnings, Daz Kirkby** on promotion and **Sig** 'Scotty' **Harcus** who has escaped the Army for good. Also listed as lost in battle are **LCpl Col** 'Combat' **Nealey** on promotion, and **Cpl John** 'Geezer' **McLoughlin** on posting. We have seen **Cpl Tony** 'Officers Bouffant' **Orange, Sigs Chris** 'Shady' **Holmes, Leon** 'Dodgy' **Bradley, Wayne** 'Well Untrustworthy' **George**, and 'Akkers' **Adkins** come into Roman Tp. Goodbye and good luck to all of those people who have left the illustrious Roman Tp and a hearty hello and good luck to all of those joining the Troop.

For 214 Sig Sqn the first exercise of the year 2000 was Ex Key Flight. We were given our marching orders to go to Otterburn Training Area, possibly the wettest, windiest, most dismal place on this planet, with the possible exception of Burnley. Though the deployment was given a slight humour boost when **Sig** 'Permanent bad hair day' **Jones** bogged in his Radio Relay. This resulted in the usual Troop rendition of our favourite word – 'SLAB'. The first two days were pretty much the same, we fought to stop our cam nets and tents from becoming UFOs, although we did manage to overcome the elements to set up the Trunk Node with a fair semblance of order. It was a pleasant change to see our new OC on his first Exercise actually sitting in his Node Command vehicle as opposed to being permanently in his sleeping bag as the last one had perfected. SSgt **Chris** 'Food Nazi' **Symonds** did make ours the most popular destination for attachments as he blatantly refused to feed anyone who turned up in our location. We were eventually saved from the threat of hypothermia when we were told to move south to Catterick Training Area where we were promised at least a few trees to keep the wind off. Catterick proved to be a bit friendlier although hindered with an attack by the enemy and a short NBC phase, but nothing too drastic. Mission accomplished with peace more or less restored to the area (Geordies will probably never get on with the Sunderland boys!) we heard the magic word -ENDEX! An uneventful journey back to camp without a single ambush, everybody went home in the knowledge of a job well done.

We returned to Camp for a few weeks to enjoy the slabs people had acquired on Exercise and to revel in the local nightlife, but it wasn't too long until we were off again. This time our presence was requested on Ex Eagles Flight, a combined exercise with the newly formed 16 Air Assault Brigade. The Troop deployed on a glorious sunny Sunday morning to Keevil airfield. After an uneventful cabby down to the exercise area we arrived at the airfield ten hours later and began to set up the Node home. After a plug up to the other Troops we settled into the 'dump/Node home' for the night. Bright and breezy the next morning the other Troops left for their node home locations and, once comms were established again, we waited for the exercise to start properly. In the meantime we were treated to aerial displays by the local glider club/boy racers up and down the airfield. As the forward elements of the Brigade deployed, we felt like Marvin Gaye and Ottis Reading 'watching the Hercs coming in and going out again!' As the exercise moved into full swing, we received a call in the evening telling us that the Step-up SAS/MC had arrived on the airfield and were waiting impatiently to be engineered. After two hours of our relay testing and changing every possible piece of kit **Sigs Nat** 'Picture in the local paper' **Davis** and 'Scotty (Scabby Head)' **Harcus** finally admitted defeat, 'We can't see him !' This was passed onto the Node Command where our illustrious leader **Lt Stu** 'Hear me now' **Whittley** rang the OSC and asked for confirmation of the SAS/MC's deployment, in the background he heard the call to the brigade and then heard, 'Oh dear' (or words to that effect!). It turned out that it had not even left South Cerney - cheers to brigade ops for that!! Following in the same vein when it came to refilling the water bowser the next day, we found to our disgust that **SSgt Chris** 'Admin guru' **Symonds** had built the entire Node home around the aforementioned bowser… Nice ! As the exercise progressed we left our 'dump' and moved to South Cerney for an overnight stay in-between phases and we got to see our SCC crew **Cpl Rick Allmark** and **Sig Sam Stroughair** in, what could only be described as, the latter stages of 'death by boredom!' Our ED **LCpl Bob** 'Commander comms' **Thirsk** also got the chance to reflect on how hard life was for his fellow EDs back at Echelon, but like the true diplomat he is, he kept his comments to himself (well nearly)!

The next morning a few members of the Troop were walking like Texas cowboys due to the fresh food. This had still been gladly received after a week of solid compo, all lovingly prepared by our resident sloppy **Cpl John** 'I'll harden those arteries' **Galletley**. After another long cabby we arrived at Sculthorpe airfield, which was surrounded by what looked like the annual meeting of the Janes' military spotters society! Our job on this the final phase of the Exercise was to test the satellite link back to South Cerney and re-establish comms. Unfortunately the sat link did not work so, as the saying goes, 'If the man won't go to the mountain.' The sat det moved to our location and shock horror the link worked. Things went smoothly from then on, the morning of the 23rd we were expecting news of the Endex on our morning brief. However, we were told that we were moving back to South Cerney and the exercise was carrying on - the entire Troop was on the verge of ripping into the OC. Big lad or not he was going to get some! Luckily for us all it was just a wind up in aid of **Cpl** 'Ricky' **Rickard's** birthday, who appreciated his cake as it didn't contain any compo! With Endex called we headed back north.

Cpl 'Ricky' Rickard's birthday celebration in the field

We are now waiting with baited breath on our RSIT reports and the details of a summer jolly, sorry Exercise, to Germany. Until the next thrilling instalment, remember 'If in doubt, Shields Up'.

TN 022 TORNADO TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Graham Wills**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Neil Cooper**

Welcome notes go to **Cpl Cox** from HQ AFCENT and **LCpl** Nicky **Burnip** from 1 (UK) ADSR, Herford. February saw the start of some serious maintenance not only within the Squadron but all the Troops. With RSIT pending the Troop found little time to play and long hours and sleepless nights prevailed. As always, when you think you have done your bit, the Board of Officers quickly followed RSIT. Well at least that is classed as 'in house'.

Another tasking for the mighty Tornado sees a JNCO and Signaller having to fly back out to Kosovo to pick up a Switch. This was extremely short notice with manning unavailable from 33 Sig Regt (V) Liverpool, to whom the switch belongs. Who should volunteer to go, but good old **LCpl Craig Jinks** and new lad **Sig Wilson.** With their Switch returning from Kosovo, 33 Sig Regt (V) needed to borrow a Switch from a reliable source accompanied by the Det Commander for a short plug up as part of Ex Spring Eagle. **LCpl Jase Nicholls** was unanimously voted as volunteer for this first phase and quickly returned two weeks later accompanied by **Cpl** 'Snoz' **Davis.**

The Squadron 2IC organised a 'Supertom' Competition 29-30 March. The aim of this was to determine the best Signaller within the Squadron. All the Corporals organised and put into place the stands including driving skills, first aid, muscle endurance tests in the gymnasium, the assault course, SAT training, a trade training stand and even a night navex. Results are still being compiled as we speak.

We now look forward to a well earned extensive leave period to catch up on last year's entitlement, followed by preparation for the annual Race the Sun competition and then deployment to Germany for Ex Arrcade Falcon. Congratulations go to **LCpl Sibley** on her promotion in unit. Finally we say goodbye to **Sig** 'Griff' **Griffiths** on posting to RSS Blandford, **Sig Matt Taylor** on posting to 16 Air Assault both also on promotion and **Sig Richie Glass** who has gone to CivDiv.

TN 023 VIKING TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt J. D. Noble**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Terry Shiels**

Viking Tp started the millennium with an ever-fun ITD week, and with the results of most of the shooting, you could tell that people were still recovering from the Christmas parties. We were then thrown into Ex Key Flight spent in sunny Otterburn. It was a fast moving exercise used to shake off the cobwebs after Kosovo and Christmas, and served as an excellent opportunity for the Troop to get to grips with their tactical and communication drills all over again. Carrying on a similar theme, February brought Ex Eagles Flight where we supported 16 Air Assault Bde on their first exercise since formation. Although, on exercise, there was a requirement to maintain our wagons as March took us right into the thick of our old friends RSIT! The near future promises to bring plenty of variety with a deployment to Arizona for Ex Roving Sands (3 Jun – 11 Jul) in support of 22 Air Defence Regiment. Three weeks of exercise followed by adventure training/R&R package sounds just fine to us (unlucky 'Torpedo' Troop) VIVA LAS AMERICA!

Finally, the Troop would like to bid a fond farewell to **LCpl Dan Parker** who has left us for 1 (UK) Div, **LCpl** 'Pebbles' **Pember** who has moved to 7 Sig Regt, both on promotion, and congratulations to **Cpl Steve Cadywould** on passing his RCB. Good luck at Sandhurst in September. Hellos go to **Sig Pikendra** who has arrived fresh after re-trading to Radio Relay at Blandford, we hope you enjoy your time with the Troop.

TN 024 CELTIC TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Dhan Gurung**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Bhuddi Gurung**

This has proved to be a hectic time for the Troop since its formation in January as part of 214 Sig Sqn. This is the first stage of the formation of 246 Gurkha Signal Squadron with the continuing arrival of Gurkha soldiers from 30 Sig Regt and fresh from re-trade at Blandford. The oncoming months will prove very interesting for sure.

The newly formed Celtic Troop, prior to deployment on Ex Eagles Flight

However, the formation of the Troop has not been as smooth as one would of hoped. The majority of the kit and equipment is being 'dragged', 'borrowed' and sought from around the Regiment and from the Out of Use pool at Ashchurch. All Troop personnel have worked extremely hard to ensure the Troop were ready to support the first exercise at the end of January, Ex Key Flight I. This was achieved but it was found that there is still a long way to go. Support was then given to Ex Eagles Flight to assist 16 Air Asslt Bde in their first exercise since formation. Work did not stop both in the field or on return to barracks as the Squadron prepared itself for both RSIT and the Board of Officers. The Troop now look forward to leave and the preparation for deployment on Ex Roving Sands in America.

Farewells go to **Sig Munnings** who leaves us for 1 (UK) Div on promotion and **SSgt Buddhi** who was commissioned on Friday, 7 April, he will leave us shortly for 250 Gurkha School of Signals at Nuneton. The Troop also welcomes **Sigs Hem, Mek, Nirakal, Ramesh** and **Pitamber** who join us from Blandford.

Lt Buddhi pops the champagne on his commissioning in the Officers Mess

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON EXERCISE 'SUPERTOM' 29-20 MARCH 2000 - *by Sig Gregory*

It started at 0645hrs on Wednesday 29 March at the armoury for weapons and then onto the cookhouse for a hearty breakfast and collection of 'death packs'. Once all that was sorted it was time for the two teams to be split down – I was in Team 'A' and this is how we did it! A Section Assault written test and then off to Strensall Training Area for the real thing. The shiners like **Sig** 'Griff' **Griffiths** get 'killed off' straight away to give the newer kids a try, most did OK.

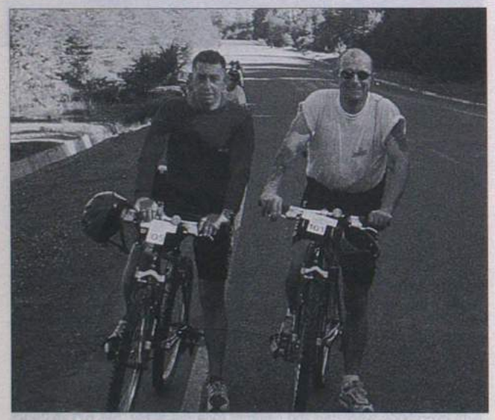
After a quick de-cam we were off to the SAT for a dawn shoot scenario in the desert with **Lt Wills** proving that officers can not shoot a 'barn door at 10 yards'. A bit of food and we had a go at the command tasks; tyres over parallel bars and cable drums over horizontal logs etc. All were there to stretch everybody's limited brain power! Next we were rescuing a 'special forces' recce team and administering first aid as part of a cleverly constructed stand by **Cpl Rickard**. To polish the day's events off, **LCpl** 'Kelly' **Codling** and **Cpls Bevan** and **Macleod** took us through, over, under and around the assault course with a lot of blood, sweat, tears and anything else into it, to get through as quickly as possible. This ends with everybody wheezing and gagging for a quick fag. **Sig Bryan Jones** wins the Oscar for 'most original way to descend a rope, then sprain his ankle'.

At 1800hrs it was off to Galtres Bivouac area to administer ourselves and tuck into some lovely pork casserole compo to warm us up ready for the Night Navigation exercise. This was to prove that, with cyalumes marking the points, even the best get lost. An unexpectedly quiet night under the stars, a layer of frost tempting us to stay in our sleeping bags but still up at the crack of dawn. Back at Imphal Barracks for the remainder of the events kept us extremely busy. It started with a rather taxing BATCO test and everyone proving they remember all they were taught on their basic signalling skills at Blandford??! Then the trade skills stand with a SCAM 12 race and putting up 9x9 tents keep the adrenaline pumping ready for the final push – the 'United States Marine Corps' muscle endurance test (Sir, yes, Sir!) Some upper-body overloading and a 1.5-mile run later, everyone knackered it was time to hit the showers. Finally, with the weapons in the armoury, we eagerly await the final debrief. A few lessons learnt, maybe, we all collapse in our rooms. This is of course except the die-hards like **Sigs** 'Vinny' **Vint** and 'Dan' **Wales** who prove that, even on this Thursday, you can still go to 'Toffs'. Just think, we now have another year to forget what we have learnt and to do it all again.

TRANS ANDEAN CYCLE CHALLENGE
2 - 12 MARCH 2000
by WO2 (SSM) K. Smith

Thursday 2 - Friday 3 March: 0745hrs Thursday 2 March and the minibus arrived. An energetic yet sombre mood hung in the air as I travelled from York to Heathrow Terminal 1 to meet up with the RSM, **WO1** 'Sean' **Keilty** and the rest of the 40 strong charity raisers. It had all begun back in June 1999 when we saw an advertisement in The Times, it read 'Ride across the Andes in aid of SENSE (The National Deaf/Blind and Rubella Association)'. After much begging and borrowing we reached our goal and raised £2000 each and were now Chile bound to spend the next ten days cycling from the small town of Puerto Montt over the Andes into Argentina to the town of Bariloche and back. The flight took us via Madrid and Sao Paolo (Brazil) to Santiago, the capital of Chile. We landed an hour behind a certain Mr Pinochet and adopted our grey man stance. The Chilean airport staff were very helpful and within an hour we were on an internal flight to Puerto Montt. We were split into two groups of 20, the RSM and myself were in Group B. Each group was then taken to its final destination, ours being the Hotel Salzburg in Frutillar on the bank of the immense Lake Llanquihue. We had been on the go for 33 hours and all we wanted were our beds. This was not to be and after a tentative brief on the next day's cycling we had an excellent meal and retired to bed in readiness for the start of the trek.

Saturday 4 March: We woke to a clear and sunny Patagonian morning. After breakfast, 'which was nice', we assembled at our bikes and chatted to our Argentinian Guides from a bike company called Bikeway who specialised in Adventure Holidays. We couldn't help but notice that Ron Hills and green issue trainers were not in Vogue this year. The first day's ride for us was an easy 35km from Frutillar to Puerto Varas following a dirt track along the lakeshore. Ever present throughout the ride across the lake was the two volcanoes Calbuco and Osorno. As the journey progressed it became evident that within our civilian counterparts there are people 'In the rear with the gear' and a few of these sporting professionals fell off their bikes at various stages. Unfortunately the RSM also fell off, however, he warned the bike for orders and never fell off again. We arrived in Puerto Varas shaking as the last 3km were along a disused rail track with the sleepers still laid. The late afternoon saw the guides take us by bus into Puerto Montt to sample the old Indian market 'which was nice'. After five minutes we had looked around and discovered that you could buy everything in the market in better condition in the high street back home, so it was off to the new shopping centre and time for a quick Big Macio before we headed back to Puerto Varas. That evening for supper we were taken to a seafood restaurant where the choice as the Chilean waitress put it was 'Beefy or Steak' or a seafood platter. We are still trying to work out the difference between Beef or Steak.



Sunday 5 March: The Andean challenge started today with a 42km cycle from Entre Lago to Salto del Indio campsite. The journey started off very flat, however, we soon started our ascent into the Andes. Lunch was spent in a lay-by at the top of this hill and after this the roads just kept inclining. We finally arrived at the campsite and helped the guides set up our tents (well the RSM and myself did) !! The campsite is named after an Indian who escaped from the Spanish and hid by the magnificent waterfall at the back of the camp. The night was spent around the campsite (dib, dib, dib) with dinner comprising of what can only be described as a Chicken pasty from Mrs Miggins Pie shop with an olive in it.

Monday 6 March: We woke to hear whining from the Civilian Corps who had been extremely cold during the night, (Gucci do not make good sleeping bags). At this point, I emerged from my Gore-Tex bivvy bag absolutely toasting (thanks QM). Breakfast consisted of a cup of coffee and a rich tea biscuit if you were lucky. This is a perfect staple diet for the days cycle of which the first 26km were all uphill to the top of the peaks, so after licking t' road clean wit tongue. We set off and once out of the campsite we started the ascent. After 4km we arrived at the Chilean border and then continued on into what is known as the buffer zone. There is a 40km buffer between Chile and Argentina, as they cannot decide where the border lies. The next 22km wound their way upwards, until lunch when we arrived at the top. As we got stuck into our lunch awaiting the arrival of the rear party, an Argentinean Interior Ministry Patrol arrived. The RSM and myself went over and had a quick chat and photo call with their **Lt Walter Thompson** by name that spoke exceedingly good English. He told to wrap up, as the wind chill factor would be approx –15 degrees. We soon learnt that –15 degree wind chill factor to a Argentinian is about 30 degrees C to a westerner and after a kilometres we stopped to strip back down to T-shirt and shorts before we melted. As we got further down the weather became 'Scorchio' with temperatures hitting between 35 – 38 degrees C. At the Border crossing we still had another 26km to do till we arrived at our Hostel for our fist night in Argentina, however, the route was mostly downhill and tarmac which made the going a lot easier. The Villa de la Angosturra is located on the massive idyllic Lake Nahuel Huapi, with a massive non-idyllic, loud, female American host. Dinner that evening was Chicken and chips a real treat after the last 24 hours.

Tuesday 7 March: The sunrise from the hostel over the lake that morning was picturesque and after devouring 24 slices of toast each we got ready for the days cycle. As people brought their luggage down for transfer to the next accommodation it was apparent that the uphill cycle the day before had seriously drained everyone's quads. We set off 66kms to Bariloche to be covered. We left Angosturra and after the first 3kms our muscles had stretched off so we increased the pace. One hour later we stopped for a quick NAAFI break (bananas and chewy bars) having covered 25km. Our route today took us from the North of Lake Nahuel Huapi in a clockwise direction to Bariloche located on the South side of the lake. The distance covered shows you the size of the lake and we were only covering a slight part of it. A quick dip in the lake to cool off and we carried on towards Bariloche. The afternoon leg seemed to go on forever, over tarmac road with a strong head wind. The heat of the day hit us and added to the strain. We finally arrived at our pick up point to be bussed the last few kilometres into Bariloche The late afternoon was spent shopping for the familiar T-shirt (see it, done it, got the T-shirt, starred in the film, etc). Dinner that night was to be a Vegetarian meal at the renowned Vegetarian restaurant in Bariloche. Not being vegetarians the RSM and myself had to top ourselves up with 1.5 litre bottles of Warsteiner (Argentina's premier beer).

Wednesday 8 March: After a bad night's sleep (I wonder why!!), we woke up to breakfast which comprised of four year old toast if you were lucky and coffee that made your eyeballs stand on end. We left Bariloche and the first 12km was dirt track, however, leaving Bariloche consisted of a 1: 1 hill ('hello') which soon had myself and the RSM sweating like Gary Glitter. The dirt track was a nightmare, however, it also included exciting steep and technical moves. Lunch was spent at a tributary of Lake Petito Moreno, it was late after we lost one of the group in the woods after taking a wrong turn. The afternoon was spent with another 10km on dirt track following the shores of Lake Petito Moreno until we hit tarmac with 14km to go. Our end point for the day was the Hostel at Llao Llao pronounced 'jchao jchao'. The 14km were covered very quickly and reminded me of Yosemite National Park in California. We finally arrived at the Hostel and relaxed until dinner which was amazing 'Asado Argentino', a selection of the best meats. The steak would have satisfied both Homer Simpson and Fred Flintstone.

Thursday 9 March: Today's cycle was not so daunting, we paraded five minutes before under supervision of the RSM and sized the bikes off accordingly. After several ferry journeys and passports stamped we arrived at Puerto Frias and started the climb through the cloud into the tropical rainforest. The 4km went very quickly although it was very tiring. The descent was 13km down a dirt track to the Chilean side, which was covered very quickly, with a few people taking some hair-raising tumbles. We broke through the cloud again and reached the Chilean side and again had our passports stamped. In front of us lay another 14km to the next ferry at Punta Peulla. The journey followed the course of a tributary running into the main lake and about 10km from Punta Peulla, I met two hikers from America who were walking all of South America. The dirt track meant that your arms were aching from all the shuddering and after a few kilometres your arms and fingers were numb. We arrived at the ferry port two hours to wait and the view reminded me of something out of Jurassic Park.. While we waited the two hikers arrived and we sat for part of the journey chatting to them on where hey had been and where they were going. The ferry docked in Petrohue and we unloaded our bikes for the final 23km of the day, six of which were again on dirt track. We arrived at our hostel for the night in Ensenada. The Hostel was located on the shores of Lake Llanquihue with the breathtaking view of Osorno Volcano overlooking us.

Friday 10 - Sunday 12 March: Our last day and it was obvious as nobody stretched off before cycling. Today's goal was to arrive where we had started a week ago at the Hotel Salzburg in Frutillar a stunning 80km away. The first 21km were yet again all dirt track cycling next to the Volcano on old lava and cinder. The kilometres sped away and in no time at all we had hit tarmac in the village of Las Cascadas. We dropped our bikes off and trekked to the splendid waterfall located east of the village. After some pictures we trekked back down and had lunch on the shoreline of the lake. All of us knew that ahead of us lay 60km of hills and valleys. What actually lay ahead was horrendous, the long straight roads interrupted with hills that made you drop down to the lowest gear straight away. The sun beat down and drained you at the same time. The first cyclists (of which I was one) arrived at Frutillar in an exceptional three hours, however, no one from the admin team was there to meet us and we had to wait for 1.5 hours for our dry clothing to turn up with the admin vehicle. Everyone was in by 1730hrs and we set off to get showered and cleaned up.

The next groups arrived that evening from UK and were met by a torrent of windups and horror stories about their week ahead. Dinner that night was a culmination of seafood and poultry which mixed with a few well deserved beers (and a game of pool!!) finished off a superb week. The next morning we were taken to Puerto Montt airport for our 33-hour flight back to UK. To sum it up I would say the money we raised, the people we met both in the group and on our travels, the scenery and sights we saw made it a worthwhile and just expedition. A special thanks must be given to the Associate members we swore in along the way: - Simon (Stocks & shares man), Shane (I.T.man), Julien (Financial Director) and Colin (The Architect).

3(UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISONAL SIGNAL REGIMENT

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

The recent change of appointments in the 'Puzzle Palace' has meant a change of emphasis in the RAO and the 2IC's job descriptions. The Payman, **Capt Paul Corker** AGC is forever on the golf course and the 2IC, **Maj Nick Bateson,** continues to do most of his work from the gymnasium! In fact his output is falling so greatly that we are thinking of replacing his clerical support with voice mail that tells you exactly which forest he's running in! The Commanding Officer, **Lt Col Neil Couch** splits his time between the Divisional and Regimental commitments while taking in parts of the globe that only you and I can dream about. The Ops Team is now led by **Capt Nick Rees-Deacon** who you may recognise as merely **Deacon** before he entered the world of wives and babies. He is being helped along his rocky initiation into the Ops world by the old steady hands:

Capt Nige 'Happy' **Cullen**
Capt Al 'I' ll get to the point eventually' **Patterson**
WO1 (YofS) '264 SAS No women's clothes' **Slater**

The ever presents of RHQ the RSM, **WO1** 'Brummy' **Stoker** and the Adjutant, **Maj Al Long** soldier on with the poor Adjt doing both the day and night shift in between baby sitting and buying the 'Spar' out of chocolate. Don't worry **Al** only a few months to push. I hear OC 202 Sqn might be on the cards. Jog on !!

ARMY CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS
WEDNESDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2000

As 2 February 2000 approached the prospect of beating last year's third place in the Army Championships looked unlikely as **LCpl Johnson** had been posted to 1 Div and both **Sig Kemp** and **Sig Durward** had packed their bags for Hereford. Then suddenly everything began to change ……..**Maj Nick Bateson,** the new 2IC arrived from HQ 4 Div with a car full of trainers, **Maj Richard Smith** was persuaded to come out from behind his HQ Arty Ops desk and low and behold **Kemp** and **Durward** decided that storming embassies was not for them. The team selection was confirmed after a league event on the Bulford ridge and with the Ladies Team also finding some new AGC blood from the Div HQ **(Maj Bev Walters-Davies)** and from 2Ll **(Pte Watson)** it looked as though it would be worth going to Aldershot after all. In the end the men were Runners Up only thwarted by a particularly strong team from 1 Para who took the title for the first time in 35 years achieving eight scorers inside 63 places. Our finishers were as follows:

25	**WO2 Docherty**	89	**Sig Clark**
34	**LCpl Conlon**	95	**Maj Smith**
50	**LCpl Kemp**	98	**Sig Swan**
77	**Maj Bateson**	134	**Sig Durward**
Total 602 Pts			
141	**Lt Irwin**	186	**WO2 Morrow**

The Ladies Team also had success achieving fourth place with **Maj Walters Davies** leading the team in to take 14th position overall, second female veteran. **Pte Watson** 31, **Cpl Austin-Williamson** 36 and **SSgt (YofS) Rouse** 49 completed the scoring 4. Our other runner **Sig Mates** ran exceptionally well to finish 53rd. As a result of the race **Maj Bateson** was selected to run for the Army Veterans team in the Inter Services competition at Deepcut on 3 March 2000.

ROYAL SIGNALS CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS
STOP PRESS! - CORPS CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPS

The resurrected Corps Cross Country Champs took place on the Bulford Ridge on Wednesday 9 February 2000. Following their Army success the Regimental Male team were victorious with a two point victory over 11 Sig Regt. The eight good men and true were:

5th	**LCpl Conlon**	6th	**WO2 Docherty**
11th	**LCpl Kemp**	14th	**Maj Smith** (Div HQ , very handy Sir !!)
17th	**Maj Bateson**	30th	**Sig Swan**
32th	**Lt Irwin**	34th	**LCpl Watts**

The ladies also went one better than the Army Champs by storming to third place overall. The placings were as follows:

3rd	**Pte Watson**	11th	**SSgt (Yof S) Rouse**
15th	**Sig Hunt**	23rd	**Sig Darcy**

SPORTS SUCCESSES

Champion Ladies
Back Row (L-R): Cpl Kelly Clark, LCpl Helen West, Sig Linsey Smith, Pve Lousie Fraser, Cpl Julie Austin Williamson, Cpl Carmen Michelska , SSgt Brew Baker
Middle Row (L-R): LCpl Laura Smith, Capt Nikki Dewsbury, Cpl Cath Burgess, Capt Mary Read, Cpl Lesley Beck, Sgt Debbie Fairclough, LCpl Tracey Prowse
Front Row (L-R): Sgt Jo Walton, Lt Imogen Mulholland

Maj Appleton receives 5 Div Hockey Cup medal

Sig Salmon receives 5 Div Hockey Cup medal

Stop Press…….3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt win Army Ladies Hockey final versus 11 Sig Regt and win Mens and Ladies 5 Div Cup. Cross Country Team were second in the Army Championships, but lost 5 Div League to 11 Sig Regt

202 SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj R. Quinlan**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) J. McNaught**

Yet another busy period for the Squadron, with the build up for the Regimental and Divisional Exercises in the approaching months taking priority. The Christmas break was used to the full, with surprisingly few sore heads returning to work in January. It seems the 'millennium bug' was not as much trouble as everyone thought! The Squadron moved straight into business mode with the deployment on Exercise Tricorn Bull 1/00, a major event as the Squadron had not deployed as two separate Headquarters for some time following Operational Commitments. It would be nice though if the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Warren**, could spend more time with the Squadron and less time hassling 1 Mech Bde!

Preparations for our main Divisional Exercise in May are going well, as are plans for Adventurous Training in the Isle of Wight later this year. There have been some major changes in personnel within the Squadron during this hectic time, and we'll leave it to the individual Troops to go into that in more detail. The Squadron still awaits that influx of manpower from that mysterious, invisible Signals Regiment located somewhere to the north!

At this point the Squadron would like to extend its warmest congratulations to our SSM, **WO2 (SSM) Jim McNaught** on his selection to promotion to WO1 and to **SSgt Chris Davies** on his selection to WO2 – both well deserved.

BUSSACO TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Sean** 'The Colonial' **Lumley**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Social Grenade' **Howson**

Bussaco Tp wish a warm welcome to **Sgt Steve Weate** and wife **Angie**, **LCpl John Dunwoody** and wife **Emma**, **LCpl Claire Sellings** and **Sig** 'Chezza' **Stevenson.** On a sad note Bussaco Tp bid farewell to the 'Big Cheese' **Sgt Chris Cheesman** to 30 Sig Regt (Good luck 30 Sig Regt),**LCpl Mark Parks** to 40 Sig Regt (V) after successfully completing his Class 1 and to **Sig Mick Warden** who has left the Army for pastures new in civvy street.

The Troop would like to congratulate **Cpls Bob Dryden**, **Don Brennan** and **Caroline Maxwell** on successfully passing their T1 Entrance Exam and to **Sig** 'Big' **Dave Silcock** on passing his Class 2(only just). The Troop has had a fairly busy month recovering from the garage move and a Board of Officers, but still remains in high spirits. The Troop would like to take this opportunity to say farewell and good luck to **Cpl** 'Andy' **Gleadal** who is attempting his T1, also to **Cpl** 'Grandad (Windy)' **Miller** whose new job is to educate the uneducated at the Royal School of Signals at Blandford (more hair loss I'm afraid for 'Windy'. Finally to **Sig** 'Jay' **Nelson**, with new improved sideburns, who is off to 8 Inf Bde. The Troop would also like to say a huge hello and welcome to our new Troopy, **2Lt Sean** 'The Colonial' **Lumley** who has taken over from **Lt Simpson** (who has been demoted to Waterloo Troop); **LCpl** 'Jamie' **Davis** from 30 Sig Regt and **LCpl** 'Richie' **Dunwoody** from 40 Sig Regt (V) – Welcome Lads!!

Congratulations to **Sgt** 'Mick' **Brown** on coming off the Staffy Board and good luck to **LCpl** 'H' **Aitchison** on his Recognition Instructor's Course. The Troop is looking forward to the Easter Block Leave which is followed immediately by fun and games in Exercise Spring Foray (The major divisional exercise of the year). A final good luck to **Cpl** 'Red' **Davis** who were pounding the streets of London on 16 April in the 2000 Flora Marathon – fun! We almost forgot about **Sig** 'French Boy' **Gaston** who now performs for the public with the White Helmets – nice one!

OVERLOON TROOP

Tp Comd **SSgt D. Oliver**
Tp Sgt **Sgt J. Rowe**

The Regimental Boxing showed members of the Troop in fine form with **Sgt Joe Rowe** and **Bdr Larry Loates** training the team. **Sig Emily Knowles** winning the best boxer award.Congratulations to **LCpl** 'OJ' **Olejnik** and Louise on their wedding and good luck to 'Curly' **Watts** and **Jude Hills** in their new postings as newly promoted Lance Corporal's. We also say goodbye to **Mick Mathie** and **Craig Jackson** to Civvi Street. **Lt Grice** to 222 Sqn. The Troop has gained three new members, **Sig Andy Pell**, **Nick Pallis** and **Tony Frewin** (who deployed straight out to Kosovo)

The pace of life in the Troop has picked up again with the move into the new garages and preparing for the new training year. The Troop also took time out to win the 202 Inter-Tp Orienteering Competition. With recent Exercises, garage moves and boards of officers, the joint largest armoured Troop in the Royal Signals (together with Waterloo Tp of course!) has been very busy. Despite this, we have still been able to send soldiers away recently adventurous training and out to Cyprus on Exercise Lion Sun.

The Troop would like to take the opportunity at this time to welcome the following new arrivals. Welcome to **Cpl Sean Bysouth**, who joins us from Waterloo Tp, **Sig Bladen**, **Martin**, **Pell** and **Tucker** from the factory, and **Sig Frewin**, **Harper**, **Hodgetts** and **Mainka** who re-join us from holiday in Kosovo. We also warmly welcome **Sig Pallis** from MCTC in Colchester. We all hope you enjoy your tour with armour!

On a sad note, we bid farewell to the following. Goodbye (sniff!) to **SSgt Oliver** who may not return from his CCE to IS Op at the factory, to **Cpl** 'Chico' **Towers** who is on his IS conversion and then off to Aldershot, **Cpl** 'Mick' **Lynn** who is playing with penguins in the Falkland Islands, to **LCpl Higgins** and **Sig Hartell** who depart into civvie street, **LCpl** 'AK' **Akkulugadu** who is posted to NI and to **Cpl Miners** who moves to Waterloo Tp after a brief spell with the Troop. We also say a temporary farewell to **LBdr Howell** and **Sig Knowles** who have managed to escape to a second Lion Sun within six months of each other!

WATERLOO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Peter Simpson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt T. Wringe**

The year has started on a very hectic note, with the extra weeks leave so kindly granted by the CO, everyone returned with 'post festive spread'. We were straight back into work mode and swiftly got down to a garage swap with 206 Sig Sqn, then from there it was a quick week in 1st Line Inspections and Exercise prep and then straight onto Exercise Tricorn Bull, January 2000. The Exercise was a massive learning curve for everyone with plenty of morale and very little sleep, but all in all a very good exercise, roll on Exercise Tricorn Bull 2/00.

Morale in the Troop is certainly lifting as more and more of the Troop are receiving their posting orders and looking forward to the big event. Welcome to **LCpl** 'Farquar' **Smith** – well 'Smudge' is just so common! Goodbye and congratulations to **Cpl Andy Carter.** Welcome back to **Sigs Lahrici** and **Jackson** and to **LCpl** 'Peda' **Fildes** from Kosovo, back to the reality of tent erection and er… more tent erection. Also to **Sig Brown** who after a few weeks of standing around is off to JCUNI to probably do some more standing around. Also, a big hello to **Cpl Steve Miners** who has joined us from Overloon Tp. Finally we welcome **Lt Simpson** who had better start drinking if he's to follow in **Lt Jackson's** footsteps.

Goodbyes to **Lt Jackson** who is off to ATR Bassingbourn, and **LCpl Chris Knights** who is off to 16 Sig Regt – we wish you all the best. **LCpl Glen Lyon** and **Cpl** 'Barney' **Rumble** are off to be the mean pair of Troop 'screws' that they are in Blandford, along with **LCpl Nicky Wilkie** who will be keeping the ROP's in line as an RP. Lastly, a big thank you to **Cpl** 'Barney' **Rumble** for 'volunteering' to come back in May to show us how to run Radcon. Nice one.

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Capt Odling**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Archer**

MONS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Gardner**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Fairfield**

Well it's Mons Tp but not as we know it. We have now taken on the entire Ptarmigan fleet of the Squadron with Cambrai Tp disbanded. So it's hello to all the Ptarmigan personnel from Cambrai, it's about time you earned you money and put DRASH up for a change. By the way those funny things with six wheels do belong to us, so don't be afraid to get your hands dirty, they are only Radio Relays and SAS/MCs in an air portable box. A Warm welcome goes to **Sigs Blackman** and **Blake** straight from the factory. Welcome to the real world and enjoy your stay with the Troop. Unfortunately we must say farewell to **LCpl Andy Williams**, who's off to York. Goodbye to **Sig Eddie** 'The General' **Green** who's leaving us for Civvy street.

So what can the Troop look forward to this next year? Well yet again there's plenty of exercises to be done, with a distinct lack of manpower again, due to the imminent deployment of troops to the Falklands. Enjoy it people, don't get cold, watch out for those penguins and we'll see you on your return in August.

On Wednesday 22 March the majority of the Troop travelled, along with the rest of the Regiment, to 14 Sig Regt (EW). The day was spent taking part in a number of different sports with the Troop well represented in all sports. **Sig Jane** 'Lock the Door' **Darcy** came second in the female cross-country, **Sig Ross** 'Chopper' **Harley** played in the football team's 2-1 victory, and **Sigs Tony** 'Smirnoff' **Szejok, Steve** 'Fat boy Slim' **Smith** and **John** 'Ratface' **Evans** were drafted into the volleyball team. The less said about that the better. **Cpl Jim** 'Brylcream' **Richards** had been scheduled to play golf, but swaned off somewhere and in true **Richards** fashion, wasn't seen until later on in the bar muttering some rubbish about a little trophy and not wanting any more Vodka. The highlight of the trip was the boxing, however the Troop's only boxer **Sig** 'Taff' **Needs** didn't box. After the boxing it was into the Bowling Alley for a game of ten-pin bowling and some light refreshment. It was at this point that **Cpl Jim** 'Has anyone got a mirror' **Richards** decided to reappear and (between falls) managed to win the bowling. The rest of the night was spent in the bar socialising with our hosts. Entertainment was provided by **Cpl Richards** attempts at chatting up the bar staff. He was eventually saved by **Sig Ross** 'Where's my beret' **Harley** who ended his embarrassment by putting him to bed.

All in all, a good time was had by all. The members of 14 Sig Regt seemed happy to rediscover that there was civilisation outside the hills and sheep of Brawdy and despite enjoying ourselves I don't think many of us will be rushing to get posted there.

The Troop would like to take this opportunity to say farewell to **Cpl Pope, LCpl Parvin** and **Sig Murphy**, we would also like to welcome **Sigs Townsley, Needs** and **Szejok**

INKERMAN TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Irwin**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Bartleet**

The Troop are getting ready for a busy exercise period with the regiment and we've also lost 30 personnel to 257 JCUFI Signal Squadron. We've had to say a lot of farewells to Troop members, **Ssgt Steve Bartlett** his wife **Debbie** and son **Daniel** who are going to NI. **Cpl Shaun Richardson** and his wife **Karen** who are now in civvy street selling newspapers in South Wales. Also **Sig** 'Skopje' **Scott** whose gone to white helmets and **Sig Jon Johnston** who has gone to Radex Tp at Blandford. We've also lost **LCpl** 'Tinman' **Shepherd** to 20 Armd Bde at Paderborn. We have a few welcomes in the Troop that is **LCpl Lynn Grey** from 14 Sig Regt and **Sig Routledge** from Blandford

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON
ADEN TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt E. J. Fawcett**
SSgt **SSgt S. Littlefield**

We welcome back **Lt Fawcett** and the rest of the Kosovo kids to the Troop, finally the Troop is up to full strength! - but for how long? Warm congratulations go to **Sig** 'Lifer' **Robb** and **Sig** 'Dish' **Washer** who during the leave got engaged - it must be something in the water? Also in line for congratulations are **Sigs** 'Dodgy' **Dawson,** 'Formula 1' **Chamberlain** and 'Chumlie' **Warner** who have recently been promoted, well done and where are the beers?! We also say a well done to **Sgt** 'Mac' **McNeill** on his recent promotion - even more beers?! **LCpl** 'Reginald' **Perrin** leaves us temporarily to go off penguin watching with the JCUFI deployment, and **Sig Milne** joins civ div - Good luck. The Troop throw themselves back into work and straight out on a Troop Exercise. An interesting few days with the Troop's own version of charge of the light brigade! **Sig** 'What full moon?' **Yule** was caught short by the enemy and **SSgt** 'Small acres' **Littlefield** was 'frisked' by the clearance patrol! All in all a good shake out from the Christmas blues, lady luck was on our side and it didn't freeze.

SHARJAH TROOP

TpComd **2Lt Grice**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Baker**

The end of 1999 saw Sharjah Tp winding down after a year of frantic activity. We returned from a successful battlecamp in Sennybridge and were then pleasantly informed of the following promotions to Lance Corporal: **Andy Cornfield, Mark Anderson, Lee** 'Scraf' **Scrafton, Kelly Garrett** and **Leah Mates.** Congratulations to one and all. The 'detox' period that followed the Millennium Celebrations were interrupted by **SSgt Lang's** leaving do in early January. He didn't surprise us when he decided to squeeze cash out of us one last time by auctioning off his 'pre-war' kit. Other departures include **Cpl Lester** who leaves to 1 (UK) ADSR, **LCpl Morris** who leaves to 7 Sig Regt on promotion and **Sig Lynn.** We also loose the Falklands lot for six months: **Lt Johnson, Sgts Ireland** and **Pickering, LCpls Cornfield** and **Danter, Sigs Connell, Wright** and **De'ath.** Arrivals include **Lt Grice** as new Troop OC, being posted across from 202 Sig Sqn, **Cpl Lynn** from 1 (UK) ADSR, **Sigs Donna Clark, Nick Reeves** and **Gaz Wain** from training. Welcome to you all.

OMAN TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Imogen Mulholland**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Andy Hayler**

EXERCISE PARTHEON SHOT

The Troop's first exercise of the season found them up on the Beacon, supporting 16 Air Assault Bde. Sharjah Tp very kindly lent us **Cpl** 'Fixed Grin' **Hawkins** and **Sig** 'Good Job' **Walker**, so we banished them to the very end of the ridge in their central, with a 1.5 km walk for dinner. Who says we're not the most hospitable Troop in the Squadron? After occupying the 'Ice Station Zebra' location of three days we returned to the real world, with a week to prepare for the first squadron exercise of the year. Please Yeoman, may we go somewhere colder next time? And preferably with better visibility for Recce **Cpl** 'Eagle-eyes' **Hoggart**. What with people on the Regimental Cadre, courses and everything else, it is a bit thin on the ground in the garages. **Sgt** 'Lucky' **Ogg** is on his RSSC, **Cpl** 'Who' **Catney** has just become an RR operator and is thoroughly enjoying his long stint at Blandford on his retrade. **Cpl** 'PTI type' **Wilson-Cochrane** is just about to go on his selection course and Cpl 'Techs are for Winners' **Boden** has joined 257 Sig Sqn to deploy to JCUFI. Good luck to everyone who is not currently with us – we do think about you (frequently, and we laugh).

More good news on the promotions front, with plenty of Signallers coming off the board. We now have **LCpls** 'Short and sharp' **Wall** and 'Old Lady' **Brady** in the Troop, and not before time either. Well Done! Sad news, though – too many goodbyes. Farewell to **LCpl** 'Mr' **Dave Wilson** (timely promotion!), **Sigs** 'Married with Children' **Barry** and **Carter** to HQ Sqn, and last but not least **Sigs** 'Loud and Dangerous' **Lewis 968** and **Jackson**. Yes – the end of an era has come. The Troop OC came back from Egypt only to find that they were on a White Helmets Selection course. The threat of separation (or rather the threat of armour for 'soon-to-be LCpl' Jacko, and 'P Company' for 968) proved just too much, and they are now the responsibility of Blandford. Hurrah – and can't wait to see your displays! A final note – this is **Sgt** 'Loud' **Hayler's** last ex with the Troop. We look forward to a leaving do in February of some magnitude!

EXERCISE COTOPAXI IRON
15 NOVEMBER – 9 DECEMBER 1999

We arrived in Quito, Ecuador after a gruelling 16hr flight and our first impression of this developing country was that it would not be the 18 – 30 holiday that we were all hoping for. The next couple of days we busied ourselves organising maps and supplies amongst the poverty-stricken streets. The active Volcano near Quito had covered most of the city and us in fine ash. It was then time for the team to get down to some work. We first set off South to visit the Volcano Tungurahua on the way to the first trek, but our driver spoke no English and directing him was futile. Near to the Volcano the local police, complete with shotguns, pistols and machine guns, had set up their own toll both for entry to view the volcano – very enterprising. A price/bribe was argued and finally agreed and we passed – the boss seemed very happy as he got the policeman to throw in his cap for the money. The views were amazing with spewing lava and ash, which was spectacular, and even more impressive at night.

At the start of the first trek we were welcomed by crowds of locals trying to sell us things and asking if we would like to hire their donkeys and guides, but being British Soldiers we refused! But by the next day **LCpl Tony** 'Lollipop' **Richardson** and **Lcpl Andy** 'Stillborn' **Dunn** and **Lt Sarah Irwin** went back to the start to try and organise some donkeys.

The following three days were spent trekking up to heights of 4500m amongst the breathtaking scenery. Finally we arrived at the Ingapirca ruins after 62km of tough walking with thumping headaches. With two days of admin we then headed off for the Cajas National Park to start our next treks, this time with out the donkeys. The R & R phase started with a terrifying 100m bungee jump, which happened to be the highest in South America. Words of 'I'm not doing it' from **LCpl Jes 'Yes Fear' Smith** and probably moans from half of the team especially from **Cpl Lesley** 'Pet rescue' **Beck** her cries soon turned into 5-4-3-2-1 bungee. After celebrating our achievements with a few beers we had a good forecast to look forward to. The high point being mountain biking or should I say bike crashing particularly **LCpl Lorna** 'Bothered' **Moses** and **WO2 Dave** 'Bacardi Breezer' **Taylor** managing to come off there bikes but **Cpl Mark** 'JSMEL' **Corber** nearly managing to fly off the cliff. Our final entertainment was the white water rafting which turned most people off of water all together by going down Grade 5 rivers and experiencing the most scariest moments especially when **Cpl Gaz** 'I'm sinking' **Lane** nearly fell completely out of the boat and was nearly swallowed up!

Just to round the excellent adventure trip up, we were all looking forward to returning to the UK but instead decided to spend another two days in Quito sleeping on the comfortable floors and one day in Houston Texas before arriving Home because of the Volcano erupting.

7 SIGNAL REGIMENT

On 13 - 17 March 7 Sig Regt and Krefeld Station held several fast and furious fund raising events to collect money for the flood victims of Mozambique. The Commanding Officer, **Lt Col David Jones**, expressed a desire to raise and send money quickly while concern for the victims was strong. To that end immediately after returning from Ex White Javelin, each Squadron was tasked to carry out a fund-raising event during the following week. DM11,000 was raised and donated to Christian Aid, a charity whose aim is to assist Mozambique's government in restoring infrastructure, assisting with the establishment of temporary camps and providing reconstruction kits for families of the 1 Million people affected by the flood. The Station came up with several different ways to collect money, including the Station wives who raised money, serving in the 'Coffee Pot' in fancy dress. Squadrons raised money in the following ways: an Officers and Seniors v Juniors football match where competitors were charged DM10 and spectators DM5, an auction of useless items donated by the bidders, personal contributions, an Officer and Staff Sergeant washed and ironed their troops' clothes and soldiers from Oscar were also in fancy dress raising money in JHQ, St Tonis and Bruggen and raised the Lion share of the money. To end the week the Commanding Officer and RSM, **WO1 Steve Smoothy**, raffled their appointments and the winners, **LCpl Justin Wood** was the CO and **Sig Sam Clarke** was the RSM. Both took a Regimental Parade on the final day of the fund-raising week (see p245/246).

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Wally Drain**
SSM **WO2 Steve Bovan**

It has been another busy period for SHQ Troop with preparations for, and the deployment on Ex White Javelin 1/00, and preparations for the CO's admin inspections, sorting out the OTP for the Squadron, Corporals' CRs and the list goes on!

Ex White Javelin was an interesting time for A Ech CP with Ptarmigan making an unreliable back-up in case mobile phones ran out of battery power!!! Where's those 1771's! But despite unreliable comms the Exercise was a success with all aims achieved. Back in camp a Regimental fund raising week for the people of Mozambique, culminated in a Regimental parade with various people wearing ranks and uniforms they weren't really supposed to; of the most noteworthy was **Padre** 'SSgt' **Gandiya** whose efforts as right marker for HQ Sqn earned him a shouting at from **WO2 (SSM) Stevie Bovan** and a jailing from the Adjt, where he joined our OC – **Maj Wally Drain** who had been jailed earlier in the day for being 'too short and too northern'! A good day was had by all especially when the acting CO for the morning, **LCpl Wood,** ACC, fell the Regiment out for the rest of the day.

QUARTERMASTERS (T) DEPARTMENT
QM **Capt Ray Cory**
RQMS **WO2** 'Taff' **Burdge**

The Department has nearly got back to normality post the Christmas break and the Millenium has brought us the usual challenges of exercise, operations, RSIT etc. on the Kosovo front, seven accounts have been closed, only three to go, keep the midnight oil burning boys. The ESV crews have been busy with **Sigs** 'Chalky' **White**, 'Slug' **Owen** and 'Geordie' **Ellis** all getting their hands dirty competing for the best RSIT inspection report award, don't forget, the winner doesn't get slabbed. **Sig Carter**, nee **Packman** was encouraged to attend a two week skiing course which he thought was all downhill, it is noted the fresh air did him good as it is reported he has started to shave (though this is only hearsay).

Congratulations to **LCpl** 'Kerry' **Johnston** on her recent promotion, she is using her brand new stripe to good effect commanding our pack of young Signallers. Congratulations are also extended to **SSgt** 'Kev' **Scott** for managing to stay out of work for two days, word has it that he's in UK! A big welcome to **Sgt** 'Skip' **Skipper** RLC who has taken over from **Sgt** 'Vinny' **Neil**, and congratulations to **Sgt** 'Jock' **Castle** on his well deserved selection for promotion to Staff Sergeant.

REGIMENTAL MOTOR TRANSPORT
MTO **SSgt Phil Hay**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Phil Hay**

February started off quiet for HQMT, then there was a Squadron call out and, surprise, surprise, everything went according to SOP! Towards the end of February things started to get busy as the Regiment prepared for its first exercise since returning from Kosovo. There were plenty of early mornings and a fair share of late nights for the grafters in MT, particularly organising fuel re-sup with the UBRE's in Bielefeld being worked on. Monday 28 February arrived and kicked off Ex White Javelin, as always the long convoy drive to Werl provided its ups and downs with vehicles breaking down and cam nets flying around (we'll say no more QM)!! Once in the Exercise location it was all hands on deck to set up the Regimental A2 Ech, thanks are extended to Regimental Ops for ordering Ptarmigan silence, this kept the OC, **Maj Wally Drain** pinned to his mobile phone, whilst we grafted on everything and anything that moved. Week Two of the Exercise saw Ptarmigan silence lifted and the POL crews discovered that they were in demand, that is except for **Sig** 'Micky' **Middleton** who had more sleep than most people get in a year.

A couple of farewells in the troop, goodbye to **Cpl Stu** 'Jabba' **Mead** after a good four years in the MT, **Stu** started off in the MT as the store-man, once this was sorted he moved to the POL accounts and having picked up the nickname 'Stu Tischmarsh' he was rewarded with the job of Regimental photographer and latterly Squadron Barman – nice one **Stu**, good luck for the future. We are also losing **Cpl** 'GWA Bowman' who leaves us for the Regimental Gennie Bay, probably because he wants more time off for golf and volleyball! Welcomes are extended to **Sig Clarke** who joins us from training and **Cpl Mark Knowles** who replaces GWA moving in from the Gennie Bay.

FAMILIES OFFICE
Families Offr **Capt Kev Jones**

All is well in the Families Office, although the office is going through a change as the team are preparing for the Regiments move to Bruggen. Sadly we are losing **Cpl** 'Steve' **Peacock,** who is leaving the Army after 22 years service, he will be greatly missed by us all and the families he has worked so closely with. Also congratulations to **Cpl** 'Steve' **Peacock** on the marriage of his daughter **Monika** to **LCpl** 'John' **McMahon**, HQMT 7 Sig Regt, we hope they will be happy together. We would also like to welcome **Sgt** 'Jacko' **Jackson**, who has joined us from 232 Sig Sqn, we hope he settles in quickly. The main effort for the Regiment this month has been the Mozambique Fund Raiser, with all sorts of activities going on. One of these was The Custard pie Mob who are paid to hit various departments and personnel within the Regiment, this office was one of the departments, **Sgt** 'Les' **Robinson**, in his old age, was too slow to lock his door in time, therefore, he had to retire to the shower. Well that's all for this month folks, bye for now.

229 (BERLIN) SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Dan Webster** Royal Australian Signals
SSM **WO2 Ged Keane**

CHARLIE TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt** 'Aunt Sally' **Evans**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Jock' **Reid**

First we say hello to **SSgt** 'Jock' **Reid, Sgt Dave Bain, Cpl Paul Lomas** and families. Also **Cpl Nelly Shillito** from 4 Bde and **LCpl Rob Vickers** from 1 (UK) ADSR we hope you all enjoy your time in sunny Krefeld. With half of the Squadron Signallers getting promoted we say goodbye and farewell to **Sig** 'Scouse' **Kelly** and **Sig** 'Canada' **Dave Whitehurst** both off to 3 Div to enjoy Bulford camp we also say goodbye to **Sig** 'Ski' **Sosinski** and **Sig Andy** 'Mac' **Mcfarlane** both of to 1 (UK) ADSR congratulations to them all on their promotions. We also say goodbye to **LCpl Paul Brown** and family off to 2 Sig Regt, congratulations on your promotion to Corporal. Also congratulations go out to **LCpl Hopkinson** on his recent marriage we hope all goes well in the future.

Now that the Troop is back from leave of some sort we are looking forward to a busy period with 1 Sig Bde exercises and RSIT. On this note the first exercise of the year has just passed. We deployed on Monday 28 February to Bielefeld. All went well at this location. The second phase of the exercise involved us doing a train move to Sennelager.

We left for the rail head at 0300hrs once we all arrived we expected to load the wagons straight away. The usual army thing happened we waited around until 0700hrs to start loadingand the train. We left the rail head at around 1000hrs that morning give or take a couple of minutes and all you could hear on the train was snoring. We were woken up around 1500hrsand unloaded the train. We then left for our first location which was a hide lots of sleep or so we thought. We were constantly practising our drills. We were in this location for about for about 24hrs before doing three moves in 48 hours. Until we were called into the network. After about 24 hours in the network the Troop had endex called we all returned safely. We are now looking forward to RSIT.

WHISKEY TROOP - *by Sig J. Lafferty*
Tp Comd **Lt** 'Allyson' **Lawson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Paul' **Robson**

The Troop has just recently seen a fair few departures over the past few week's so we would like to say good bye and good luck in the future to **Nige** (***the civvi***) **Rowbottom**, for a split second we all thought he may decide to change his mind and stay with us but at the end of the day the smell of Manchester was just to sweet for him to leave unattended. **Sig Knowlden** and the doormen of the saloon bar will especially miss him. **Sig Jeff Townsley's** knowledge of the switch will be missed, although on the Troop's last exercise he had every tech in location in the back of the wagon trying to fix the main lights which he said were not working, After working for two full days in complete darkness det comd **Cpl Andy Morris** thought it would be a nice idea to point out to our **Jeff** that in fact the lights were not broken but just hadn't been switched on in the first place. Thanks **Cpl Morris** for not pointing it out earlier. **Sig George Spence,** no matter how bad things ever were you could always guarantee that **George** would be walking round with a smile on his face which we are sure he will pass that on to all the young intake's down at sunny Blandford, and we are also sure he hasn't already forgotten were the G-spot is (have you George?). **Cpl Gaz Barlow** who has also decided to make a departure from the Army, Thursday nights will never seem the same now without one of **Gaz's** Quiz Nights in the Squadron bar. (Although his shoes have already been filled by, **LCpl Perry Mason** or as he likes to be known '*The Admiral'*) Finally farewell to **Sgt Dunc Cupit** who was not with the Troop for long but will surely not be forgotten in a hurry, this huge character within the Troop will truly be missed by all. The Troop also welcomes **Sgt Kenny Macpherson, Cpl Andy Morris,** their families and **Sig Lewis Finlay** who have all just recently joined us and already seem to be settling in quite nicely.

231 SIGNAL SQADRON
QUEBEC TROOP
Tp Comd **SSgt** 'Andy' **Saunders**
Tp Sgt **Sgt** 'Dean' **Wilson**

The Troop re-formed in February 2000 and now includes the Technical workshops run by **Sgts** 'Chris' **Kelly** and 'Tiny' **Tindale**, and the Soft Rover Group operators. The Troop was particularly busy during the recent Ex White Javelin with the SCRA (T) crews flying around northern Germany on spec tasks. The SYSCON crew managed to build a revamped ARRC Main HQ in quick time even though there were no staff. **Sgt** 'Lanyardman' **Wilson** and his team (mainly Quebec Tp lads) are busy training for the forthcoming Lanyard Trophy competition. A depleted team from the Troop took part in the Inter-Troop Football Competition in March and now have an unbeaten record to take forward to next month's event. Oscar Tp gave us a scare in the first game going 2-0 up in the first four minutes, but **LCpl** 'Twinkle-Toes' **Moffat** showed his mettle by leading the team through and came out eventual winners 4-2. The great come back from defeat spurred the team on and in the end we were too strong and swept all opposition away. Special mention must go to **LCpl** 'No Skill' **Manns** who won the coveted worst player of the tournament and he only played 15 minutes.

The Troop has welcomed **Cpl** 'Swany' **Devlin, LCpl** 'Funds' **Evans, Sig** 'Claudia' **Schaffer** and **Sig** 'Lee' **Taylor** who have all joined us from Radio Tp. Posted in were **LCpl** 'Dennis Finbarr' **Long** and **Sig** 'JP' **Pearson** both from training. Congratulations and 'Bye' to **LCpl** 'Souse' **Jennings** who moved to 7 Bde on promotion. Future events include the forthcoming marriages of **LCpl** 'Jimmy' **Samuals** and **Sig** 'Adam' **Tasker**.

OSCAR TROOP - 231 SIGNAL SQUADRON
MOZAMBIQUE FUND RAISER
by LCpl Matt Childs
Tp Comd **Lt** 'Tricky' **Nicky James**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Robbo' **Robertson**

Before we get into what's been going on with Oscar Tp, a few hello's, goodbyes and congratulations. The Troop welcomes **Sigs Pete Corr, Chris Heath, Sarah Hardy** and **Pete Stevens,** all fresh from the factory. Also to newly promoted **LCpls Phil Baynes** and **Sly McKay** on inter troop postings, well done lads and welcome to the mighty Oscar. The Troop would also like to welcome **Cpl Steve Ritchie,** also on an inter troop posting. Goodbye goes out to the Troop Boss, **Lt** 'Tricky' **Nicky James,** who will shortly be leaving us for sunny New Zealand on Ex Long Look. Thanks for all the hard work ma'am, and all the best!

Congratulations to the newly spliced **Sig Emily Hopkinson,** on her marriage to Ian. All the best for the future, and we all hope the two of you will be happy for the years to come. Last but not least a special message of congratulations goes out to **Sgt** 'Cappo' **Carpenter,** for eventually finding his uniform and turning up for work, we hear he eventually tracked it down at the Corps Museum.

The Troop deployed on Ex White Javelin on 28 February for a two week ARRC exercise with one vital element missing……the Staff! What's the point we hear you cry, well it was the first time we had been able to practise our role as ARRC MAIN in the HIC role since out return from Kosovo, and for all the new bods in the Troop it was a well worthwhile experience that enabled them to see what the Troop and the Regiment is all about. The exercise was a success for all concerned, and the hierarchy seemed to be well pleased with the final result.

15 March, 2000, dawned clear and bright, as we all met up at Oscar Tp lines with the mission - 'To raise as much money as possible in aid of the flood relief in the Republic of Mozambique.' There was a twist however, thanks to our beloved Troop Staffy, in that we all had to turn up in fancy dress. Clear and bright it was.... and cold! (Ask **LCpl** 'Wiggy' **Wiggins**). We were all split into teams and scattered around the local area. One team was sent to JHQ, one to St. Tonis (280 (UK) Sig Sqn), one to BFHC Wegberg and the remainder stayed behind ad Krefeld. We hit a setback straight from the off in that Wegberg team were unable to collect on the station due to reasons beyond their control. Not before **Sigs** 'Smudge' **Smith** and **Sam Clarke** had managed to fleece the sum of DM 20 from the hospital staff though! The team had to set up shop as JHQ with on of the other teams.

The CO hands over power to Chef, LCpl Justin Wood

The RSM hands over to Sig Sam Clarke of 231 Sig Sqn

Lt Steve Jones Passes the 'Colonel' toast in morning coffee in the Officers Mess, Maj Wally Drain and Maj Pete Smith flank the new CO

The new RSM meets the football team

The New RSM always keen to check the length of sideburns

A quick orders session on discovering that one of the Sqn Comds was French Maj Phil Baker, (Phillipe Boulanger) OC 232, the other Sqn Comd, Maj Wally Drain (OC HQ) was just a malingerer

The RSM can rest assured that all is in order...The End

The JHQ teams spent the whole morning running around the station ambushing people for their hard earned dosh. We knew no shame and no rank on station was safe from the ravages of Oscar Tp. The same can be said of the other locations, where the other collection teams acquitted themselves in typical Oscar style. The JHQ team stopped collecting at 1100hrs for a photo outside the 'Big House' with COSARRC and the senior RAF Officer on station. We were then let loose around HQ ARRC itself where another few hundred marks were raised, no thanks to the tight wads in COMMCEN BFG, much to the eternal shame of **Cpl** 'Appy' **Applegarth** and **LCpl Matt Childs,** who feel s that the honour of DTG's everywhere has suffered as a result. It was then back to Krefeld, where all the teams met up, and the dosh was combined. The money was then taken to the local Sparky Bank for changing and counting... the final total was a staggering DM 3910. Out of a Regiment total of DM 6000, we managed to raise more than half! Not bad for a morning of running about in daft cossies! All involved had a good laugh, and we managed to put a smile on a few faces in the process. At the end of the day, 'It's all for charity mate.' We can now all look forward to the Troop members all going their separate ways again in the next few months, with some of us off to Bosnia and some off to the Falklands for six-month tours. No rest for the wicked! Who knows what these trips will bring. Although there are bound to be a few stories to tell when we all get back together again next year.

RADIO TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt** 'Rich' **Byfield**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Tony Downing**

After such a long period of leave it has been a hard transition from civvie life back to the military jargon, but some lucky individuals managed a sledging expedition along with other members of the Squadron to Bavaria. Before any complacency set in, the Regiment deployed on Ex White Javelin, a two-week shake out which it seems wasn't long enough for the Ptarmigan troops, but as usual Radio Tp came through with flying colours. Obviously it wasn't all plain sailing as rusty Det commander **Cpl** 'Winnie' **Whyte** found out when he forgot what an inverted ' v' was for. The other Rebro commander **Cpl** 'Murph' **Murphy** decided to follow his Staff Sergeant's advice and go through a marsh to his grid. Unfortunately they both discovered that these rusty old trailers don't like mud, and the REME was sent to the rescue. HF proved a problem for **LCpl** 'Crappy' **Crabb** who struggled to put up his antennas from his doss bag. The troop welcomes **Sigs Kelly** 'Crippled already' **Tweedie,** 'Lurch' **Burgess,** 'Not very bright' **Lightley.** Farewells to **SSgt** 'Gorgeous' **George Farrar** who has left the ultimate reminder of him with his protégé 'Mini me' **Bibby** as he departs to 3 Div. **Cpl** 'Micky' **Devlin** who has moved across to Quebec Tp for a quieter life in his old age and 'Twizz' **Twissell** off to Aldershot and 101 Log Bde. Last but not least congratulations to **Sgt Tony Downing** on his selection for promotion to Staff Sergeant.

LIMA TROOP

It has been a busy period for the Troop over the last few months, the return from theatre went with out to much trouble apart from the loss of one of our land rovers which is know three foot shorter. Firstly the Troop would like to congratulate **SSgt Dave Mitchell** on his recent promotion to WO2 we wish him and his wife **Petra** all the best on they're new posting wherever that may be. Also the Troop would like to welcome three new baby linies from the factory **Sigs, Barclay, Mitchell** and **Sig** 'Dusting brush head' **Hutton.** The Troop has recently finished Ex White Javelin, were a few of the Troop members put on a cabaret for the rest. **Lt** 'Birds nest' **Mayne** was asked to go and help decam the vehicles after he pulled in about 500m of LDA quad but forgot to use the ACL and drum. A special mention should go to **Cpl** 'MT' **Lamont,** after he asked, so what sort of wires do we use then? To his credit every vehicle deployed with an adjustable spanner. A quick mention to **Sgt** 'Obvious and necessary' **Yendel** and **LCpl** 'Slab' **Taylor, LCpl** 'Dom' **Reynolds, Sig** 'Ears' **Smith,** and **Sig** 'I'm sure I should have my line belt by now' **Jeffries,** CHEERS mine's a Fosters. A final mention should go to **Cpl** 'I am just nipping off skiing' **Dawson,** lets hope he remembers that the mini bus works a lot better on diesel.

EXERCISE PISTE BACKSTOP 13 - 23 MARCH 2000

Members of Ex Piste Backstop Bavaria March

Sixteen hopeful skiers and two instructors set off on what should have been a routine journey from Krefeld to Bavaria. However, after the first pit-stop, the refuel carried out by **Cpl Andy** 'Benz' **Dawson,** as he was soon to be known, went horribly wrong. When the diesel minibus was refuelled with benz, and shuddered to a halt 2kms down the autobahn. **Cpl** 'Benz' **Dawsons** only defence was, 'I used the diesel pump'. the mistake left six members of the party awaiting recovery and subsequently four hours late to the bar.

After kit issue the party headed to the Austrian slopes for their first 'interesting' day of skiing. The group was split down into novices and intermediates as there were no advanced skiers. **SSgt** 'Jock' **Reid** drew the short straw and was responsible for instructing the novice group which included **LCpl** 'Wipeout' **Holland, LCpl** 'Manic' **Mundy** and **Sig** 'Wobbly' **Whatmough. Cpl Dawson** had the somewhat easier task of instructing group two which included **Lt** 'Doc' **Farrimond, Sig** 'Crazy' **Sykes** and **Sig** 'Scouse' **Johnson.**

The first few days were used to learn basic ski principles and manoeuvres, however after Day Two we lost **Sig** 'Crick' **Wells** to a stiff neck and **Sig** 'Chunder' **McColm,** for reasons of safety, but both were back in action very quickly. On Day Four we were joined by the 2IC of 232 Sqn, **Capt Shenow,** who had come to oversee operations. Due to bad weather and avalanche warnings, Saturday and Sunday became rest days and a trip to Garmish was organized by **Cpl** 'Kamikaze' **Cansfield.** A brilliant night was had by all especially **Cpl Cansfield, Sig** 'I'll never drink again' **Anderson, LCpl** 'Good time girl' **Evans** and **Sig Conney Turner** who paid a late night visit to the pool, minus costumes and accompanied by three Pathfinders from 16 Air Asslt Bde, apparently **Sig** 'Snogger' **Read** enjoyed herself also. An excellent second week skiing was had by all and saw the promotion of **Sig** 'Dusty' **Miller** and **Sig** 'Snowballer' **McClaren** to the intermediate group and the celebration of **Sig** 'White fang' **Williams'** birthday. After the two week exercise all of the students received their bsp, (basic ski proficiency) and had improved remarkably from their first day's performance. Many thanks goes out to organisers **Lt Farrimond** and **SSgt Reid** and to the Squadron for allowing the exercise.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON
SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS TROOP

Sqn Comd **Maj Baker**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Carter**

Firstly it is hail and farewell time, We say a sad goodbye to **SSgt (SQMS) Pete Griffiths,** who is off on promotion to sunny 14 Sig Regt and **LCpl Simmons** off (eventually) into civilian life. We wish them both all the best and hope that they get all they wish for in their chosen careers. On the new arrival front welcome to **WO2 (SSM) Ian Carter** from Northern Ireland, **SSgt (SQMS) Ade Chapman** from the Royal School of Signals, **SSgt Cook** from HQ Squadron and **LCpl Ryall** from RHQ. Welcome to all and enjoy!

On return to camp there has been a frenzy of phone calls to MCM Div (Through the correct channels of course) not to try to get out of the place but because several individuals have come off the promotion boards, Well done and congratulations to **SSgt (YoS) Gaz Tabor, SSgt Ade Chapman, SSgt Shaun Cook** and **Sgt Steve Pulman.** It's all fingers crossed for the postings now. Anyway we must dash now as we are all off on Exercise Lion Sun. We're looking forward to sun drenched photographs in the next edition.

14 SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO **Lt Col D. P. Meyer**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Palmer**

A slight change from the usual sports afternoon saw the CO, the four Squadron Commanders and the Squadron Sergeant Majors testing their marksmanship skills with the 9mm pistol, the SA80 and some clay pigeon shooting. The first problem was, the lack of Squadron Commanders with only **Maj Harwood** available for the duel. This left **Capt Ingram,** the newly promoted **Capt White** and **Lt Reid** representing the Officer's team. The second minor problem was the weather - when you can only see 30 metres it's just as well the Regiment only has a 25 metre range. First competition was the pistol shoot from various distances in a number of positions. A check of the scores revealed a second competition in the offing as a rather smug **Lt** 'Fraser' **Reid** proudly mouthed off to **Capt** 'Stevie Wonder' **Ingram.**

Lt Fraser Reid demonstrates a 'consistent' talent with a variety of weapons

Then came the easy shoot. A frame with some big targets, with big easy balloons and condoms, to be burst with an SA80 at 25m. After a quick burst of fire most frames were now draped in flaccid pieces of rubber. Except that of **Lt Fraser** 'Not so Smug' **Reid** whose target still resembled a cross between MacDonalds at the weekend and an Ann Summers party. This SA80 thing also provided a few problems for **Maj** 'Glenn' **Harwood.** He learns quickly though and was able to compare the 'new' rifle with the short chamber box Henry .45 calibre, 'We didn't need automatic at Rorke's Drift you know!!' Then we moved on to his speciality on the Clay Pigeon range. The CO led the way for the Officers, **Lt Reid** continued his run of bad luck scoring 0 and the Warrant Officers pulled into the lead. A magnificent 4 out of 20 from **WO2 (SSM) Watson** was the best score of the day.

Maj 'Glen' Harwood wins a firefight against some pretty vicious balloons at the Officers v Warrant Officers Range Day

We retired to 'The Lanes' for a few drinks and the prize giving. The trophy suspiciously engraved already was presented to the Warrant Officers as overall winners! A successful and enjoyable day thanks to the efforts of **WO2 (SSM) Newton** for the organisation, but especially to the two 'Trap-men' who endured long hours in pouring rain releasing clays.

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

Sqn Comd **Maj Rob Meinertzhagen**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Dave Watson**

The Squadron has been undergoing a number of changes including the recent reorganisation of the Troops. Romeo Tp now also consists of Comms Tp together with the remnants of Hotel Tp. Several of the operators from 640 Sig Tp (EW) are also cross training with Romeo Tp whilst they are waiting for the completion of the vehicle transfer process. The Squadron has been busy supporting 16 Air Asslt Bde and is getting ready for the start of some very large exercises, combined with a very busy Squadron programme. The Squadron is also looking forward to Ex Devils Horizon 2000, Ascension Island, to train in an unfamiliar environment.

GOLF COMPETITION

The month of December was flying by, when we realised it was time to organise a Troop day out which took the guise of a golf competition. It all started at 0830hrs, at MacDonalds with a three course breakfast and then off to Haverfordwest Golf Club. A beautiful crisp winters day with snow capped mountains providing the perfect backdrop for what proved to be an

interesting mixture of complete novices, **Sgt Titus Reene** and utter bandits, **WO2** 'Tiger' **Phillips.** First to tee off and to show the beginners the way to do it 'not' with a terrific hook was **WO1 Mick Jones** followed closely by **WO2 (SSM) Dave Watson,** who was using clubs designed for a midget (no not 'Q' Watton), preceded to slice the ball from one side of the fairway to the other. By the end of the day everyone found something they could do. **Sig** 'I'm not Welsh' **Lloyd** found the water and **Sgt Titus Reene** somehow found himself up a tree. Afterwards we met in the clubhouse for some sustenance and compare our scores (disasters), a fine time was had by all, with many of the Troop deciding to take up the game and others vowing never to play again!

CONGRATULATIONS

The Troop would like to congratulate **FofS Huw Phillips** and **YofS Dick Rutherford** on their well deserved selection for promotion to WO1, and finally a heart felt well done to **Sig** 'Bacon' **Rolls** for completing the SSM's parking space after only 4 months, his next project is how to breath in air without stealing it!

LEWT

Tp Comd **WO2 (Supvr R) Jim Spiers**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Steve Brown**

Light EW Troop has now finally completed the move across from 237 Sig Sqn. It has been a busy period re-organising equipment and preparing for JRRF Spearhead whilst much of our strength is away on courses. LEWT have supported both 1 and 2 Para at their respective CAST exercises across the country. Here it soon became apparent that many units have yet to grasp both the concept of EW and the benefits that friendly EW support can have. Thanks must go to 640 Signal Troop for hosting us on their air mobility training week. This enabled us to refresh the Troop's under slinging capability away from the distractions of camp and to rehearse for our increasing commitment to 16 Air Assault Bde. The week rounded off with a day's helicopter abseiling practice but unfortunately lack of aircraft meant we were restricted to synthetics. Despite having no real helicopter, the DS made enough noise to add realism to the day. The Troop welcomes a new OPSWO, **WO2 Jim Spiers** whilst we say farewell to **Sgt Matt England** who is departing onto his Supvr Radio course. Congratulations too to **SSgt Steve Brown** and his wife **Angela** on the birth of their new baby girl.

640 TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Ben White**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Frank Flaherty**

Welcome back to **Sig** 'Carpet' **Matzke** and **Sgt** 'JJ' **Walker** (Oh we've missed you 'JJ') who have just come back from six months in Bosnia. Not forgetting a big welcome back to **Sig** 'I can't wait to get out of this place and join the Int Corps' **Welton**, unlucky **Adam** welcome back to 14 Sig Regt! Goodbyes to **WO2 Andy Jensen** and his wife **Jeanette** who are off to RAF Digby, **Cpl Russ Ryan** and **Cpl Paul Pettman** who have gone to Romeo Tp, **Cpl Si Green** who has gone to LEWT, **LCpl Pete Sykes** who has been posted to 30 Sig Regt, **LCpl Mark Young** who has been posted to 16 AA Bde. Finally goodbye to **LCpl** 'Mr Jamie' **Young** who has been posted to Civvi Street.

ROMEO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt H. J. Scott**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Murray**

It has been a rather quiet period for the Troop, which has been involved in several demonstrations of the Beady Eye equipment and a communications training weekend. A group from Cardiff UOTC visited the Regiment and **LCpl** 'Stevo' **Stevenson** and **LCpl** 'Eddie' **Edwards** showed them how to put up a PU 12, work a range of communications equipment and also how to set up a detachment. The second day of the visit saw them taking part in a short exercise carrying out normal routine for a communications detachment. At the same time half the Troop was assisting with the Odette 'Soft' trials - Ex Littoral Dragon 6-17th March.

The Troop would like to congratulate **Cpl** 'Callum' **Black** on his promotion to Sergeant and wish him the best of luck in Northern Ireland. The Troop welcomes back the guys from Kosovo, **Lt Scott, SSgt Geoff Murray, Cpl** 'Stu' **Latham, LCpls** 'Stu' **Kelly** and **Geoff Fawcett, Sigs** 'Baz' **Mceachy** and 'Mike' **Meghee.** Also a warm welcome to **Sigs** '10 letters a day' **Cullen** and **Bailey** into the Troop. Farewell and the best of luck to **Sgt** 'Gaz' **Campbell** who has been transferred to 245 Sig Sqn (EW) along with **Cpl** 'Rus' **Ryan.**

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

Sqn Comd **Maj Jon Dakin**
SSM **WO2** 'Deano' **Richardson**

EXERCISE DEVILS HORIZON 12 FEBRUARY - 3 APRIL 2000

Ex Devils Horizon was a 237 Sig Sqn (EW) communications exercise based in Kenya. The two month deployment saw the Squadron practice electronic warfare, in theatre communications including VHF and HF equipment, providing a long range HF link back to the UK incorporating RACE equipment and providing a comsec monitoring facility against 1st Battalion The King's Regiment who had deployed on Ex Grandprix 2/00.

Once it was decided that 237 Sig Sqn would deploy to Kenya the Squadron dispatched **WO2 (Supvr R) Mike Oshorne** and **SSgt (YofS)** 'Taff' **Thomas** as the recce team in October 1999. They were accommodated in five star luxury hotels and judging by the postcards and photographs had a marvellous time but, in addition, they did manage to return with a comprehensive recce report. The main concern would be how would the equipment and personnel stand up to the extreme temperatures and generally harsh environments expected in Kenya. A rigorous beat-up programme was planned and involved many late nights and headaches for the Squadron Operations Team. It was a ground breaking exercise for the Squadron but it was an unique opportunity to practice live skills in a demanding environment. Once all the mandatory lessons, jabs and briefings were completed it was time to load the equipment and wait for flight confirmations. The departure date was changed, moved and eventually brought forward a week and so on 12 February 2000 some 40 Kenya virgins deployed from RAF Brize Norton destined, via Manchester and Bahrain, for Nairobi.

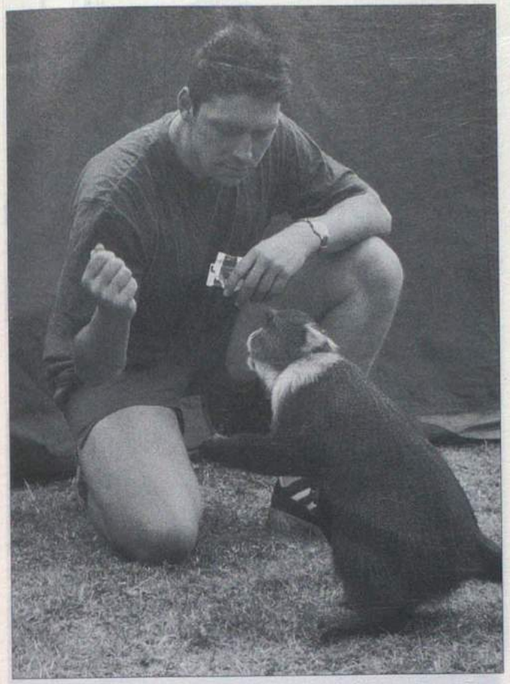
On arrival they were met by **SSgt (SQMS) Glen** 'Arrows' **Kitchen** who assured everyone that he had made good contact with British Army Training and Liaison Team Kenya (BAUSK) and everything was sorted! The whole party was transported in 'luxury' coaches, Kenyan-style, northwards to the Nanyuki Show Ground, home for the Squadron Command Post and Echelon for the next eight weeks. The accommodation consisted of two 18x24 tents situated in what is best described as a dust bowl - but what the heck, this is the African experience after all. The first week was spent moving from one tent to another in search of better accommodation. At the same time site recces were conducted and our resident Operations Warrant Officer (OpsWO) who had been on the recce party in October was navigationally embarrassed and unable to lead us to one of his pre-recced sites. The initial days were also spent acclimatising and waiting for our vehicles, freight and equipment to arrive from the UK. The searing heat and the high altitude of some 2500m made acclimatisation difficult. The initial PT sessions were torturous with several Squadron Members experiencing altitude sickness and random nose bleeds. **Sgt** 'Flying doctor' **Hambleton** was kept busy giving out sick chits and even managed to excuse himself from the training as well.

Things became worse when 1st Battalion The King's Regiment staged a relief in place with the out going 1st Battalion The Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders. The Nanyuki Show Ground designed to house 350 suddenly had over 1000 thirsty and dusty soldiers. A water crisis developed and as a result there was no available drinking water, no showers and the toilets became a health risk. The deployment of our detachments into their field locations was therefore put on hold until the drinking water crisis was solved. Within two days the Royal Engineers had tapped into a water source to provide shower and toilet facilities and 70,000 litres of drinking water arrived from somewhere? Our three detachments were then able to deploy to their field locations. The two Barracuda dets deployed to training areas at Mpala and Solio while the rebroadcast station was located half way up Mt Kenya at 10,000ft above sea level. Things quickly began to take on some order. The detachments had set up their defences, but not so much against a traditional enemy but as protection against the local tribal warriors and the extensive assortment of wild animals in their AOR's. The Mpala det resembled a medium sized Brigade communications site with field latrines, showers, eight weeks self sufficient POL, tents various and a vast array of EW antennas. The det was plagued by wildebeest with **LCpl** 'Moz' **Morris** harassed at the latrines by a pack of hyena and **Cpl Dave Janvier** spotting a lion whilst out running, and running and running .....

Midway through their stay the det was caught up in a major incident when a Kenyan military vehicle was involved in a RTA a few kilometers from its location. **SSgt Tony Watters** led a team to the assist with the situation. They were joined by a nurse who was attached to B Coy, 1 Kings and together they attended the casualties. One casualty sustained a fractured femur and required casevac by air. The remaining casualties were taken to our detachment where first aid was administered. The casualties who between them had chest injuries, a suspected fractured pelvis and various open wounds were taken to Nairobi hospital the next day. The crew were commended for their diligent work and enthusiastic approach to a situation that could quite easily have been ignored. This incident highlighted a difficult problem regarding humanitarian aid. A high percentage of the population suffer from AIDS and attending any gory scene necessarily causes individuals to query their own safety. It is a dilemma many local Kenyans have to live with on a regular basis. **The Solio det had** the luxury of a stand-pipe at its location although like all our dets, they had only menu A or B compo rations to eat so were fairly sick of chocolate pudding by the eighth week. **Sgt Jez Ward** and **Cpl Richie Bretherick** spent most of their off-shift time running. A combination of their scrawny physiques, the added effects of compo and their healthy sun tans meant that they blended in well with the local population!

The RRB crew were involved with their own major incident. The det commander had called in a casevac report to aid a military mountaineer who was suffering from altitude sickness and heat stroke whilst attempting to climb Mt Kenya. The AAC helicopter that was dispatched, whilst attempting to land at the RRB HLS, created such a sea of dust that the pilot was unable to see. As he attempted to clear the area the rotor hit a tree causing the helicopter to crash. The incident occurred only 30m from the RRB detachment. The pilot who was suffering from shock was treated by our crew of **LCpl** 'Lagger' **Lee** (promoted during the Exercise), **Sig** 'Biggsie' **Hancock** and **Sig Louise Magill** who had witnessed the whole incident. During the exercise the Squadron were fortunate to have ten places allocated to them on the 1 Kings BG jungle training phase. Here our section came face to face with **Sgt** 'Taff' **Morgan** also of 14 Sig Regt but attached to 1 Kings as a Jungle Warfare Instructor. Our jungle virgins (all volunteers!) learnt basic survival skills and jungle routine, They all returned as super slim, bearded warriors (less the girls) and were even keen to tuck into cookhouse food again.

The RRB det situated at 10, 000ft was plagued by wild monkeys that knew every trick to get anything shiney or edible. This included jumping into a moving vehicle and extracting **Sgt Dave Keenan's** camera. This was an act which the monkey immediately regretted as **Cpl Seth** 'Clobber' **Campbell** (19 stone super heavy weight boxer!) conducted a hot pursuit resulting in a retrieved camera and a bruised monkey.



Sig Hancock, 'Try that again and you'll have this to chew on!'

All Squadron personnel were withdrawn back to the Squadron Echelon in the build up to the comsec monitoring phase. Two Barracuda monitoring teams were deployed to Archers Post, a remote training area to the north rumoured to have the third hottest average temperatures in the world where they came under the direction of the Troop Commanders Analysis Detachment (TCAD). Echelon with our intrepid REME mechs **Cpl** 'The Riverside Pimp' **Cleary** and **LCpl Daz O'Connell** plus our Intelligence Corps hierarchy **WO2s Mick Sheppard** and 'local boy' **Si Taylor** remained at Nanyuki (keeping an eye on the swimming pool) so each det was effectively on a self-sufficient hard routine detail for seven days. The schedule was punishing with temperatures reaching 450C making shift work difficult for those who had to sleep during the day. The FTX finished with a series of mobile EW teams led by **Cpl Janvier** and **Cpl Garner** deploying to remote Op sites where the Royal Engineer had pre-laid BATS1M which provided an interesting early morning wake up call!

ADVENTUROUS TRAINING

Sig Junior Waddell takes a well earned drink at 38°C

Mid-way through the exercise the Solio and RRB dets were withdrawn to Ech to allow some adventurous training to take place. The whole package was the brain-wave of **Lt Phil** 'My head's burnt' **Waddell,** ably supported by **Lt** ' Tigger' **Coleman** and **SSgt Tony Watters.**

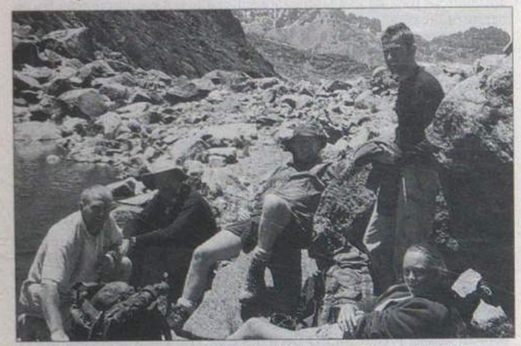
Ex Devils' Horizon gave 237 Sqn a unique opportunity to carry out adventurous training in a fascinating and challenging environment. By the nature of the country alone the week long package was to prove extremely adventurous and most enjoyable. The Squadron was rotated through a series of different activities during the week long package. The activities on offer were horse and camel trekking, white water rafting and a 4-day trek to one of the peaks of Mount Kenya. The wild life in Kenya was not to some people's liking particularly when asked to ride it. I am of course here referring to the camels upon whose backs we were to spend some time trekking. As the camels were brought over a ridge line down to where we were waiting the look of horror on some faces was a sight to behold. However, those expressions of horror were soon to be surpassed by sheer alarm when the camels started to express there own dismay at the sight of the future riders. I do not know which was funnier, the noise of a camel snorting or the look on **Cpl Daz O'Connell's** (REME) face as he announced, 'I'm not getting on that! No way!' The ride was uncomfortable and the camels were less than motivated, deciding on several occasions to refuse to camel. The camels were tied together in a chains of two or three throughout the trek which made it easy for the guides to control them. In theory that is. The camels on which **PO Pip Dredge** and **Sig Rob Leyland** were riding received the award for best comedy actors. First of all **PO Dredge's** camel sat down rather disgruntled only to be roused back into action by a swift whip from the guide. As camel number one regaining its composure **Sig Leyland's** camel decided that this was a good wheeze and followed suit. There then continued a comedy sketch of yo-yo camels which if it had not been so amusing had the potential to have been terribly painful.

Sig Rob Leyland, 'Get me off this creature!'
Camel, 'Get this creature off me!'

The white water rafting could have been more aptly named brown water rafting for the water levels were extremely low. However, the instructors kept the groups busy and entertained. The safety brief was not for the faint hearted. After a matter of seconds on how to paddle and direct the boat through the water **Andreas**, our instructor for the day, frightened the life out of the unsuspecting by going through a series of actions on snakes in the boat. One of the preferred actions on snakes falling into the boat is to jump into the water, but the next set of actions on was soon to dissuade against that. Actions on crocodiles!! **Andreas** then proceeded to go into the mechanics of retrieving one's paddle from the crocodiles mouth whilst getting it into a head-lock from which he assured us the crocodiles would not be able to escape. Of course the more discerning amongst the groups soon realised that **Andreas's** tongue was firmly pressed into his cheek. Some, however, were taken on more than a white water ride. To my mind the most adventurous part of the week was the 4-day trek to Mount Kenya. It is an experience the kind of which few had encountered previously, and which I am sure will remain in people's memories for many years to come. The ascent was broken into three legs, each of which took the groups between huts at various altitudes up the mountain. The biggest shock came roughly ten minutes after the start point as the effect of the altitude took hold of everybody. To operate at an altitude of approximately 2,500m above sea level is difficult but when the activity involves climbing to greater altitudes the effects are more pronounced. Having conducted a recce it was decided that an acclimatisation day would be needed on reaching McKindas hut after the second leg. The day was spent climbing to Tyndall Tarn (lake) and Tyndall Glacier. The Tarn was azure blue and freezing cold as it was fed directly from the glacier. Despite this, some intrepid explorers decided to take a dip. **Maj Dakin** was the first to take the plunge in his group, swiftly followed by **Cpl** 'Seth' **Campbell** who did a guided tour of all the rocks protruding from the icy waters (of which there were several). He took to it literally like a fish to water. Another daring member of the group was **Sig Lou Magifi** who proceeded to put on a fine show of how to keep warm in sub zero waters. I do not think that the drills were necessarily designed for glacial water as the goose bumps could be seen from 100 paces!

The final day of the trek saw the ascent to Point Lennana at altitude of 4985m. This was an achievement of which all those who made it should feel rightfully proud. We set off from McKindas Hut at 0230hrs and traveled extremely slowly up a steep scree slope for approximately two

hours. It is difficult to describe the effect of the altitude when one reaches approximately 4000m, but it most certainly does not feel healthy. Headaches are common and persistent, the mere thought of food is enough to induce nausea and the gradient of the scree produced a phenomena commonly termed 'screaming calves'.



LCpl Daz O'Connell, WO2 Mick Sheppard, Cpl 'Giff' Giffin, Cpl Ritchie Bretherick, PO Dredge at Tyndali Tarn

The final few 100 metres climb were treacherous in places and not for the faint hearted. The view from the top, in spite of the biting cold winds was well worth the effort and pain involved. I believe that despite some moaning on the climb up, the satisfaction of completing such a climb exceeded any reservations anyone had. The experience was an awesome one and the sheer sense of achievement will be difficult to better. Unfortunately our expected recovery dates were put back for several days which allowed the Squadron to arrange some more adventurous training activities. The main activity on offer was paragliding under instruction from **Sgt Hope.** The instruction was carried out in 2-day packages which saw most individuals on a solo flight. Many were seen to be dragged down the hill on their faces as the wind direction was misjudged or on their behinds as personal weight was underestimated. But all in all fun was had by everyone and some have been bitten by the bug and are thirsty for more. The Kenyan experience was excellent and the adventurous training package complemented that wonderfully. All those who took part enjoyed themselves and will have great stories to tell those back in the UK.

Three wise monkeys attempting to keep warm at McKindas Hut LCpl Lea, Sig Magill, Cpl Garner

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

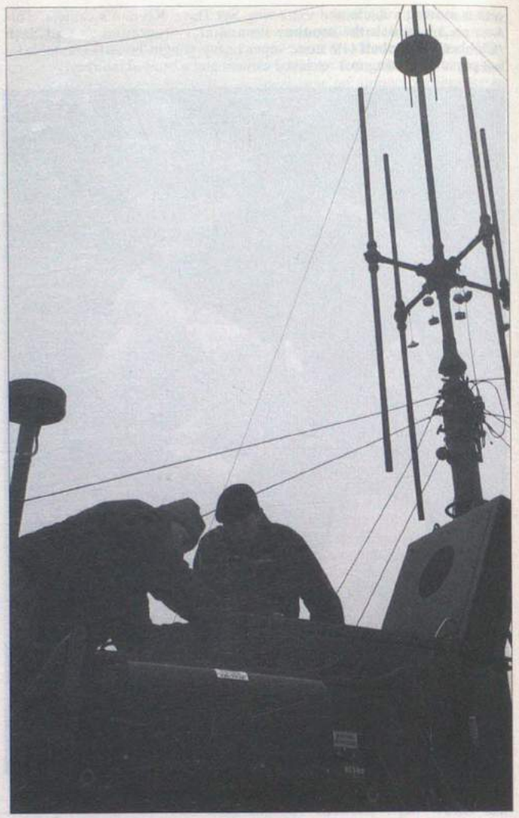
Sqn Comd **Maj Hodges**
Sqn SSM **WO2 (SSM) Griffiths**

Hello and Congratulations to 'New Bloke' **WO2 (SSM) Griffiths** and goodbye and congratulations to 'Old Bloke' now **WO1 (RSM) Fisher** of 35 (South Midland) Signal Regiment (Volunteers). Also Congratulations and farewell to our two new Ruperts. There was much cause for celebration on the commissioning of **WO1** (Now Capt) **Pip Ashworth** R Signals and **WO2** (Now Capt) **Pierre Kennedy** Int Corps.

EXERCISE LITTORAL DRAGON

This was the System Operation and Field Trial (SOFT) for Project Odette, the next generation EW equipment. More importantly it was the culmination of several months of detailed planning resulting in a Squadron deployment to support the trial. 245 Sig Sqn were augmented by personnel from 226 and 237 Sig Sqns. Other trial participants included Y Troop Royal Marines, personnel from procurement agencies, DERA, HQ RACAL.

The Squadron subsequently spent two weeks based primarily on the airfield at Blandford putting the equipment through its paces. Tests ranged from the technical capabilities to the human factors considerations. The latter concerned mainly with health and safety but also included a requirement to put **Sgt Butler** and his crew into NBC equipment and conduct a set-up time trial.



Cpl Stringer
gets advice from a RACAL engineer on the generator

Lt 'Fi' Stewart looks on as Sgt Butler's detachment conducts set-up drills in NBC suits

Toward the second half of the first week the detachments were deployed to form a base-line ranging from Salisbury Plain in the North to Lulworth Cove on the south coast. The detachments varied from the Squadron's integral Armoured platforms, 237's wheeled and the Royal Marines BV206 sensors.

The deployment of the sensors gave the Squadron hierarchy the extra onerous task of regular visits to the detachments. The 'Michelin' detachment hospitality guide was an assessment of how long it took for visitors to be offered a brew and also gives an indication of the quality of the biscuits. **SSgt** 'Nuclear-Reactor' **Newton Roberts** was close to gaining a top five star recommendation, however the winner was that of **Sgt Hunt** by virtue of his location. The Compton Abbas airfield cafe saw everything from the POL re-supply to a Squadron 0 Group throughout the following week!

Despite the high tempo of the exercise the Squadron still had time to say farewell to **WO1 Phil Ashworth** who was to be commissioned and posted to 11 EOD. After several years as the Operations Warrant Officer of the Squadron, Pip had never been in a moving panzer. That was all to change,

as he was sat upon by a couple of our heavy weights, put in the commanders coppola to be driven to the Sergeants' Mess, where a surprise farewell dinner had been laid on.

Sgt Butler looking better than ever!

Maj Hodges on the pre-deployment line-up for the Armoured Odette platform

The Squadron hierarchy working hard at Compton Abbas Airfield

XVI

16 SIGNAL REGIMENT

VISIT BY THE LORD MAYOR OF LEICESTER

16 Sig Regt's link with the city of Leicester began with the civic twinning of Krefeld and Leicester while the Regiment was stationed in Krefeld, prior to the Regiment moving to Rheindahlen in 1994. Furthermore, as Leicestershire is one of the counties within the Regiment's primary recruiting area, the Regiment has continued to strengthen its ties with the City. In February this year the Lord Mayor, **The Right Worshipful Phil Swift**, and The Lady Mayoress, **Marilyn Hall JP**, accepted the Regiment's invitation to be guests of honour at the Kosovo Medal Parade.

The Operation Agricola medal recipients FofS Duff (Front R) was also awarded the 'Regimental Cheesey Grin Award'

As Sig Sims receives her medal from the Lord Mayor, Maj Turner becomes increasingly concerned that there are not enough medals left over for him!

As one of his final duties prior to assuming his appointment as DCOS, 1 Signal Brigade, the Regimental 2IC, **Maj Jonathan Turner**, took the parade. After many early morning rehearsals and the obligatory last minute changes, the day of the parade arrived, and with it - snow! In true British 'the show must go on' style (or was it 'I am determined to be

presented with my first gong' attitude of the 2IC) events moved under the shelter of 230 Sig Sqn garages. Over 160 soldiers were on parade to receive their medals from the Lord Mayor and Commander 1 Sig Bde, **Brig David McDowall MBE**. As well as campaign medals, several members of the Regiment were awarded medals for specific acts of gallantry or exemplary service. The parade was in recognition of the Regiment's deployment between February and December 1999 to Macedonia, Kosovo, Northern Greece and Italy in support of the ARRC on Op Agricola.

Singled out for special honours were **LCpl Christian Perry** and **Sig Stephen Whitworth** (Commander Kosovo Force Commendation), **SSgt (FofS) Matthew Duff** and **LCpl Darren Kirby** (Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service), and **Cpl Duncan Windsor** (Mention in Despatches). **LCpl Perry** extracted himself and his Ptarmigan detachment from a hostile situation in Skopje when an explosive device detonated on his vehicle bonnet. **Sig Whitworth** worked 20-hour days to deliver the power requirement when NATO entered Kosovo. As a member of the ATacCS team, **FofS Duff** was critical to the design and deployment of a C2 system at HQ KFOR in Macedonia. **LCpl Kirby** commanded an isolated detachment on the Kosovo border with great professionalism despite being a potential target for Serbian fire. **Cpl Windsor** and his team were surrounded by a mob of 1600 people while en route through Skopje, who smashed the vehicle windows and tried to drag the soldiers out. He beat off the attackers and got the team to safety. Praising the Regiment for its effort in the Balkans, the Lord Mayor said, 'The young men and women of 16 Sig Regt did a superb job as part of the Kosovo campaign. I am proud and honoured to be here today, representing the City of Leicester, to present these awards.' In a busy day for the Lord Mayor, he also presented Long Service and Good Conduct Medals to **WO2 (RQMS) Mark Giles, SSgt (FofS) Bob Vowles, Sgts Haslam, 'Chalky' White, Kit Knight, 'Gaz' Tanner, 'Smudge' Smith** and **Cpl Mick Beeson**.

With official duties over, it was time for a spot of lunch in the Sgts' Mess and a chance to relax prior to the evening's entertainment: a Regimental Ladies Guest Night in the Officers' Mess. Taking his interpretation of hosting to the extreme, **Capt Nick Bruce** was last seen in a corner of the bar with the Lord Mayor in deep conversation and consuming large tots of whisky behind a thickening blanket of cigarette smoke. **Lt Oliver Dinnis** finally realised that breaking the newly presented port decanter would not be in his best career interest after the Commanding Officer's clear advice! On the final morning of the visit the Regiment laid on a demonstration of its deployable assets. Finding the operation of a switch a bit taxing, the Lord Mayor looked intrigued, as we all were, as the Master Chef, **Sgt Mickeljohn** explained how to make fruit juice from a rat pack sweet. A quick shopping trip and tour of the local area, ably escorted by **SSgt Paul Youd**, sent our guests off to Leicester with fond memories and full suitcases. The visit succeeded in strengthening our ties with Leicester and the Midlands. Well done to all those who made it such a success.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON – EXERCISE WHITE JAVELIN

by Cpl Tipping

Another year, another millennium, and once again another busy exercise programme, kicking off with our old favourite Ex White Javelin. HQ Squadron once again provided the ERV support, with **Cpl Ferguson** and **LCpl Smith** deployed with 230 Sig Sqn and **Cpl Tipping**, **LCpl Davies** and **SSgt** 'I'm only part of the crew' **Bath** supporting 255 Sig Sqn. Last but not least, **Cpl Johnson** and **LCpl Jowett** deployed in the Radio ERV at Echelon. There were, however, a few familiar faces missing, most notably **Cpl Connor** due to his ERV 'refusing to work'. There were also the 'three one-armed bandits' who managed to avoid all the fun. These were **Sgt** 'Kartman' **Rutter** whose driving skills leave a lot to be desired, **Cpl** 'Ooh I've hurt my shoulder' **Harricon** and **Cpl McKenna** who had a strange desire to find out how far he could fall before breaking his arm.

As the first exercise of the year it was time to blow away the cobwebs and fine tune our high intensity war fighting skills. This was the roundabout way of telling us we would be moving a lot and putting up and taking down cam nets frequently. The first week was spent on training areas practising our skills, which then ran into a second week in which we were involved in a high intensity conflict. Luckily enough the 'conflict' was so intense that it was all over by Friday morning and so we set off home for vehicle turn around, weapon cleaning and a well-earned rest. We can hardly wait for the next exciting instalment of the Regiment's exercise programme.

REGIMENTAL HOCKEY

16 Sig Regt became the BA (G) Major Unit Hockey champions for the third successive year. The Regiment overcame 1 AAC at Quebec Barracks, Osnabruck. The game started well with the Regiment taking an early lead through **Cpl Jamie Butt** from a well-worked penalty corner routine. Shortly before the break 1AAC equalised with a similar corner penalty routine. The second half started well with an early goal from **Sig Rob Brown.** The score remained the same with the Regiment dominating the play until **Cpl Jamie Butt** and **Sig Rob Brown** each added another goal to make the final score 4–1. Earlier in the day the Regiment edged a well-fought semi-final win against 21 Engr Regt. With an early 3-0 lead with goals from **SSgt Neil Perm, Cpl Jamie Butt** and **Sig McIntyre** the Engineers fought back and took a 4–3 lead. However, our individual skills paid dividends and the Regiment ran out 5-4 winners after efforts from **Sgt Martin Jeans** and **Sig Rob Brown**. After winning the BA (G) Army Cup the Regiment went forward to represent Germany in the Army Cup held in Aldershot. Although the Regiment put up a good fight they went out to the eventual winners of the competition, 42 Survey Squadron RE.

Cpl J. Butt, Sig R. Brawn, Capt Stu Boyne, Sgt M. Jeanes and Maj Lee Smart

252 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Brian Greenwood**
SSM **WO2 Rob Hood**

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

Since our last entry we have seen some comings and goings. Firstly, we bid farewell to **Maj** 'Al' **Thomas** and his wife **Sue**, who went off to join **Maj Gen Raper** at DCSA (UK); good luck for the future. Taking over the mantle is **Maj Brian Greenwood**, who arrived all the way from G6 HQ ARRC; welcome to both you and **Heather**, and we hope you enjoy your stay. Also newly arrived are **Sig** 'Orb' **Robin**, posted to the Squadron from Colchester, and **LCpl Fisher**, poached from 255 Sqn.

CONGRATULATIONS

Well done to **SSgt** (SQMS) 'Andy' **Dixon** on his success at Bisley in receiving his Top 100 badge; good luck again this year. Also, a special welcome into the world for **'Baby Jessica'** the latest addition to **Capt** 'My baby will sleep through the night' **O'Rourke** and his wife **Jan**.

EXERCISE PACIFIC FALL – FIELD FIRING CAMP HYTHE AND LYDD, 3 SECTION

The Section arrived at the Camp and soon settled into the luxury accommodation. The section members, who were drawn from all areas of the Squadron soon gelled together as a team. The first few days were basic ITDs to prepare us for the more interesting and certainly more demanding range work ahead. As a section, no one really shone in the shooting department at the beginning, especially **Sigs John** 'True or False' **Blackman** and **Ian** 'Firing Pin' **Pirie**. Morale was always high with the help of the pep talks given by our illustrious Section Commander **Cpl Mick** ' Start Sparking' **Wood**. We also had the added bonus of having **2Lt James** 'what causes phosphorous burns?' **Mason** in our section, who had the most amazing talent of asking the most ridiculous questions. The more advanced range work brought out more characters like Combat Clerk **LCpl Annette** 'Spare Ribs' **Orange** and **LCpl Verity** 'GI' **Gough**, who both proved that they could shoot better than the men. Everyone enjoyed using other weapons like the LAW 94 mm and the GPMG, which was a favourite for both the ladies in the Section, (hmmn, wonder why?), but also for 2IC **Cpl Paul** 'Which way is left?' **Meardon** and **Sig Scott** 'Where is the burger van?' **Hendry**. The whole two weeks went very well with all members playing a vital role. This became apparent when we won the 'Best Section' award, which shocked us greatly but pleased us even more.

4 SECTION

From the start, Section 4 was labelled as the 'Biff Section' but, as the days progressed, those assumptions were soon quashed. Under the command of **Cpl Steff** 'voicebox' **Lake** and ably assisted by **Cpl Ritchie** 'Sniper' **Widdison**, the Section swiftly flew to the top of the scoring table, which is where they stayed for most of the exercise. Whilst on the ranges, Section 4 excelled in the shooting aspects, acquiring some of the highest scores during the exercise. Everyone in the Section enjoyed the two weeks especially **Sig Sarah** 'GPMG' **Wilcock** and **LCpl Gav** 'Show me a tank and I'll hit it' **Ruckledge**, who demonstrated how to fire a LAW 94 mm.

INITIAL IMPRESSIONS – *by 2Lt James Mason*

Fresh out of school and even fresher out of a short period of training at both Sandhurst and Blandford, I joined 16 Sig Regt to complete my Gap Year Commission. After a week or two of finding my way around the Regiment and JHQ I was lucky enough to go on Ex Pacific Fall, giving me the opportunity to brush up my rather basic military skills. The Exercise was organised by 252 Sig Sqn into four Sections and I was fortunate enough to be in the Section commanded by **Cpl** 'I will stop talking soon' **Mick Wood**. I was warmly welcomed into the Section and soon became part of the friendly banter, being a constant source of amusement due to my lack of experience. Our first few days were spent completing the relevant ITDs and zeroing our rifles (although in some cases it made little difference to our shooting abilities). Having only fired a rifle once before, I was learning everything from scratch and consequently, I was not very surprised that I was not leading the field. However, I was pleased with my progress over the two weeks and finished well above bottom of the group. I was especially pleased at achieving the highest score in the Pairs Fire and Manoeuvre Shoot with **Sig** 'True or false' **Blackman**, as neither of us had done particularly well up to this point. Having passed through the lower level shoots in the first week, we moved on to the more advanced range work for the second week of the competition. The highlight was probably firing the LAW 94 mm and also the Fire Discipline Range, which involved shooting at moving enemy targets who were using moving civilians as cover. The Exercise built up to a live firing section attack, which began by wading through some very wet and smelly ditches. It just goes to show how involved I got that I did not realise just how wet, cold, muddy and bruised I was until we arrived back at the Troop Shelter at the end. Evenings were spent with lectures covering skills needed for the next day, sorting our kit as best we could and shopping at the 24 hour Tesco just down the road (a godsend!). At the weekends we hit Folkstone with a passion as we had been banned from drinking the day before any live firing. Overall Ex Pacific Fall was a great experience. I thoroughly enjoyed myself and learnt many new lessons.

BRUGGEN TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Gary Johnson**

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

Goodbye and all our best wishes to the following: **Cpl Matt White, Cpl Arnie Renforth, LCpl** 'Witch' **Southwick, LCpl Jim Dryden, LCpl Mike Napier** and **Sigs Dick** and **Hayley Danby.** Posted in trying to fill the gaps are: **Cpl Mark Aplin, LCpl** 'Giz' **Stainer, LCpl Ian Farrow, Sig** 'Taff' **Davies** and **Sig** 'Ski' **Kedezierski.**

CONGRATULATIONS

Well done to the following: **SSgt** 'Jonah' **Jones** on his recent selection for promotion to WO2. **Sgt** 'Harry' **Harris** on passing his Sergeant's Course (apparently it was a really hard course!), **LCpl Neil Frazer** on eventually getting his first tape and **LCpl** and Mrs **Matt Stowell** on their recent addition to the family (is it true that she is already tucking into pork scratching's?)

EWT – *by Sgt Tim Rigby*

During the period 14 -25 February **Sgt** 'Trigger (abominable snowflake)' **Rigby** and **Sig** 'Snow Queen' **Griggs** disappeared from the Troop to embark on a two-week 'Bavarian swan' (Exercise Winter Training). The aim of the training was to learn vital skills such as skinning up in preparation to climb mountains, dig snow holes and live like fish fingers for the night. Tabbing up and down 'them yonder hills' wasn't quite what the little snow dwarves had expected but nevertheless **Sgt Rigby's** life was heartened by the constant support from **Sig Griggs**, who often found himself hiding under drifts of powder snow having 'crashed and burned'. Needless to say the rest of the Troop were envious of the deep tans and numerous stories of daring exploits from our two intrepid heroes.

CABLE RECORDS PROJECT – *by LCpl Chris Lees*

I have been involved in the recording of circuit and cable records for some time now at RAF Bruggen and firmly believed that computerisation of the paper-driven method would greatly enhance the process. So with this in mind, in my own time, I created a small database to allow quick and easy access to telephone circuit records. In August last year, during a visit to RAF Bruggen, **SSgt Gorman** noticed the system I had implemented and notified CPD in Blandford. A project was started between **SSgt Gorman** and myself to produce a Corps-wide package for all Telemech/SWS units around the globe in order to standardise the process.

In January 2000 an improved version of the package, known as ReeMan (Records Management Database) was demonstrated at Blandford. A similar package was also demonstrated and, as a result, a new partnership was formed between myself, **SSgt Gorman** and **SSgt Elliott** from 259 Sig Sqn, who had produced a huge amount of work for his own proposed project. In March 2000 the team met in Cyprus and both packages were looked at. After a week of intense work a final package, CCMD 2000, was produced. In addition, methods of training and maintenance were discussed with training being introduced at Class 3 and Class 1 level. This will be presented to CPD in May 2000 and the package will be made available to all units shortly after.

BORNEO TROOP

Tp Comd **WO2 (YofS) Hartshorne**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Nick** 'Drive time' **Hawkins**

Borneo Troop is responsible for the IT training of all Staff Officers from HQ ARRC and 1 Sig Bde. This responsibility required new premises and a training facility was built last year in the old RHQ building of 16 Sig Regt. The Javelin House Training Centre was officially opened in May 1999 by **Maj Gen Raper CBE**, Chief Executive of DCSA. The facility comprises four LAN suites, a lecture theatre and a Comms Control Suite. There is also Ptarmigan capability and the LAN suites can be transformed into an exercise HQ. Since the initial opening over 500 students have completed various courses and given lots of positive feedback. Javelin House will be put through its paces in April 2000, when the Centre becomes a fully operational HQ for Ex Arrcade Warrior. We say goodbye to **Capt Pete Stoddart, Sgt George McGuire, Cpl Jim Gwinell** and **LCpl Dave Storey** and wish you luck in your new jobs. We also say hello to **WO2 (YofS) Stu Hartshorne** and **Cpl Robson** and hope you enjoy your stay with us.

230 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. L. Smart**
SSM **WO2(SSM) A. Churchward**

The Squadron, now all returned from Kosovo and Macedonia has had time to recuperate and prepare for the next challenge. Little did the Squadron know but the tide of change was just about to strike. January saw the disappearance of TN014 and its reformation as TN017. It also saw the raising of Support Tp, which carries on the tradition of supporting the rest of the Squadron as TN014 claimed to have done! SHQ has suffered a bit of a shake up due to the unfortunate parachuting accident of the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Glynn Buxton**. Our thoughts and those of the Regiment go out to **Glynn** and his family and we wish you a speedy and full recovery. The new 2IC is **Nigel** 'Its only 50km, who's coming' **Francis-McGann** who joins us on attachment from 2 Regt AAC while he waits for the Army Air Corps to build a helicopter large enough for him to finish his Pilots Course in. As if this wasn't enough, the Squadron has just learned that we are to loose our backbone, **WO2 (SSM) A. Churchward** to the 'the cauldron' or Regt Ops! **SSgt (FofS) M Duff** leaves to move a little further away, at least 800m up the road. We wish them the best of luck in RHQ and 252 Sqn respectively and thank them both for their contribution to the Squadron, Regiment and Corps on Op Agricola and on our transition back to more peaceful climes. **WO2 (SSM)** 'Calls a spade, a spade' **Hood** and **SSgt (FofS) Pace** will both have a hard act to follow, but when they pass their CAT 8 Skydiving/Squadron Entrance Tests, the Squadron will be well placed to carry on providing robust and resilient networks for the access squadrons!

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Rebecca Knightly-Brown**
Tp SSgt **SSgt J** 'I support Rangers' **McNeill**

To keep up with the climate of change, TN014 was reformed as TN017 and the prime movers were prepared for their move into Light Care and Preservation. With the change of title also came a change of command and the troop bade farewell to **Lt Lucy** 'It must have slipped' **Thirsk**. She leaves to join HQ 101 Log Bde and claims that she will double the bar intake of The Pegasus on her arrival in Aldershot. A quick hello and goodbye to **Lt Ollie** 'I set off airport metal detectors with this' **Dinnis** who came, saw, failed to conquer and left. **Lt Dinnis** was subsequently replaced by **Lt/Capt Francis-McGann** for six weeks before they managed to find another double- barrelled Officer to take over. Enter **Lt Rebecca** 'I would like to take this opportunity to buy my new troop a slab' **Knightly-Brown** who arrived from 16 Air Asslt Bde to take over just in time to rescue the Troop from marching competitions. Recent exercises to wipe away the Kosovo cobwebs have been fast and furious. The Troop has also seen many new arrivals, mostly in the form of 'baby' Techs and Sys Ops. We say hello to **Sig Button,** who joins us from an exchange posting in Austria, **LCpl Rickards, LCpl Quinn, LCpl Kneale, Sig Edwards, Sig Jackson, Sig Priest, Sig Daniel, Sig Smithson,** and **Sig Winters.** Congratulations to **SSgt Rick** 'I'll need a pace stick then' **Hannah**, and **Sgt** 'Chalky (Vertically Challenged)' **White** on their recent selection for promotion.

TN016

Tp Comd **Lt O. Dinnis**
Tp SSgt **SSgt D. Coleman**

TN016 were not quite so fortunate as TN015 and have been caught with a few of the changes. **Lt Phil 'OPFOR' Connor**, the outgoing Tp Comd has moved to HQ Sqn on promotion to Captain and is warming the 2IC's chair before venturing into civilian life in July 2000. The Troop and Squadron congratulate you on your promotion and wish you well for the future. We also say goodbye to **LCpl Welsh** who returns to 'Blighty' having steadfastly refused leave prior to disembarkation so that he could stay with his Troop on Battle Camp. Nominations for awards and honours to the Adjutant please! We welcome **Lt Ollie** 'This hurts when it gets cold' **Dinnis** from Support Tp and **Sgt Taylor**. The Troop also congratulates **SSgt Coleman** on his recent selection for promotion.

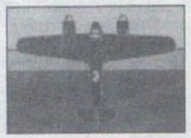
RAF BRUGGEN 10 MILE ROAD RACE

On Saturday 1 April 2000 (yes, it was April Fools Day!) a 28-strong team from 230 Sig Sqn, having returned a full 18hrs earlier from exercise and therefore being well rested, arrived by coach at RAF Bruggen. This year saw the Millennium RAF Bruggen Ten Mile Road Race and it was both the 21st and last year that the event would be run. To this end, units from all over the world flew in to compete. There were teams from as far away as RAF Akrotiri, RAF Kinloss and RAF Leuchars as well as local German, Dutch, Belgian and US delgates who turned in to run from SHAPE, AFCENT and, of course, the ARRC. All ranks from 1 Star to private soldier were to be found running in boots, combats, fancy dress and PT kit. This was joined by a healthy throng of local civilians which saw the number of runners exceed 900 initially and swell even further to over 1000 by race start at 14:30hrs. The day had started out well until **Cpl** 'Seemed like a sensible place at the time' **Sutton,** along with another unnamed member of TN015 (you owe me one) parked behind the team coach. The coach driver then managed to spend the next half-hour filling in FMT3s with the RAF Police after he finished his impression of the Railway Squadron's shunting efforts, unfortunately not with a locomotive! End result: Coach 1, New Tigra and New Puma 0.

The sun shone until just after the start and then the weather that we thought we had left on exercise turned up to finish the job. To say the skies opened would have been an understatement. It was however clear that having started raining at the two mile point, by the time we finished, getting in a swimming pool would have left most of us drier. The

Squadron Commander led the team delegation originally with the lightly boned 2IC picking up the rear of the group (purely in the interest of keeping up morale). Commendable efforts were made by all but particular mention must go to **Sig Heywood** who finished in just over 1hr 1min. All in all a thoroughly enjoyable day was had and I hope that we can write similar stories (save the car shunting bit) about the Bruggen 50 in which the Squadron plans to enter a team. Any volunteers for 6 – 7 May 2000?

21 SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)



CO **Lt Col Peter Gillespie**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Al Jenkins**

Good grief! *WIRE* notes time again and I still haven't managed to delegate responsibility for editing! Equally, the good burghers of Colerne are very poor at producing notes, let alone any photographs. So come on the David Baileys of Azimghur - if you're reading these notes and wondering why your own delightful fizzog isn't looking back at you - get snapping!!

COMMANDING OFFICERS HAND-OVER

In January, **Lt Col (now Col) John Terrington** handed the reins of command to **Lt Col Peter Gillespie** and headed for the open plan delights of Abbey Wood and a tour as the Land EW IPT Project Team Leader.

Col John Terrington hands over to Lt Col Peter Gillespie

Lt Col Terrington's style of command has made a marked impact on the way that the Regiment conducts its business, especially with the RAF, and has been key to maintaining the excellent level of morale across all ranks. In addition, his robust approach to the peculiar problems associated with Colerne, in particular the failing infrastructure, has ensured that the needs of the Regiment remain high in the list of priorities of the operational and regional Chains of Command. To mark his farewell, **Col John** was driven away from the Regiment in his very own helicopter, designed and built in the LAD. This Surgical Support Helicopter (SSH, You Know Who!) came complete with working rotors, machine guns, sound effects and subaltern power.

OC LAD Capt Peter McMillan REME gives the flight briefing

2Lts Mike Barnes and John Malcolm provide the pulling power for the CO, who has clearly reverted into Dick Dastardly mode!

We wish **Col John** and **Heather** all the very best for the future. We also wish **Lt Col Peter Gillespie** and **Fiona,** a very warm welcome to Colerne and best wishes during his tour.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Chas Date**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Nick Organ**

Special Notice: **Phil Fluck** leaves the Army shortly, after a full and wholesome career spanning many years and countless 'carefully-constructed-and-never-dodgy-deals'! The very best of luck and our sincere good wishes for the future to you and your family. May **Phileus Phluck** Enterprises reign high in the PHTSE-100 Index.

After an interesting few months in which we have seen garages closed and RSIT/PRE inspections come and go we have at last recovered from Christmas and settled into 'normal routine'. During this period the squadron has seen a major turn around on personnel at all levels and I would like to take this opportunity to thank those that are leaving or have left and welcome those that have arrived. On the home front the 2IC/OC PRI/Families Officer (**Capt Dave Whitaker**) is still working hard to fill the role of Training Officer and the SSM, **WO2 Nick Organ**, manages to find his office at least once a month. Well done gents the Squadron Clerk, **Pte Ali Nation**, is still waiting for pay of higher rank!

QM(G) DEPARTMENT

QM(G) **Maj Tom Dean**
RQMS(G) **WO2 (RQMS) Nige Roberts**

The usually steady routine within the blanket stacking Department of the Regiment has recently seen a number of changes. Firstly **Capt Jeff Ashwell MBE** has left the Army and he has been replaced as QM(G)/PROPMAN by **Maj Tom Dean** who has recently arrived from 14 Sig Regt. **Cpl Paul Selby** fresh back from a holiday in Croatia is also leaving the Department to join the QM(T) Dept, many thanks to **Paul** for all your hard work during your relatively short stay with us. Also congratulations to **Sig Emma O'Neill** (nee Baker) on her recent marriage to **Rory** and we all wish you the best of luck, for the soon to be, extra member of your family. Finally it would be wrong not to mention **Mr George Wood** who is retiring after working in the QM(G) Dept at Azirrighur Barracks for over ten years. Best of luck for the future **George** from the Department and all those members of the Corps who have worked with you over the years.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

Tech Adjt **Capt Lee Wookey**
FofS **WO1 (FofS) Ady Knight**

Welcome new arrivals to TM Tp, on the Systems side **Sgt** 'Billy' **Belshaw, Sgt** 'Royston' **Parr** and **LCpl Helena Southwick** and the Radio Techs, **Sgt Nikki Francis** and **Cpl Rob Murray** and also to **Sgt Andy Sergeant** into the newly formed ISM team. Farewells go to **Cpl** 'Gumbo' **Bentham** to 264 Sig Sqn, **Cpl Ed Chwieseni** to 3 Inf Bde and **LCpl Jim Harrison** deployed on Op Palatine. Congratulations go to **Al Cook** on promotion to Lance Corporal and 'Taff' **McRadish** on promotion to Sergeant and posted as well. It has been a busy post Christmas period with us supporting the Squadrons on exercise's both locally and **LCpl** 'Percy' **Purcell** deploying to Norway with Alpha Tp, also RSIT and PRE running back to back didn't help matters along with the formation of the new Regimental ISM team. This was not helped by the fact that half the Troop seemed to be on leave or courses as well. We have been well represented on the sporting front with Troop members in the Orienteering, Football and Rugby teams and in training for the Lanyard Trophy. It's not all work though and the first Troop function of the year saw **Cpl Johnny Nicol** organising a trip to Swindon dog races, where a good night was had by all, with most people picking the winner in at least one race.

Ex Red Beaufighter III was the last regimental exercise of the millennium, and the first after the formation of 220 Sig Sqn. The ten-day exercise consisted of four days of regimental training at Longmoor Training Camp followed by a peacekeeping deployment scenario moving from the Aldershot area back towards Colerne. With a lot of new faces in TM Tp, this was the first exercise for a few people and the learning curve was steep, especially for **LCpl** 'Percy' **Purcell** who only arrived in the Regiment the day before deploying. Apparently, **LCpl** 'Stanley' **Harrison** has now been given extensive lessons on how to disconnect the binner after causing injury to **SSgt** 'Gorbachov' **Wilson.** His map reading skills will be addressed in the future, after proving to be the only person not to locate the port-a-loos ... enough said. Despite the lack of experience the exercise went well, apart from when **LCpl Mark Taylor** went into shock when the SSM published the guard roster and he found he'd been given a 23 hour stag.

Morale was kept up by **Sgt Chris Gearing,** keeping everybody entertained trying to untangle himself and his rifle from various cam-nets and also doing some intensive research into the new stores CIS terminal 'P1stJ - commonly known as Play-station. Practising his acrobatic skills, whilst tumbling along the full length of his binner, although impressive, resulted in a broken tooth and testing of the casevac system - **Jessie**! The Automatic Test Eqpt (ATE) on the Ptarmigan ERV kept everyone amused, not playing when too cold or too hot, if it had undergone a recent move, if it didn't feel like it, etc, a bit like **Cpl** 'Clean Boy' **Nicol.** The power men at Ech managed to survive under the control of **Sgt Andy Hayes**, even though the ERV (Access) was put out of action during a routine powering down of the generator at the request of the EDs. **Sgt** 'Scouse' **Hayes** could not understand the response he got to the second request to drop power some 20hrs later after the Techs had only just got the ATE working again.

Finally, the Techs want to thank the TM Tp tea-boy (you know who you are) who didn't spill a drop when failing to negotiate the binner steps. Well done, hope you recover soon. A big thanks to the chefs for the excellent standard of the food at Ech ... unlucky 220 and 244.

MOTOR TRANSPORT TROOP

MTO **Capt Pete Griffiths**
MTSNCO **Sgt MacDonald**

We say goodbye to **SSgt Mark Sala** who departed to 220 Sig Sqn as SQMS and, secondly, to **Cpl O'Neil** who also moves to 220 Sig Sqn as the MT representative. We wish them the very best in the future and hope that all goes well in their new jobs. We also say goodbye to **Cpl Gough** on posting to 2 Sig Regt and wish him and his family all the best in the future. On the new arrivals front we welcome **Capt Pete Griffiths** and his family (including Ben the Boxer, who appears every time a camouflage net or hessian is out and plays with it). We also welcome **Cpl Berrey** and family to the fold. The last few months have been extremely busy for the Regimental MT with the collection of vehicles returning from Kosovo, followed by stores checks, servicing and repairs. This was quickly followed by the POL inspection, which was fronted by **Cpl Andy Doyle** who did an excellent job, ensuring that the inspection team left the Regiment happy and we await the final report. The Regiment has been busy forming a new Signal Squadron with vehicles moving between Squadrons at a great rate of knots. Having successfully completed the majority of vehicle moves it was then time for the Regiment to shake out on Exercise Red Beaufighter, ably supported by ECH.

The first packets to deploy on Red Beaufighter got away on time (well almost) and the NITO was confident that everybody would arrive on time, and safely, if they stuck to the route card provided by the MT. Unfortunately, Serial 8 proved not to be a large roundabout but indeed, a one way circuit around Farnham town centre! Special mention must go to **Sgt** 'Mac' **MacDonald** who not only gallantly battled through the traffic and the abuse from other road users but also managed to re-tacsign the route around the by pass onto the A31 thereby ensuring the majority of the packets arrived safely. On arrival at Longmoor, the vehicles were met by the RCWO, **WO2 Dave Mead Male** RLC, who tried to line up the convoys on the square without much success. The comment about Billy Smart's Circus was heard that evening over dinner and from now on the MT promises not to cook if he promises not to help with the line-ups.

The training over the next two days went very well with the MT running cross-country driver training set up by **Sgt Charley Farley** and **Cpl Dan Eskdale.** Everybody seemed to enjoy this as it involved one instructor, one wolf landrover, a cross country course and a student who had had a brain removal and a CD ROM replacement making them believe that they were **Colin McCrae** and completing the cross country stage of the RAC Rally. The middle weekend of the exercise saw HQ (V) and 43 (V) Sqns join the Regiment in the field and this time the MTO had personally recced the route and TAC signed any junction where there might be a problem. All of the packets successfully made it to the point of disembarkation via the correct route with the exception of one, but you know what they say about Officers and maps! The next four days were spent practising the new role of the Regiment with ECH successfully completing a further two moves before moving back to camp to prepare for the Regiments return. This they all did successfully via Warminster wash down and a rerun of the gunfight at the OK Coral involving 14 hose-pipes and an unsuspecting SSM!

The last three months have been a busy period for the Regimental MT with the return of **Sig Chilvers** from Split and the deployment of **Cpl Holmes-Smith** to replace him. We also say welcome to **Cpl Jay** who joins us from Bassingbourne and **Sig Ward** who joins us from basic training and wish them both a successful tour with the Regiment. February saw the Regiment undergo PRE. This highlighted a number of problem areas and work has started in earnest to rectify this before July. The MT has been busy getting people correctly qualified to do their job and has run three MHE courses and has one motorcycle course scheduled for May. A driver training package begins on 3 April running for two weeks which involves one day packages briefing on the new FMT 1000 series forms, RTA/recovery procedures and driving techniques. Individually **Capt Griffiths** has attended his MTO's course, **Sgt Macdonald** has attended his DDE course and **Cpl Eskdale** is at present undergoing UBRE training, all this with HASMAT to come in June.

ATTACHMENT TO A TP ON EXERCISE HARDFALL 2000 TO NORWAY FEBRUARY AND MARCH 2000 - *by Sig Berry*

It was about four on a Sunday morning and it was time for me to leave on my long journey to Norway. This was my first time visiting anywhere like this so I was fairly apprehensive. When we finally landed at Bergen, after the usual waiting around for hours at South Cherny, I realised that my next two months were going to be very different. My first three weeks were spent at a place called Mjolfiell with 249 Sig Sqn where I was completing my Novice Ski and Survival Course. This comprised of many various tasks, which usually involved getting cold but I still settled in fairly quickly. Nights spent in Snow holes, brushwood shelters and four-man tents, lots of digging and don't forget the superb ice breaking drills made the time fly by. In amongst all of this was plenty of ski-ing which I thoroughly enjoyed and hope to continue with. The remainder of my time in Norway was spent preparing for the Exercise and then the Exercise itself up in Bardufoss. As the RAF didn't make it, things were very quiet for us. As for the journey back, there was the mandatory twenty-four hour delay on our flight, due to 'too much snow'. I would not hesitate in trying to return to Norway and I am hoping to pass my Military Ski Instructors course late on in the year!

VISIT TO THE REGIMENT BY THE SOinC, BRIG C. J. BURTON OBE

On 29 November 1999 the SOinC, **Brig C. J. Burton OBE** accompanied by the Corps RSM, **WO1(RSM) G. Hodgson** visited the Regiment. After being greeted by the CO and RSM the SOinC was then given a Regimental update and operations brief. The SOinC was then taken a up to the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess to present four well deserved Long Service and Good Conduct medals to **WO2 (RQMS) Merrie, WO2 (SSM) Williams, SSgt Sheerin** and **Sgt Jones** (19 M). The SOinC also presented the Territorial Army Efficiency Medal to **Sgt Mortimore, Sgt Cox, Sgt Tapley** and **Cpl Jones** who are currently serving with 43 (V) Sig Sqn, one of 21 Sig Regt (Air Sp)'s Territorial Squadrons. The SOinC then took time to meet members of the Regiment and also congratulate the medal recipients along with their wives and girlfriends.

REGIMENTAL GOLF COMPETITION 1999 - *by Sgt Al Kemp*

This year' competition took place at Cumberwell Park Golf Club on 8 October 1999 with 19 players and several willing caddies taking part. The meeting was sponsored by the Regimental PRI and the prizes were presented by **Capt Pete McMillan** - a well known hacker from the local garage. The course was in excellent condition and the weather was perfect for the time of year. Most golfers saw this as an ideal opportunity to make the most of the course and not leave one inch of woodland or water unobserved from the occasional fairway. Throughout the course of the day various competitions were keenly contested especially the 'most golf' of which there were several punters thrashing their way wildly towards. After a 9 hole warm up and a ploughmans lunch the main 18 hole stableford competition got underway with renewed passion. The eventual winner of the 'Rabbits Trophy' with a fine score of 34 points was **Sgt Steve Joyce**. In addition to the trophy Sgt Joyce now holds the prestigious title of '21 Signal Regiment (AS) Golf Champion 1999'.

Sig Joyce receiving the 'Rabbit's Trophy'

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Jim Forrest**
SQMS **SSgt (SQMS) Mark Sala**

Since the last notes in *The WIRE*, 220 Sqn has moved from Laarbruch to Colerne, gone from 4 to 98 personnel in strength, equipped itself with vehicles and taken part in a Regimental Exercise. Not bad for two months work! Of course, this has not happened painlessly and **SSgt (SQMS) Mark Sala** is showing severe signs of hair loss. This affliction may not be due to stress however, and could be infectious as **Maj Jim Forrest** and **SSgt Russ Ezard** are both also showing signs of 'shiny head' - nothing is being said about **Capt** 'Kylie' **Barker's** barnet! Despite a thinning command element, the Scorpion has gone from strength to strength. Battling against time, lack of equipment and a lack of manpower, the Squadron managed to deploy on exercise by the end of November and acquit itself admirably. Some basic soldiering skills, such as map reading, were practised, and not before time, as **LCpl Matt** 'Magellan' **Dudinan** and **LCpl Dave** 'Pathfinder' **Heath** will testify.

Although the new Squadron is young, there is a great deal of potential in the troops and this is sure to manifest itself in the busy year to come. The exercise plot is hectic and the adventurous and military training plans for the next year should combine with trade training to make well-rounded and knowledgeable soldiers.

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Ian Walton**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Paul Williams**

Over the last few months 244 Sig Sqn has seen major changes in just about every aspect of life; Op Agricola, the Squadron's commitment to Op Palatine, and to cap it all the formation of 220 Sig Sqn from, in the main, 244 Sig Sqn. The Squadron split began in October 1999, involving half the Squadron manpower and half the Squadron Communication assets all moving across to 220Sig Sqn. All of this caused bucket loads of work for the Squadron, especially **SSgt (SQMS) Tony** 'Am I the only one working?' **Lee.** On behalf of the Sqn Comd and members of 244 Sig Sqn, we would like to take this opportunity to welcome 220 Sig Sqn to Colerne and wish everyone who serves with them a good tour.

ALPHA TROOP (AMF(L))

Tp Comd **Capt Bill Holbrook**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Daz Sheerin**

The busiest of all the Troops, is once again bracing itself for the beginning of yet another hectic year. Starting with the Norway deployment in January it is followed, a matter of weeks later, by the Arty Ex in Hungary and then in the summer months to Greece. not forgetting a trip to Heidelburg in June to help re-config the (AMF(L)) TOC HQ……oh ya beauty! The Troop is reaching steady state after a turbulent few months with various Troop members on Ops. With the return of 'the management' **SSgt Daz Sheerin,** from half a tour in Split, and re-role of **Capt Bill Holbrook** fresh from Kosovo into the A Tp Comd's position, **Sgt Tim Tomkinson** the only adult in the Troop for the best part of a year was in December allowed his summer leave. Well done TT for a sterling effort and all the best for the YofS course. Goodbyes also go to **Capt Andy Arthurton** who leaves the Troop without getting even the smallest of snowflakes under his belt to become the Squadron 2IC in place of our old leader **Capt Steve Abram.**

All work and no play makes ... blah , so the Troop took time out from its busy schedule to take part in a quiet game of Quasar. After listening to the rules of no running, no bodily contact and both hands on your weapon at all time's the Troop engaged itself in the bloodiest and most riotous game imaginable, managing to break all the rules within the first thirty seconds. The Green Team was seen skirmishing up the stairs and along the corridors using cunning and good tactics. The Red Team having neither of the aforementioned used brute force and bulk to assault. Bruised and exhausted we left an hour later dripping with sweat and ready for a pint or eight.

With the release of the F board, congrats to **Sigs Andy** 'Conan' **Day, Chris** 'Got an opinion' **Kirkman, Phil** 'Psycho' **Smith, Dave** 'Brigadier' **Marlor** and don't forget **Dave** 'Lesser spotted' **Shepherd** (hint to MCM Div who must have forgotten him) for being selected for promotion. Congratulations also go out to **LCpl** 'Boggy' **Marsh** and his wife **Ruth** on the birth of their bouncing little boy **Charlie** ... about time you became responsible for something. The Troop also welcomes into the fold **LCpl Gaz** 'Spud' **Evans** from 16 Air Assault Bde and **Sig Jo** 'Blodwin' **Owens** straight out of the factory. We welcome back from Op's **Cpl** 'Wills' **Williams, LCpl** 'Daz' **Daniels, Sig Matt** 'Naughty' **Mills** and last but by no means least **Sig** 'Taff (pen-pal)' **Charnley** who we believe will be putting himself forward for one of those fiction writers award and correspondence courses!! Never shaken, Never stirred - The Martini Boyz ... stag on wherever you are.

BRAVO TROOP - *by LCpl Bradbury*

Tp Comd **Lt Pete Hale**
Tp SSgt **Cpl Marrit**

Bravo Tp has seen a huge change in recent months. October saw the restructuring of the Squadron with the MAOT and Systems crews moving over to the newly reformed 220 Sig Sqn. This coincided with many of the Squadron personnel being on exercise, so it was a very busy, and for some a stressful couple of weeks for those lucky ones left behind. Overall the reformation passed off relatively uneventfully, except for being hard done by the SQMS department headed by **SSgt Tony** 'Evil' **Lee** and his sidekick **LCpl Andy** 'No' **Humble** who, after making us CES the vehicles until the cows came home, still think that us operators are under worked and overpaid (surely they must be wrong). The only thing left to do is to thank **Cpl John** 'JD' **Donnison** who yet again is doing a sterling job in organising a well-earned Troop function to get rid of the old coffers. We're sure he's on commission with the manager of 'The Fox and Dogs'.

HELLOS, GOODBYES AND CONUATULATIONS

Welcome to **Lt Peter Hale** as the new Troop OC, also hello to **LCpl Anne Wilson, Sig Dan Honour, Sig Andy Kennedy** and **Sig Scotty Megraw** all newly posted into the Troop. Congratulations go to both **Cpl Mark** 'Smudge' **Smith** and **Cpl Chaz** 'Rocky' **Charnley** on their recent promotion and also to **Sigs Claire Blades, Gus Sygrove, Chris Reed, Damon Chichester, Dan Crossley, Pete Sellers** and **Geoff Jackson** for coming off the board - the beers will be greatly appreciated.

EXERCISE RED BEAUFIGHTER III - *by LCpl Dunbavand*

The culmination of Regimental level training for the year. All went smoothly with the exception of **FofS Mark Todd** and his team of technicians running around fixing all types of equipment. Eventually, with most dets fully working we deployed to Longmoor Training Area for further training at Squadron level. This proved to be an eye-opener for the newer members of the Troop who had never worked with their respective dets before. All aspects of deployment were covered from basic det drills to counter-surveillance. The counter-surveillance lesson given by **RSM Al Jenkins** opened everyone's eyes to the threat from equipment like OTIS and CWS. The benefits of the Mk7 cam net compared to the Mk5 were shown to all concerned, although **Sig** 'Monotone/Private Pile' **Masters** did become a little confused with the Mk6! Following the work-up training the Troop deployed into field locations to exercise our new Con Ops in support of 16 AA Bde as we moved into the Regimental phase of the exercise. All went according to plan in the main with very few major problems. Many thanks go to the MoD Police for locking both vehicles of the 14RA in at Keevil airfield after assuring the brick commander **LCpl Marc** 'DB' **Dunbavand** that the gate would be left open. After many frantic calls on the net the RAF finally came through and opened the gate. Unfortunately for the CO, **Lt Col John Terrington,** and the RSM, **WO1 (RSM) Al Jenkins,** the message about the airfield being active never reached them. If a video camera had been at hand the film would be on its way to 'You've been framed' already! The look on their faces as the slow moving train in front of them became an extremely low level Hercules on a night training flight as it rushed over them, narrowly missing them and the masts on the antenna field. All dets finally recovered back to barracks on the 25 November with many lessons learned, ready to be implemented on Red Beaufighter I in January 2000.

THE START OF A NEW MILLENNIUM - *by Sig Torode*

The start of the new year has been a hectic time for the Troop. Both 244 and 220 Squadrons arrived back to work to discover that both working hangers had been closed due to an asbestos hazard. So followed the next seven weeks of movement and disorder, until at the start of March the Squadron moved into their new hangers. It has however, not all been bad news. As a consequence for the first week we were not allowed to go anywhere near our vehicles, equipment or offices. This of course for some was a God send, with going on an extra weeks Christmas leave the only thing left to do! The others, however, who stayed behind were put to work moving offices and, once we were allowed near the hangers, moving vehicles and as much equipment as we could get our hands on. Things on the whole get worse before they get better and this was no exception. With exercises and inspections still proceeding, both Squadrons were forced to occupy an extremely old hanger with no lighting and worse still no heating. Thankfully the start of March saw the end of working in the cold and dark as 244 Sqn moved into an ex-Navy depot hanger. Our thoughts, however, do go out to 220 Sqn who are still relegated to the cold and dark. It is not all doom and gloom, we are delighted to gain a few more bodies to the Troop. A big welcome goes out to **Cpl Stu Stanway** recently arrived from 7 Sig Regt and **Sig Pete Simon** new from the factory. Congratulations must go to **LCpls Chichester, Blades, Jackson** and **LCpl Crossley** on their recent promotions. We would also like to say a big congratulations to **Stu Stanway** on his forthcoming marriage on 29 April - Good luck from all.

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Mike Lithgow MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Al Higgins**

MILLENNIUM WINDOW
ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, BRAMCOTE

Bramcote was a small village before the last World War. It was requisitioned in the late thirties and it became known as RAF Bramcote. Various Squadrons including a Polish Squadron flew from the base. In 1947 it became HMS *Gamecock* with the arrival of the Fleet Air Arms. The name was given since there were cockfights in this area during Victorian times. The Fleet Air Arm, transformed appropriately the former de-contamination building into the church, and gave it the name of St Nicholas. During this time they installed a pipe organ that they had shipped across from the Bermuda Dockyard. During their time in Bramcote they also installed three stained glass windows. One of which commemorated a naval pilot **Lt Mick Ryley** who was tragically killed in a flying accident in 1949. In 1959 the Junior Leaders Regiment Royal Artillery was formed in Bramcote, and the name was changed to Gamecock Barracks. They worshipped initially in the church, which they had inherited from the Fleet Air Arms. It started to show wear and tear in the mid-sixties, and it was planned to have a new church built.

The new church of St Nicholas was opened by the then Chaplain General, **the Venerable Archdeacon J. R. Youens QHC.**, on 24 November 1968. The three naval windows and the pipe organ were re-installed into the new church, where they have remained since. The Junior Leaders Regiment Royal Artillery remained in the Barracks till 1992. In the intervening years nine more stained glass windows were added. There were a series of six windows, which depicted the life of David. These were placed on the West side of the church. It told the story of David from his anointing by Samuel to the birth of Solomon. This final window has a figure in swaddling clothes in it. A stained-glassed window of St Barbara, the patron saint of the Royal Artillery, was also placed in the west side. To commemorate the time the Junior Leaders were in the Barracks, another window was placed with a bugler dressed in the band uniform. Another window was installed called the Goschen window, commemorating **Capt J. A. Goschen MC**, RHA. He was lost at sea on 5 December 1941. This was removed, when the Junior Leaders Royal Artillery left, and is now in Larkhill.

In 1992, 30th Signal Regiment moved into the barracks from Blandford. The church initially did not have any memorabilia of the Royal Signals. It was decided to have a Millennium Window to acknowledge the Regiment. It was planned to place the window in the empty space left by the Goschen Window. This was subsequently designed and placed in the church after the Chaplain General had kindly given us his permission. In the centre of the window is a 501, which the Regiment felt would be significant. On the top was the Royal Signals badge. It then incorporated the badges of the four Squadrons (250 (Gurkha) Sig Sqn, 256 Sig Sqn, 258 Sig Sqn and Support Sqn). The Support Squadron's badge had the emblem of the Alderney Island. The People of Alderney had given the Regiment the Freedom of the Island. The final image was the white swan, which is the symbol of the Worshipful Company of Dyers, who have adopted the Regiment.

On 17 December 1999, as part of the Regiment's Carol Service, the window was dedicated by the Chaplain General, **the Rev. Dr. V. Dobbin, QHC, MA, MTh, PhD, DD**, who also preached the sermon. At the service were guests from Mary Anne Evans Hospice.

(L-R): The Chaplin (Rev G Alex Potts), the Chaplin General (the Rev Dr V Dobbin), the CO and the OCF(RC) Sister Anne-Marie Eden

WELCOME TO THE NEW TROOP COMMANDERS

The Regiment would like to welcome **2Lt's Lucy** 'Crazy Legs' **Pim, Chris** 'Orphan' **Smith** and **Blaydon** 'Did we hit that sir?' **Morris**. Their initial performance was hardly encouraging as they managed to write off the OC LAD's 'rally car' with a CVR(T) within their first week when they should have been doing CO's PT. Needless to say they looked very smart in their Service Dress as they were welcomed into the Regiment by the Officers' Mess!

Did we hit that sir?....Uhh Yeh I think we did!

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. W. Cooper**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Tivey**

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Owen Finnie**
Flt Lt Paul Pearce
2Lt M-L Lucas
Tp SSgt **Sgt Gaz Shuck**

It's been a busy few months within the Troop, as the Squadron has come into its role of JTFHQ. We say farewell to **Capt Owen** 'Jump Ship' **Finnie**, who is leaving the shop floor for the delights of SHQ and his new role of '2 Ice Cream' of the Squadron. We welcome **Flt Lt Paul** 'Crab' **Pierce**, as new Troop OC, who since arrival has ensured he lives up to the Regiment's globe trotting stereotype by his 'visits' to both Senelis, France and Tampa, Florida. We say goodbye to **Sgt Dave** 'Condor moment' **Bennet**, who is leaving to become an Information Systems SNCO in Bulford, and congratulate him on his selection to Staff Sergeant. We greet **Sgt Gaz** 'Chair Borne' **Shuck** and **2Lt M. L.** 'Limited Capability' **Lucas** to the big happy family. Elements of the Troop were involved with the French NEO Exercise in Senelis. **Flt Lt Paul** 'Failed Pilot' **Pierce** led a small team consisting of **Cpl** 'Mac (part time) Sergeant' **MacDonald, Cpl** 'Teachers Pet' **Ashton, Cpl** 'Slim - Steve McQueen' **Scott** and **LCpl** 'Globe Trotter' **Taylor**. The team was integrated with the French Signals unit, and was involved with both Airborne and Amphibious exercise play in addition to the daily red wine intake. The Troop is currently preparing for Ex Cobb Ring, the inter-operability Ex with the American JCSC in Tampa, Florida. Seven members of the Troop are deploying to Tampa under the command of **Flt Lt Paul** 'Blue Boy' **Pierce**, whilst the remainder of the Troop man the Bramcote end under the command of **2Lt M. L.** 'Grounded' **Lucas.**

BRAVO TROOP – OPERATION BARWOOD – MOZAMBIQUE

On 29 February 2000, whilst the politicians were deciding what to do, and the South African Air Force had captured the imagination of the world's media, **Cpl** 'Richie Bouffant' **Hay** and a small team from JTFHQ, made their way silently towards Mozambique. Their mission was to access and prepare the way for any UK force that might deploy. 24hrs later this was decided and the task fell to Bravo Tp to provide the expeditionary communications package and strategic links back to the UK. Having been prepared for both Op Spearhead and Op Bell the team jumped at the possibility of a tasking that might deploy further than the camp gates.

After a busy night, a team of seven, headed by **Lt John** 'Part-time Captain' **Dagless** and **Cpl Mark** 'It's only sunburn' **Allen**, were on their way to Mozambique, with an in-theatre HF Wotan package (Wotan having been in the Regiment for less than 24hrs), and a number of Inmarsat Terminals. Unfortunately no one remembered to tell the South Africans this. After being detained for 24hrs in a 4 star hotel at Johannesburg we were back on our way, a fact **Sig Tom** 'This is too good to be true' **Beerling** found hard to adjust to, camming up ready for dinner. Though most of the team had worked on humanitarian Operations before in Albania, no one could have imagined just how poor Mozambique would be. Especially those from 21 Sig Regt who remained in Hoedspruit, South Africa, with **LCpl** 'Scottie - where's my PIE' **Cooper**, helping to man the Wotan link. The RAF were also disappointed, as they could not get pictures of themselves in the press saving lives. They did however provide a valuable taxi service for the media on the off chance that someone might have been stuck up a tree.

The package we deployed was flexible in nature and had to provide a robust network for the staff to operate. This was clearly shown with the arrival of the RFA Fort George as **LCpl Bishnu** and **Sig Dickie Davis** deployed up country to meet her at Beira. Having helped to provide immediate humanitarian aid, and with the infrastructure improving within Mozambique the team recovered to South Africa for a few days R & R at the Kruger National Park. It only remained for **Sig Dan** 'I'll have my photo with that wild elephant' **Shore** to nearly upset the largest lady in town.

CHARLIE TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Lucy Pimm**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Adam Yafai**

The whirl of events continues for Charlie Tp as the year gets under way. The team is under a lot of change with the arrival of **2Lt Lucy Pim** as Troop OC, and the promotion of **Sgt Phil Joyce** to Troop Staff Sergeant - congratulations on coming off the board. **SSgt Adam Yafai** is now preparing himself for the role of Sergeant Major at ATR Arborfield, having been Troop Commander for the past three months - many thanks for all your hard work with the Troop and good luck from us all in your new post. Congratulations to **Sig Clarke** for being the sole winner in the Regimental Boxing against 29 Regt RLC - a hard and well fought fight. Welcome back to **Cpl Hay**, who has just returned from Op Barwood in Mozambique. Well done to **Sig Shaw, Sig Powell** and **Sig Niven** for surviving Ex Arduous Cygnet - having been spoilt by Sennybridge's three day summer with blazing sunshine, they were rewarded with rain and snow for the field part of the exercise that is the norm for that part of Wales! A special mention to **Sig Shaw** for his ingenious tactics during the final attack that took even the CO by surprise! As we prepare for Ex Argon Mercury, a month long JFHQ exercise to Ghana (life's hard!), we are keeping the new Troop OC well away from any vehicles, wind up or no wind up. The driving skills of **2Lt Lucy Pim** and **2Lt Chris Smith** (Delta Tp) in CVRT's were rather dubious. Let nothing be said about those of **2Lt Blaydon Morris** (Lima Tp) who crashed into the Regiment's prized rally car whilst in command - 'Did we hit that Sir?' was the comment! The CO listened to the tales of woe and then with a wry grin welcomed them to the Regiment!

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. E. Swindells**
SSM **WO2 M. Webb**

The Squadron Headquarters has been spread equally between the Balkans and Bramcote over the last few months while E Tp beds into the 250 Sig Sqn space in Kosovo and Bosnia. This hasn't stopped a whole host of promotions however, so many congratulations go to **WO2 (SSM) Miles** 'Competitive Dad' **Webb, WO2 (YofS) Jim** 'I think I'll wear civvies today' **Knight** and **SSgt (FofS) Sue** 'Just married' **Spencer**. Congratulations also go to **Sgt Stu** 'Shiny head' **Fidler** and **Sgt Pete** 'Do you think I'll have to work harder as an SQMS?' **Crawford** for their selection for promotion to Staff Sergeant. As if that was not enough, **LCpl** 'Then Sig' **Armitage** and **Sig Climpson** pulled off First and Second on the CO's Cadre Course for which many congratulations are due! Well done to you all.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Chris Smith**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Gaz Middleton**

The Troop would like to say a hearty farewell to **Capt Teri Downes** and **Sgt Gaz Middleton**, who have moved on to pastures new in the quaint Georgian town that is Blandford. We also say goodbye to **LCpl Dave Kyle** and **Sig Trish Walker-Scott** (we wish them all the best in JCUNI), farewell to **Sig Andy Cole** (who is off to 101 Log Sup) and good luck to **Sig John Burke** (who is off to the world they call 'Civilian'). A big hello goes out to **2Lt Chris Smith** fresh from Blandford, **Sgt Billy** 'The' **Kid** from the training wing, **Cpl Lee Glaves** from AFCENT and **Cpl Pete Sykes** from 14 Sig Regt (EW). On our return from East Timor the Troop has been busy with day to day troop tasks. We have also exercised with 16 Air Assault Bde where our three Inmarsat teams were:

Team 1 'The Phoenix'	**LCpl Jamie Roderick** and **Sig Richie Maybank**
Team 2	**Sig Neil Climpson** and **Sig Jamie Cassells**
Team 3	**Sig Andy** 'Crypto' **Cole**

All found themselves tabbing around South Cerney! The 501 dets Kakhi and Quince were successfully deployed, contributing to the overall command and control for the commander. The exercise was certainly deemed a success! A few weeks on and Delta Tp finds itself preparing for Op Bell (the standby crew to deploy to Antigua should Montseratt's Volcano erupt). Suffice it to say that the Troop is very busy in preparation but despite our frenzied activities we pass on our congratulations to **LCpl Mark Kadlec** and **LCpl Matt Green** on their recent promotion. Very well done to you both, although we all know that one of you only got promoted as the CO feared for his life after the Regimental Boxing night!

ECHO TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Emma** 'Big Fish' **Rae**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Doc - Utilize' **Halliday**

From the 14 February 2000 E Tp, 258 Sig Sqn became the Balkan Satcom Troop - its mission is to provide strategic Satcom communications from various locations in Bosnia and Kosovo. There are a handful of us that are the Troop's Reserves and this rear party is currently spread between Delta and Foxtrot Tps. The rear party consists of **Cpl Ray** 'Meercat' **Jopling, Cpl Pete Watson, LCpl Stu** 'Bubbles' **Engelby, Sigs Gav Williams, Kelly Maclean, Martin Hannam, Gav Dowling, Graham Clutton** and **Duncan** 'Monkey' **West**. This rear party will 'minimize' upon deployment of Skippy's children – ie: the crew of MOST4 Kangaroo on 4 April 2000 to Pristina. The Troop has witnessed the departure of **LCpl Dave** 'Squawker' **Walker** to JCU(NI) and **Cpl/Mr Aide** 'Ride the poonarni' **Lowe** and **Sig/Mr Martin Parr** to Civilian Strasse - we all wish you the best of luck!!

501 Purple - Since deployment in January 2000 the crew has changed a number of times. The original Det 2IC, **LCpl Michelle** 'Dog rough spice' **Black**, was sent back to UK mit child and was replaced by **LCpl M. J.** 'Sleeping Beauty' **Holt** who joins us for a cool 29 days. Additionally, **Sig Dion** 'Celine' **Fotheringham** has joined the det for a month before moving on to the sunnier climate of Kosovo, medal collecting. But **Sgt** 'Big Gay **Al' Barker, Cpl Tony** 'Pan Balkan!' **Gallagher, Cpl Gav** 'I'm Professional' **Wallace, LCpl Jamie** 'Ladies Man' **Slade** and **Sig John** 'Kebab' **Lawrence** remain in the Banja Luka Metal Factory.

The Det has gone about its business of conducting fallback plans and providing comms to the Tac HQ, as well as the backup to all satellite maintained COMMCEN in the theatre. We have deployed to Glamoc Ranges to work with the Highland Gunners; Gorjni Vakuf; and Mrkonij Grad. We have tried to deploy to Sarajevo a number of times but it seems BLMF can't operate without the 501 det being in its hangar and every time we get there, we get called back a couple of hours later! The extra time has been invested on the volley ball court and we now hold the title of 'BLMF champions of the world'. **Cpl Tony** 'Big arms' **Gallagher** has also been helping to organize a spot of rugby training in time for the sunny weather and some matches in Tuzla and Zagreb are now on the cards. The det adopted a ginger tint for a while as the lads decided to go blonde in the name of English rugby. But it went a bit wrong and the stench of cats and left handedness was obvious for a couple of weeks. The arrival of the rest of the Troop into the two theatres means that the det has had some company in Sarajevo and Kosovo. We have received visits from the OC Sqn and OC Troop as well as various dignitaries from different countries and civilian companies. The det is now looking forward to a period of R'n'R and testing the fallback plans to Sarajevo (third time lucky!), Split (gutted!), Gorjni Vakuf and to fly through the last 6 months of this tour.

MOST3 Cat - Even though the Det flew out to HQ SFOR, Sarajevo on Valentine's Day, everyone was in high sprits (however **Sig Adam** 'I miss my girlfriend' **Toner** was, funnily enough, missing his girlfriend!). Now 38 days into our tour (not that we're counting!) we have made numerous important changes: we have re-positioned the Sky dish; **LCpl** 'Carpenter' **Rup** very skillfully made a new weapon rack; **Sig Mark** 'Can I borrow your Freelander?' **Vinten** is building a MT Empire and a patio; and we've completely re-cabled the equipment achieving red and black separation. While the Det has been doing these improvements, **Cpl Jeffers** 'Silent Hill' **Ford**, the illustrious Det Comd, is attempting to complete the game on his play-station. The big question is will he finish it before the long-awaited move of HQ SFOR from Ilidza to Butmir. The Det welcomes **LCpl Caz** 'Must go to the gym' **Burrows** who we are sure will keep a watchful eye on our fitness and bids farewell to **LCpl Kate** 'I haven't chundered' **Deal** who departs back to sunny Bramcote.

501 RED - The past month has been a very busy one for the lads of the Balkan Satcom Troop's 'teeth arm'. The majority of the time has been spent on insuring that the detachment was fully equipped and maintained so that this strategic asset can be deployed in a tactical role with HQ MNB (C). The det has deployed into the field with the 7 Armd Bde HQ for a 48-hour exercise and enjoyed the experience of deploying in an operational theatre. A special mention for **LCpl Aaron** 'ISM' **Donnelly** who has invested a lot of extra time in ensuring the new 501 Syscon vehicle was ready for the following deployment. On the technical side, **Cpl** 'Locky' **Whitelock** has made enough cables to re-wire Whitehall. A big temporary 'hello' to **Sig Lee Simmons** who is currently doing a two day attachment with the Scots Dragoon Guards and will be buying us a crate for his name mentioned in two sets of Det's notes this issue. Finally, the Det would like to congratulate **SSgt** 'Backhand' **Halliday** and **Sgt** 'Lightening' **Plant** on their winning the inter-brigade table-tennis doubles championships, well done.

MOST3 Ibex/MOST4 Monkey - The crew of MOST4 Monkey deployed into theatre with a view of having a quiet life away from the Brigade and working at the Pristina APOD. It became apparent that the actual decision of where and when the APOD task would begin was somewhere in the dim and distant future. This left the crew of MOST4 Monkey temporally manning MOST3 Ibex in Pristina, HQ MNB (C). **Cpl** 'Paddy - Tpr I' **Irwin**, the ever devoted Ibex tech, has spent a large part of his time getting involved with the move of the Brigade up to the 'ever falling behind schedule' TFA. **Cpl Lindsay** 'Please let me change the shift rosta again' **Howson** spends her days in Syscon awaiting someone to release her to the APOD, maybe she'll be a civie before then as she has only nine months to go! **LCpl** 'Pickle' **Nicol** has a good time wielding his iron rod to his shifties, although the constant days followed by constant nights may be affecting this young fellow! **Sig** 'Simmo' **Simmons** has, at the moment been, loaned to the 501 Red crew whilst **Sig Andy Doherty** is back at the Regiment on the cadre course. Don't worry 'Simmo' if we do go to the APOD we'll grab you on the way out and take you with us! Sig 'Olaf' Hall is trying his hardest to be as gun-ho as possible whilst maintaining his genes of course. Then finally we must not forget our MOST Monkey det tech sitting back in the Regiment waiting the APOD go-ahead. Yep! You've got the right idea **Cpl Ian** 'Cush' **Cushing**, stay exactly where your are.

FOXTROT TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt** 'Mogs' **Southern**
Tp Sgt **Sgt** 'Kiddy' **Fidler**

It has been a busy period for Foxtrot Tp. Since Christmas the main focus has been exercise Cygnet Ocean to Diego Garcia. In the midst of our preparations we have had the usual arrivals and departures. A warm welcome therefore to **LCpl** 'Smelly' **Dennison, LCpl** 'Bergan packer' **Stewart** and sad farewells to **Cpl** 'GI' **Payton, LCpl** 'No fight' **Howard** and **Sig** 'Loads-a-money' **Anderson.**

EXERCISE CYGNET OCEAN

The weeks of preparation for the Troop level exercise in Diego Garcia finally drew to a close on 9 March as we departed Brize Norton for sunnier climes. After three days on our private Hercules and several attempts at the ultimate accolade, the 'Golden Blanket ' award (won by **Sig** 'Gettin' down with my bad self' **Langford**) we finally arrived on a thin and tropical strip of land in the middle of the Indian Ocean. The initial set up of the Exercise was in relentless rain, which seemed to contradict the promise of glorious weather, but things soon hotted up! Overall, the communications aspect of the exercise was very successful, providing ample opportunity for one to one training time on the VSC 501(E) det and the TRC 522. Attempts to run a 3-way JOCOMEX with HMS *Invincible* and 3 Cdo Log were not so fruitful, although **Sigs** 'We've tried everything' **Lowe** and **King** certainly benefited from a return to antenna and propagation basics. A very enjoyable day was also spent cross training with the Royal Marine Detachment out on the Island, part of Naval Party 1002. A sniper Observation Stand, CQB lane and Jungle Ambush drills were followed by a hair raising trip in the Light assault boats around the Lagoon, resulting in a man overboard - well done **LCpl** 'For Real' **Lane**. The exercise was thoroughly enjoyed and would not have been possible had we not been so superbly hosted by the British Naval Party 1002. Many thanks to all those who were involved in making the Exercise such a success.

EXERCISE SPARTAN HIKE 2000

At 0900 on the 7 January the Regiment's 'finest' skiers departed for Serre Chevalier, France to compete in the Divisional Ski Championships. Fortunately for those of us not so experienced at racing techniques, there was a week of race training prior to hurling ourselves down the slopes. We had one female and one male team (four in each) and the range of skiing ability was quite large. Fortunately we had our resident Ski Instructor, **Cpl** 'Does he do anything other than ski?' **Foster** who was able to bring out the racing demon, particularly in **LCpl** 'Freestyle' **Astridge** who must be commended for an absolutely outstanding performance for someone who had only recently begun to ski. Others in the team were **Lt** 'Nice new skis' **Southern, 2Lt** 'Retro' **Lucas, Cpl** 'Racing Snowplough' **Mason, Cpl** 'Big GWA' **Rawlings, LCpl** 'Little GWA' **Dranesfield** and **LCpl** 'Jesaaaaaas' **Nicol.** Despite some less than well placed initial seedings, all went on to improve throughout the racing, showing guts and determination to do well, and not wipe out at 60 mph. Some members of the team did return victorious, or at least notorious; **Cpl Lucy Mason** received a Chief of Alpine medal for completing a race with only one contact lens in and **Cpl Stu Foster** successfully qualified for the Army Alpine Ski Championships. Well done to all those who competed and good luck in the future to any budding racers the experience enthused.

250 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj R. P. Wilson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Chandrabahadur Gurung**

FINAL FAREWELL TO THE GURKHA MAJOR QUEEN'S GURKHA SIGNALS MAJOR(QGO) GOVINDE GURUNG

by LCpl Kumar Limbu

On March 20 March 2000, QG Signals paraded in Bramcote Barracks to tow out **Maj Govinde Gurung** in the traditional way. The GM Sahib arrived at pre-arranged spot outside the gymnasium at 1345hrs. There, two rows of mixed ranks were waiting with garlands and bouquet of flowers. One by one, GM Sahib took the garlands and flowers with friendly chats. Then he climbed up the at the back of the decorated vehicle and stood there. He was then towed away by SNCOs and Officers lead by Comd QG Signals **Lt Col M. Lithgow MBE** and the GM des, **Capt (QGO) Nabindrabikram Gurung** and the pipe and drums. All available members of the Regiment were standing on either side of road from gymnasium to the guard room. Personnel who were standing on either side of the road saluted GM Sahib for the last time showering with flowers and cheering him up by shouting 'GM Sahib ki Jaya'. In front of the guardroom, the GM Sahib inspected the guard of honor with the didis/bahinis (families), children and of course some interested British families on looking. After that **Capt (QGO) Navindrabikram Gurung** was officially commissioned as the new GM. Cameras from all angles were seen flashing to catch the glimpse of a very sad day. **Mrs Sabitri Gurung**, wife of **Maj (QGO) Govinde Gurung**, displayed her talent with bravery to break the deep silence by dancing and singing, with mixed emotions, a song called '……pheri bheta hola ki nahola' (will we meet again or not), encouraging other didies to sing along for the last time. At 1425hrs GM Sahib's car rolled out of the camp and towards Heathrow.

'The Final Farewell'
The Comd QG Signals saying farewell
to Maj (QGO) Govinde Gurung while the new Gurkha Major (GM)
Navindrabikram Gurung looks on

NEW ERA OF A MILLENNIUM - *by Sig Suresh Limbu*

On 31 December 1999, most of 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn personnel currently serving in Kosovo apart from those few personnel on shift duty gathered for the Millennium Party organized by the HQ MNB (C) Sig Sqn at Pristina University. Readers might be aware that 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn deployed to Kosovo on Op Agricola with approximately 80 personnel in the middle of July last year in order to provide satellite communications for various multi-national Brigades within the theatre. This function was a very special occasion for everybody as we were asked to arrange curry for the night. We had our chef, **Cpl Bhupendra**, serving in the theatre then, so it was not a problem. The hot buffet was colorful as displayed was Gurkha, Chinese and Mediterranean dishes. Having had these delicious dishes, the main program began. Each and everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves, as they were about to enter a new millennium. Around 8pm the karaoke and disco began, people were singing, drinking and dancing. The whole atmosphere was really good. Later on, the countdown by **Brig Pearson** (who was the Comd HQ MNB (C) as well as the Colonel of the Regiment RGR) began, people could not wait to exchange greetings. This memorable happy New Year party ended at around one in the morning. I hope this new millennium brings peace, progress and prosperity to everyone.

'Happy New Year'

OPERATION SCARAB/APPOLYON COMMS DISPLAY

by Sig Dipak

X-ray TP of 250 Gur Sig Sqn, presently holding the crucial commitment of Op Scrarab/Appolyon, which is a task of two and six hours NTM to an area of emergency to provide secure comms to military users. However, this assignment being a military aid to civilian powers, we work alongside Automatic Weapons Establishment who also provides communication with its sophisticated installations. On 22-23 February 2000, we had a joint display of our equipment and installations, at Kineton. Ironically, our assets compared to theirs seemed very limited and less cost-effective, as a result, our comms were overshadowed. This was exactly the sole motive of putting up this display to put forth the fact to our visiting VIP's consisting of many influential high ranking officers. **Maj R Dean** from HQ Land and our Ops Officers, **Capt Aitken** co-ordinated the Comms display. All the visitors were very impressed by our display and are now more knowledgeable of what we can offer. Hopefully, we will see some changes in the near future, we wait and see.

'The Display Team'

REGIMENTAL BOXING NIGHT 22 MARCH 2000

Team training started on 1 February with 22 soldiers on the books and the fitness regime commenced in the mornings only with Wednesday afternoons put aside for skills and sparring.

It was originally planned to fight RMA Sandhurst but it became apparent that their final exercise would clash and unfortunately they could not provide a team. Negotiations then took place with 14 Sig Regt and 3 UK Div Sig Regt but, again neither could produce a team for the date required. Eventually the occasion was saved by the Royal Logistic Corps team who were busy preparing for their own competitions and had a large squad with many novice Grade 3 boxers under training. Full time training commenced on 1 March and within a week the team was down to 11 with the RLC expecting to match at least 9 fights. Eventually on the day seven fights were matched together with 1 Inter-Sqn bout which meant that unfortunately **Sig 'Jeff' Jeffers** and **LCpl 'Paul' Howard** did not get to fight. The evening began with a 'black and white' demonstration of the do's and don'ts of novice boxing with **WO2 (QMSI)** 'Martin -Big Bad Razor' **Blade** arriving on a motorcycle to **fight WO1 (YofS)** 'Andy - Mad Dog' **Campbell**. The remainder of the evening saw some very closely fought contests, particularly **Cpl 'Lee' O'Rourke, Sig** (now LCpl) 'Matt' **Green, Sig Gopal** and **LCpl 'Nick' Ryan**. The RLC select team generally proved to be more experienced throughout and the Regiment scored one victory with **Sig** (now LCpl) 'Nobby' **Clarke. LCpl Kamal** also won on points against **Sig** 'Louie' **Lewis** in the Inter-Sqn bout. Overall the evening was a huge success and provided a rare opportunity to get the Regiment together with a single focus. **LCpl 'Nick' Ryan** was nominated as the 'Best Loser' on the evening.

31st (CITY OF LONDON) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS - SOUTHFIELDS
CO **Lt Col Linda Harrison TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) John Gibson**

GOODBYE TO THE PERMANENT STAFF

It seems as though everyone is deserting RHQ at the same time! Firstly, farewell to **SSgt Craig Bruce**, PSI HQ Sqn, who deployed to Kosovo on 30 March 2000. Secondly, farewell to **SSgt Mick Johnson**, PSI Mil Trg, who has embarked upon his IS Op course. Thirdly, it's farewell to the Yeoman, **WO2 (YofS) Si Tyler,** who departs on promotion to 21 Sig Regt. Finally, farewell to the Adjt, **Capt Mel Rayner**, who deploys to Kosovo on 25 April as SO2 Comms in Pristina. Needless to say, there was a lunch in the traditional 31 Sig Regt (V) style to send them all off on their merry little way. A big thanks to **LCpl 'Babs' Cameron,** who produced a magnificent feast. As usual, lunch degenerated into an afternoon 'on the pop'. Thanks go to 'Smashy and Nicey', aka the YofS and FofS, for providing the entertainment for the afternoon, boys you need to get out more! What was the RSM up to with that melon ……..?!!

FLEET/ARMY HALF MARATHON CHAMPIONSHIPS SUNDAY 19 MARCH 2000

On a beautiful Sunday morning, whilst others were swanning around at Longmoor supporting the Regimental Teams in the Courage Trophy, the HQ LONDIST mil skills competition, the Adjt, **Capt Mel Rayner** and PSI 83 Sig Sqn, **SSgt 'Dez' Eldridge** were running hard on the Fleet Half Marathon. The Fleet event incorporates the Army and Inter Services Championships. **Capt Rayner** had a good run finishing Third in the Army Ladies Championships in a time of 1hr 31 mins. This put her in the Army team that thrashed the Navy and RAF in the Inter Services. **SSgt Eldridge** paid the price for setting off a bit too quickly, but still managed a commendable time.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON - SOUTHFIELDS TAC
Sqn Comd **Maj Alec Ferguson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Chrissie Stanton (retd!!)**

THE GOODBYES, CONGRATULATIONS & FAREWELLS

Firstly, goodbye to the Squadron PSI, **SSgt Craig Bruce**, whose outgoing, enthusiastic approach to training the TA will be sorely missed by all. He has been an inspiration to the Squadron (although an interpreter to translate his Jockinese into English might have been of use occasionally!!) The whole Squadron wishes him the best during his six month tour in Kosovo. He will be working with the Adjt who deploys in April – good luck **Craig** and don't let her pick on you too much! The Squadron also sends best wishes to his wife **Pamela** and daughters **Leona** and **Laurie-Ann**, good luck for the future and thanks for all your support.

Secondly, goodbye to a handful of TA WO2's: **WO2 (SSM) Chrissie Stanton** and **WO2** 'Ruddy' **Harding** have taken the difficult decision to hang up their TA boots. The Squadron wish them all the very best for their future endeavours and hope that life as a complete civvie suits them!! **WO2 (MTWO) Sheila Billing** is retiring from the Regiment and the Corps and transferring to 135 Topo Sqn RE. Good luck in your new job, we hope that it all works out for you. The Squadron would like to thank all three of them for their hard work with the Squadron and Regiment over a combined total of years that is more than they would probably care to remember! (OK… it's over 50!)

Farewell to big Col, **Colin Wilson,** the Sqn AO, who retired from the civil service (after eight years, which had followed 39 years Army service!!) in March 2000. You will be missed by all the Squadron personnel and we hope that both you and **Sheila** have an enjoyable retirement, you have both certainly deserved it. Before he left, **Colin** was justly awarded the GOC's Certificate of Commendation. Many congratulations and well done to you **Colin**, and thanks for all the work that you've put in over the years. Congratulations also go to **SSgt Loxley Trype** AGC (SPS) who was awarded the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate of Meritorious Service on 8 March 2000. **SSgt Trype** is an extremely loyal and dedicated member of the Squadron and thoroughly deserves this recognition of his efforts.

HQ Sqn AO, Mr Colin Wilson receives his GOC London District's Certificate of Commendation from the Commanding Officer, Lt Col Linda Harrison

SERGEANTS' MESS DINNER – SATURDAY 1 APRIL 2000

The Sergeants' Mess held a dinner on Saturday 1 April 2000 to dine out **WO2 Sheila Billing, WO2 Brenda Prater, WO2 Ruddy Harding** and **WO2 Chrissie Stanton.** With the exception of **WO2 Billing** who is transferring to 135 Topo Sqn RE, the rest have decided to hang up their TA boots for a variety of reasons. The Regiment wishes them all good luck in their future endeavours and hopes that they will all keep in touch with the Regiment through the Regimental Association. The RSM, **WO1 John Gibson**, would like to thank his numerous bunch of helpers for making the evening possible.

LANCE CORPORAL COX SAVES THE DAY!

The Commanding Officer would like to thank **LCpl Chris Cox** for standing in as CO's driver whilst her Regular Driver, **LCpl Dave** 'Sideburns' **Wynne** was away on his Class 1 course. **LCpl Cox** did an admirable job and only forgot to pick up the CO once!!

41 (PRINCESS LOUISE'S KENSINGTON) SIGNAL SQUADRON COULSDON TAC
Sqn Comd **Maj Lankester**
SSM **WO2 Watson**

HELLOS, GOODBYES AND DINNERS!

On Saturday 19 February, Officers and Sergeants from the Squadron sat down to a combined Mess dinner to dine out **Maj Steve Baker**, our ex OC, **SSgt** 'Nobby' **Clark**, our ex chief clerk, and **SSgt (YofS) Steve McAuliffe**, our ex Sqn Yeoman. The dinner was the first combined mess occasion for a while at the Squadron, and the evening proved a huge success. The Officers' Mess presented **Maj Baker** with a bronze statuette of a Royal Signals Soldier, and the Sergeants' Mess presented him with a framed picture of the Royal Signals in action. He in turn presented the Squadron with a set of Royal Doulton tea cups and saucers for use when the Squadron has visitors. He talked with fondness of his days as OC 41 (PLK) Sig Sqn. He will be greatly missed, and we wish him well in his new posting. The Sergeants Mess also presented pictures to **SSgt Clark** and **SSgt McAuliffe**. Both made a valuable contribution to the Squadron in their time with us, and we hope that full time civilian life suits them both well. With the departure of **SSgt Steve McAuliffe**, the Squadron has also had to say goodbye to his wife **Cpl Kerry McAuliffe**, so we are feeling his loss greatly. Good luck to her in full time civilian life too.

PRINCESS LOUISE'S KENSINGTON DINNER

The Combined Annual of the AER and PLK Officers' Dining Clubs dined in the Duke of York's Central Mess a week later, on Friday 25 February. **Col Donald Crawford,** ex CO 31 Sig Regt (V) presided over a gathering of some 50+ dining club members both old and new. The dinner is always a great occasion for the younger serving officers to meet the old and the bold (or just the retired young!!) who have previously served with the Squadron. Invariably some very interesting stories tend to get brought up around the dinner table! It was good to see **Maj Bob Davies**, an ex OC of 41 (PLK) Sig Sqn, and **Maj Brian McAneny**, currently the Tffc Offr but also an ex PSAO of the Squadron. The CO, **Lt Col Linda Harrison** was the Guest of Honour, and she gave her annual State of the Regiment speech.

SQUADRON ADVENTURE TRAINING WEEKEND

The Squadron deployed to 14 Sig Regt in Pembrokeshire for a weekend of adventure training in the middle of March. We drove down late on Friday night, so it was with surprise that so many people were up and ready to go early on Saturday morning. (Somebody thought it funny to forget to tell the female officers the whereabouts of the cookhouse, but they hadn't accounted for **Lt Beth Pollard's** keen sense of smell. She could smell bacon frying anywhere)! We were offered a choice of four sports, and then divided into four groups. Group one went deep sea fishing, and **LCpl Maria Traynor** proved what an adept fisher-woman she was by demonstrating that all you had to do was put out a line, and the fish couldn't wait to bite it. She would have had us all amazed at her expertise until she then asked, 'What do I do with it now? Something's pulling on my line!' The second group went rock climbing for the day, tackling those Welsh rocks as though they were mere pebbles… The other two groups spent a half day kayaking, and a half day sailing.

The Fighting 41st Kayak Display Team!

I would recommend those of a fragile disposition not to witness **Sgt Nick Tuck** attempting to get into a wetsuit. Laughed?…. We nearly fell out of our kayaks! Several people did in fact manage to fall out of their kayaks – not least of all **LCpl Paul Starbrook**, whose face was an absolute picture as he emerged from the chilly Welsh water, screaming and cursing. It is slightly concerning though that **LCpl Starbrook** is due to participate in our Regimental Expedition later this year, ex Cockney Mackenzie – canoeing along the river Mackenzie in Canada in June. Let's hope he learns how to keep his canoe upright before then!

LCpl Warren O'Driscoll posing in his kayak!!

The evening entertainment consisted of a bowling challenge laid down by the Sqn PSI, **SSgt Alfie Kirkham**. He proved his bowling prowess to the Squadron, which merely showed that he had obviously spent all his time in the bowling alley when posted to 14 Sig Regt! He expected to do the same on the Sunday morning during our Annual Squadron Go-Karting Grand Prix, but was cruelly robbed from a place in the finals by the tactical manoeuvering of **Lt Debs Speakman**. She decided that driving slowly around the middle of the track was better than risking a spin off and letting the PSI past her. The Grand Prix was won by **LCpl Liz Bray,** who received a bottle of bubbly for her efforts. Second place went to **LCpl Warren O'Driscoll**, and third place to **Lt Speakman.** (By default – it should have been **Sgt** 'Formula One' **Ian Mackay**, but he was robbed of his correct position due to a computer error).

NATIONAL TERRITORIAL ARMY DAY

As part of the National TA day the Squadron opened it's doors to the general public between 11am and 4pm on Saturday 25 March. The day was a great success, and we had over 100 visitors through the door. Members of the Normandy Veterans Association and the PLK Association visited us in order to meet the soldiers and view our modern equipment. The Normandy Veterans Association had their own fascinating stand in the drill hall, with model soldiers and artefacts from the Second World War, which proved very popular with visitors. Visitors were met by a host at a reception tent, and were then taken around the stands in a circuit. We had a working det on display with a JOCOMMEX link to HMS *Grafton.* They saw the Lanward vehicle, which had it's equipment dismounted and on display inside the drill hall. Visitors were able to talk over the net to a second radio detachment attending an Open Day in Croydon. Visitors were also shown stands on First Aid, NBC, field cooking, weapons, and all the equipment carried on an FFR det. 148 Cadet Det South West London Cadet Force had their own cadet recruiting stand, and hopefully managed to convince a few of the children visiting that they should join the Army cadets when they get older. 285 (Coulsdon and Purley) Sqn Air Cadets brought an airline cockpit with them, which also proved a big hit for the children who could clamber inside and pretend they were pilots!

SSgt Bob Stanton with potential new recruit Murray practising a spot of First Aid

We were visited by The Mayor of Croydon and members of Croydon Council. Our Commanding Officer, **Lt Col Linda Harrison,** arrived in the afternoon, to see children running round in NBC kit, and soldiers trying to work out which way round to hold a 94mm. (Not much change from a usual Tuesday night then!). **Brig Verey,** the soon to retire Brigadier TA on his final day in uniform, visited the Squadron and talked to the soldiers, and seemed very impressed with what he saw. Well done 41 Sqn!

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations go to **SSgt** 'Nobby' **Clerk**, QRVM who collected his medal from Buckingham Palace last week. He was rewarded for over 40 years service in the TA. He began his military career with National Service in 1958, and never looked back. He originally joined 41 Sig Regt, before we became 41 (PLK) Signal Squadron (and part of 31 Sig Regt), and has seen a fair few changes in his time. We wish him all the best in his retirement from the military.

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON – EASTBOURNE
Sqn Comd **Maj Brian Howe**
SSM **WO2 Godden**

COURAGE TROPHY COMPETITION – 18-19 MARCH 2000

The 56 Sig Sqn Courage Trophy Team
(L-R): (back row) Sig O'Sullivan, Lt Francis, OCdt Wood, Sig Baldwin,
(front row) Sig Hulin, Sig Power, LCpl Reader

This has been a very successful month for the Squadron with our Courage Trophy team winning the Courage Best Shield at Longmoor, narrowly beating the other Regimental Team from 83 Sig Sqn who finished second. The team, comprising **Lt Kieron Francis, OCdt Rob Wood, LCpl Rich Baldwin, LCpl Jo Reader, Sig Trish O'Sullivan, Sig Hulin** and **Sig Mark Power**, enjoyed the weekend. It was a proud moment indeed when they received the Shield and their winning tankards from the GOC London District, **Maj Gen Webb-Carter**. However, the moment was rather lost when a certain Officer Cadet saluted with his tankard in his right hand! Clonk! The victory was made even sweeter by the crate of beer that they each received, courtesy of Courage Breweries.

Sig Baldwin takes aim

GOC LONDIST, Maj Gen Webb-Carter
presents Lt Keiron Francis, 56 Sig Sqn,
with the Courage Best Shield Trophy

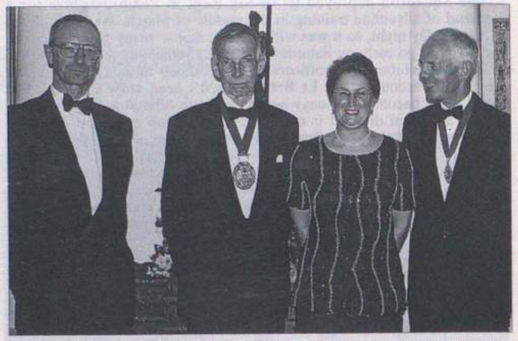
Meanwhile back in Eastbourne, **SSgt Willie Loch's** office has been undergoing a facelift and has now been repainted to match the 2IC's office. (Although he does not get the green velvet curtains to match!) He is also planning to have a bed that fold downs from the wall for all those late evenings and early mornings he keeps telling us about. He has recently taken delivery of the largest computer in the world, which he currently hides behind pretending to work.

SQUADRON TRAINING WEEKEND 18-19 MARCH 2000

The Squadron weekend in March was our first comms exercise of the new millennium and was an opportunity to dust of the cobwebs and get back to our core business - communicating. **Capt Anthony Lamb** (ex infanteer) commanded a Radio Tp in a tactical exercise for the first time. Once he realised that a R Signals 'O' Gp could be held in a CP and on chairs and did not necessarily need to be carried out in the prone position with bracken tucked in his helmet, things improved considerably for him. **LCpl Jo Bultler** and **Sgt Bob Cooper** provided advice and support as Det Comds. They too had taken the opportunity to pass on their knowledge to several signallers, who were also on their first exercise. **Sig** 'Yakety yak' **George** volunteered to provide jamming support should any be needed throughout the exercise and only quietened down when told that radio silence was in force. **Sig** '003 & a half' **Dalton** and his side kick **Sig Jenkins**, provided **LCpl Jo Butler** with the opportunity to develop her command and control skills in many ways over the weekend. All said and done, the purpose of the exercise was to practice individual and det skills in a tactical environment. This was achieved and robust communications to Dundee held throughout the exercise. During the weekend, the OC, **Maj Brian Howe** and the SQMS, **SSgt John Atherton** spent many hours wandering around inspecting the various trees that had fallen over the winter. In fact, it is true to say that the 'tree knowledge' of the OC is second to none. The question is – why were they so interested in fallen trees and logs?

OFFICERS DINING CLUB DINNER – 24 MARCH 2000

The Regimental Officers Dining Club met for the second time and enjoyed a sumptuous meal in grand surroundings at Innholders Hall in the City on Fri 24 Mar 00. The Dining Club is a relatively new concept. It meets annually and is an opportunity for officers both past and present to catch up on the news and gossip in the Regt. For the second year, the Worshipful Company of Innholders generously granted the use of their magnificent Hall for the dinner, so a big thank you to the Master! The Hon Col, **Maj Gen Bill Robins CB OBE**, presides over the dinner and delivered an after dinner speech of perfect proportion! Aside from the normal news he did say a few words of farewell to the Adjt, who departs the Regt in Apr. Fortunately for us, she wasn't given the opportunity to reply (we had to be out of the Hall by 2300 hrs!!). The Regt UPIO, **Lt Susie Sidwell**, was seen scurrying around the reception manhandling guests so she could get the desired snap. Roll on next year's dinner!



Hon Col, Maj Gen Bill Robins CB OBE, Master of the Worshipful
Company of Innholders, Dr Richard Glover,
CO 31 Sig Regt (V), Lt Col Linda Harrison
and Innholders Liaison Officer Mr Tim Wood

NATIONAL TA DAY – 25 MARCH 2000

Like so many TA Centres, we opened our doors on 25 March for National TA Day, and about 200 interested people passed through to see what we did. Several showed interest in joining, whilst the younger variety were fascinated by the kit and equipment, modelled by **Sig Steve Spilstead**, the older variety kept us entertained with all their war stories. Meanwhile, **OCdt Rob Wood** and **Sig Helen Matthews** were parked down in the pedestrianised area of the Arndale Centre in Eastbourne, passing out leaflets to anyone who looked approximately the right age to join. **Sig Matthews** had an even more tricky job as she was also trying to avoid being spotted by her pupils form the local school, without much success. Throughout the day, 'Hello, Miss,' was frequently heard from giggling teenagers! In the evening, we welcomed local councillors, employers and the CO and RSM for a VIP look at our stands and for a dinner, once again provided by **Sgt Steve Howell** and **Sgt Bob Shevels**. Whilst the day was a success in terms of highlighting what we do to the general public, we have yet to find out how successful it was in terms of recruiting.

83 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS) – WHITE CITY

Sqn Comd **Maj Julian Carmichael**
SSM **WO2 Bob Stevenson**

THE MOVE OF 83 SIGNAL SQUADRON FROM THE DUKE OF YORK'S HEADQUARTERS TO THE WHITE CITY TERRITORIAL ARMY CENTRE

Due to the implementation of the recent SDR, 83 Sig Sqn found itself on the road again. This time, from the plush surroundings of the Kings Road, Chelsea, to South Africa Road, White City.

The permanent staff and a few TA members of the Squadron, started to dismantle the Squadron brick by brick, working up to the date when we could start the move. By 20 March we were ready to go. However, White City TAC was not quite ready to receive us as the painters etc were still painting on the second coat of emulsion. Monday came and went still no move. Tuesday came and we were given the green light. Don't panic, don't panic came the cry from **Capt Dave Thomas,** the Squadron PSAO, like Jonesy from Dad's Army! Don't worry this is my fifth move in 16 years was the reply from the old war horse himself **SSgt Roy Smith** you should have been here for the Hammersmith move etc, etc and so on.....

The other slight administrative point of concern was that TAVRA London wanted us out by the weekend because there was a TA Open Day. So in the true spirit of the Squadron, we all cracked on. So few to move a Squadron's worth of assets was proving to be back-breaking work, and also the London traffic was proving a hindrance in time spent on the road. Who needs Pickfords when you have a handful of squaddies. Well you just get on with it don't you! By the weekend we had cleared the garages which was a result as far as TAVRA were concerned. However, we still had a fair bit to clear around the rest of the Squadron. The weekend came and went. Then the cavalry arrived in the form of a few other permanent members of the Regiment. Only a week late, but better late than never! They gave up a whole day and by the time Tuesday night had come, we only had the armoury and a few bits and pieces to move. After the drill night had finished we started to hump and dump until the last black bag was on the back of the truck. By 0400hrs 29 Mar we were clear of 'The Dukes'. White City actually seems to be blessing in disguise nobody seems to want to come and visit us anymore, the beer prices are cheaper and Shepherd's Bush Green seems to be a very good night out, just ask **Roy Smith**! A special thank you to **Steve Berry** the civilian fitter, and **2Lt Mike Zazzi** who put in a lot of hard work to assist with the move.

COURAGE TROPHY COMPETITION 17-19 MARCH 2000

31 Sig Regt excelled itself at this years London District Military Skills competition held at Longmoor. Not only did we manage to enter two teams but were placed first and second in the Courage Shield. The 83 Sig Sqn team consisted of **Capt Liz Fitzpatrick, Sgt Matt Cahill, Cpl Mark Bell, LCpl Jay Eastwood, LCpl Duncan, LCpl Leyland, Sig Brian Jardine, Sig Scrivens.** Although we 'Kicked Arse' on all stands involving brute force and ignorance, we were left wanting on the Academics! The all important point that pushed us into the runners up slot was lost by our most junior member of the team. 'Keep your head down **Sig Scrivens!**'

83 Sig Sqn Courage Trophy Team
Holding the flag: LCpl Bell and Sig Leyland
(L-R): Lt Col Harrison (CO), Sig Jardine, LCpl Duncan,
Capt Fitzpatrick, Mr Tony Holt (Deputy Mayor of Kensington),
Sgt Cahill, Sig Scriven, LCpl Eastwood,
Sir Craig-Cooper (DL for Kensington)

Well done to the 56 Sig Sqn Team who triumphed, walking away not only with the shield but more importantly an extra slab of beer. Their team was led by **Lt Keiron Francis.** The first winners of the new Millennium will be best remembered for their introduction of a new drill movement (Saluting to the front with the right hand firmly gripped on to a tankard). Well done to all those who took part and a special thank you to HQ Sqn for running a challenging vehicle recovery stand.

LCpl Cheryl Duncan
engaged in post Courage Trophy weapon cleaning

32nd (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col JK McKee MBE**
RSM **WO1 Hilborn**

Another busy period for the Regiment, visits, commissioning boards and supporting the QM's travel allowance. Successful visits by the GOC SCOTLAND and DComd 2 (NC) Sig Bde punctuated our programme. The RSM has been working long hours to ensure that the Corps SAAM receives the support it requires. The Adjt and Trg Maj were sorely disappointed by the result of the Scotland/England game and are still holding meetings of the escape committee after having lost all their bets on the game.

QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT
ATTACHMENT TO 1 LI (How to wind up the Adjt)
by Maj (QM) I. L. Dudding R SIGNALS

Having arrived back in December 1999 from a four month voluntary tour in Banja Luka, Bosnia, I was surprised to see a 'stray' signal from HQ SCOTLAND trawling for volunteers to act as Observer Controllers on ASCIET 2000. This exercise was to take place in Fort Stewart, Georgia, USA. 'No', I thought, my CO, **Lt Col J. K. McKee MBE**, will never wear it! However, being in my final year of service and with a heartrending plea it came as much surprise (maybe he knows something I don't or he has spoken to my fellow QM's!) he agreed to release me once again.

14 February found me reporting to Dreghorn Barracks, Edinburgh, to meet with the OC D Coy 1 LI, **Maj Bill Pointing**, where we embussed for our nine hour flight from Prestwick to Charleston, South Carolina courtesy of the Royal Air Force. D Coy found its home in the National Guard complex of Fort Stewart where we were billeted in 50 man rooms. Accommodation in the complex was basic and the latrines had open views to the side, front, rear and upwards - you could even hold hands if you so wished! A number of D Coy vehicles had been sent on earlier by sea for use in the exercise and six of these consisted of Wolf Recce vehicles - the Americans loved them!

R&R, this entitlement was taken during the first week and consisted of two days in Disney Land. Each of us contributed £70 towards the trip, which included transport and accommodation in Florida. Much fun was had by all and the general consensus was why could the exercise not be held here!

Back to reality and ASCIET 2000. Aim: To Exercise And Analyse 'Fratricide'. The first week consisted of the complex issue and familiarisation on the Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System Equipment (MILES), M16 Rifles, Anti Armour Dragon and Viper weapons. MILES is a highly technical laser engagement system (similar to our TESEX equipment), which is fitted to the soldier by the way of helmet headband and a torso vest. The laser fitted to the weapon had one serious

drawback; it could not fire through foliage! It was the task of the Observer/Controller to educate as to whether a kill was likely in wooded areas. This is where the God Gun came into its own. MILES is fitted to armour by way of a circular band around the vehicle. The laser beam attachment, like the infanteer, is fitted to the barrel of the vehicle. Infantry armour piercing weapons such as the American Viper and Dragon also contained laser attachments. Blank firing attachments and rounds were used with all weapons of all calibre. Once the weapon was fired the laser attachment emits a laser beam to the target aimed at. If the target is hit a successful kill is recorded on firers Data Processing Control Unit (small computer box) and similarly a kill and a 'tone' of four beeps would be heard by the dead infanteer. In the case of armour an orange flashing light would light up on the vehicle. In this instance both the dead soldier or vehicle would stop and personnel/crews would dismount and remove headgear showing that they had been killed. These individuals/vehicles would take no further part in that day's phase of the exercise.

All key personnel, such as Coy Comds, Radio Operators, Pl Comds and all vehicles carried a system (DIPS) that transmitted a radio signal identifying who they were and where they were on the battlefield. This signal was transmitted to the ASCIET HQ in Camp Oliver where, by way of computer graphics, the battle, including personnel and vehicles could be tracked on a large screen. It was sophisticated enough to show in which direction a tanks barrel was facing, what vehicle it was aiming at, whether it was dead or how fast it was moving and in which direction. This was also applicable to key personnel.

Exercise phases. Week one consisted of five one-day battles starting, on day one, in defence and progressing to the final day in a hasty attack. Week two was a repeat but conducted at night. ASCIET Control was based out of Camp Oliver, which was some 40 miles from Fort Stewart. Full field conditions were imposed throughout the five day battles and sleeping under your poncho and being woken up by Racoons, Alligators, Boar, Rattle Snakes and very vocal frogs made it all most interesting! Friendly forces equipment consisted of MI A1 Abraham Tanks, M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicles equipped with TOW Missiles and 25mm cannon, AMTRAC Armoured Personnel Carriers, HUMMV Line Backer Vehicles equipped with Stinger missiles, Kiowa Warrior, Cobra and Huey Helicopters, USAAF aircraft, RAF Tornado's and our six Wolf Recce Vehicles (which incidentally hold the land speed record for Fort Stewart Training Area (as recorded on screen))! (Official Speed Limit 15mph - Wolf 65mph!). After a fortnight we were sure the Americans were convinced this was the slowest they could go!!

Albeit late in my career and having never worked with the infantry I found D Coy 1 Bn 1 LI an excellent outfit to work and socialise with. I thoroughly enjoyed their unique style of training and camaraderie and thank **Bill Pointing** and his Company for an excellent and enlightening experience (maybe he should never have been shot). This was a tough, highly successful and rewarding exercise where the British Infantry again showed their high level of skill, competence and professionalism. The soldiers worked with, not only our greatest allies, the United States, but with equipment and personnel most soldiers can only dream of.

'OSCAR BLUE ONE ONE - OUT'

51ST (HIGHLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

Sqn Comd	**Maj M. Strachan**
SSM	**WO2 Crocket**

ARRIVALS

We bid a hearty Highland welcome to our new(ish) PSI, **SSgt John** 'I'm English' **Leach**. **John** is no stranger to the Regiment having served with the 61st (City of Edinburgh) Sig Sqn (V) as PSI. An excellent all rounder his knowledge of the T.A now includes such diverse subjects as the plague and ovine reproduction.

CONGRATULATIONS

A well-deserved award of the LS&GC was presented to **Cpl Andy Dickens** by **Brig Munro**, Commander of 52 Bde at Aberdeen; this is a testimony to **Andy's** lung and liver capacity in the pipe band. Also to be congratulated is **Sig** 'Cabbie' **Henderson** just returned from a tour in Norway with 249 (AMF) Sig Sqn – he came back for four days and promptly left for the Azores on a sailing expedition with the RAF – never a dull moment. Welcome back to **Sig** 'I've got a Jag' **Bruce** recently returned from a skiing exercise in Austria – our photograph shows **Sig Bruce** being given instruction on how to buy a round.

A wee hello to all our friends serving with the big Army, they include **Sigs Melia** and **Bogart** in Bosnia, **SSgt Lyn Bertram** also moving to Bosnia and of course our cunning linguist **Sgt Nige Allen** speaking Serbo-Croat with a Scouse accent.

ELGIN TROOP

Our latest venture up in the far North is the establishment of a troop in Elgin with **Capt Linda Duncan** as Troop O.C. ably assisted by **Capt Mick Granitza** and **SSgt Davey Shand** – they are working hard to recruit new members and are already in the public eye with a very detailed press report of **Capt Granitza's** life story. Finally – congratulations to our OC on her attempts to give up smoking – keep it up ma'am even if you do suffer from the secondary affliction of Ursine Migrainus.

WINTER WARRIOR OR SKIING SCOTSMAN? - *by Sig Bruce*

During February I was lucky enough to take part in an annual winter exercise - 'Winter Warrior' which takes place in the Austrian Tyrol. The beginners course is intended for those who have never skied before involving cross country, downhill and touring - the objective is to reach 'Bronze' standard in all, and have a lot of fun on and off the slopes. The course culminates in a variety of races over some hair-raising slopes. The daily routine involved about four to five hours of tuition and up to three hours free ski if you skip lunch and smoking breaks. Physically it was fairly demanding with an abundance of pulled groins, aching thighs and bruises all over not to say the late evening sessions at the bar. Other activities included swimming and mixed sauna (why do Brits get so embarrassed about nudity?), ice go carting, après ski (lederhosen, swinging from the rafters, cow bells, schnapps, etc), karaoke night (I did a couple of German songs for some free schnapps and some duets much to the amusement of the crowd). I was also able to get in a half day of snowboarding with expert instruction from the Chalet boys **Bill** and **Ted** (.... excellent).

On the course, there was a lot of hilarity at my continual attempts to foster Austrian-British relations in my rusty German - but at least I can now count on the Chief of the Vienna Police as one of my closest friends and have made some younger friends for the future. Some of the more sordid accounts will need to require counselling in due course. Fellow attendees will, I'm sure, look back on my mix of colourful trousers that demonstrate after all that Britain is not a fashion-free zone. I will personally remember the variety of friends I made on the course (Giz, Smudge, Scotty aus Tyrol, Rick et al) and wish them all the best if this article makes it to *The WIRE*.

I'll look back on this Exercise as an experience not to have been missed. The organisation and tuition was superb with a good mix of individuals from chefs through to lawyers, through to nuclear physicists. If you are interested in one of the courses next year I would thoroughly recommend it - within the two weeks all but a few were good skiers thanks to expert instruction. Hopefully by then we will also move into the realms of air travel, as the 34hr rail & bus journey from Aberdeen is a bit too long!

52nd (LOWLAND) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

Sqn Comd	**Maj R. J. H. Sutherland**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) K. A. Swan**

The Squadron has had a busy period with a lot of people coming and going. To start off with, there was a new addition to the Squadron's extended family as Sergeant (now Staff Sergeant – another reason for congratulations!) **Steve McVey** and **Sgt Carol McGurn** have had another baby. Hopefully everything is going well and there are not too many sleepless nights as a result. On more conventional changes, the Squadron will have a change at its head as **Maj Roddy Sutherland** moves to HQ Squadron as its new Squadron Command and **Capt Donald Gordon** takes over. The Squadron 2IC will be the newly promoted **Capt Lewis Smith**. Congratulations and best wishes to all these people in their new appointments. **Maj Sutherland** has already been making enquiries as to whether he can draw a brown coat from the clothing store to help out in some of the roles that his new Squadron personnel undertake! The other aspects of Squadron life have been a successful trade week held at the beginning of March when many personnel expanded their knowledge and passed trade boards, thereby gaining further qualifications. To all those with the resulting increase in trade pay – try not to spend it all at one go!

There has also been an enjoyable challenge in the shape of an Inter-Troop Military Skills competition, Ex Golden Boot. **Lt Milne Weir** led his Troop to success; hopefully some of the same success will follow him as he leads the Regimental Shooting Team at the up-coming Corps SAAM. The team had a successful training week and not even the freezing weather of Inverness and Cultybraggan Ranges could dampen their enthusiasm. We await the result with interest and wish them well. Another person to be congratulated is the Squadron's Yeoman (or should that be Yeowoman?) of Signals, **Helen Jephcote** who was promoted to WO2 at the beginning of March. With the Squadron now having **WO2 Karen Swan** as SSM and now **Yeoman Jephcote** being the first female Yeoman in the Regiment, nobody can say there isn't an equal role for women in the Army.

61ST (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

Sqn Comd	**Maj B. Shankland**
SSM	**WO2 McGowan**

CARNETHY HILL RACE

On a blustery but mercifully sunny Saturday morning 12 Squadron members led by **Lt Phil** 'Sans Pantaloons' **Donegan** and **YofS** 'Jeph' **Jephcote** prepared to deploy to the Pentland Hills in order to provide comms safety cover for the 30th Carnethy Hill Race. A service which 61 Sig Sqn (V) has been providing for 17 years. Preparation and loading at the TAC went smoothly, the only awkward point arising when it came to selecting the two 'fortunate' individuals who would have to make the only unassisted ascent to one of the race peaks. It was somehow refreshing that in these days of equal opportunities, the only two non Royal Signals soldiers were selected for this task! At the race start, the admin and First Aid tent were set up and the radio sets deployed to their alpine locations. As the competitors assembled, the Excon staff looked on in disbelieving wonder at these odd individuals who were actually paying to run up very steep hills. The disbelieving wonder turned to sheer terror when the CO arrived and enthusiastically remarked that it would be a good idea to put in a Squadron team next year. By 1600hrs the race was over, the dets returned to Excon and packing was underway. As the tired and muddy hill runners passed the Squadron land rover it was left to **Sgt** 'Flat caps n whippets' **Garner** to announce gleefully to all present that England had won in Paris. The whole Squadron looks forward to providing comms for the CO when he runs in next year's event!

CHAMPAGNE SUPPER

This event ranks alongside the Brit Awards, the Queen's Birthday Party and London Fashion Week. 80-odd trendsetters assembled at Chesser Crescent on the evening of Saturday 19 February 2000 for an evening of food, drink and verbal entertainment. As with so many other events this year, it was **Maj** 'Mayhem' **Murray's** last appearance as a serving officer. 'Mayhem' used this occasion to 'set about' the guests with tales of blanco-ed boots and '37 pattern webbing. His verbal tirade was interrupted only by the raffle, organised by **Maj** 'Shankers' **Shankland** saw a distribution of a number of unusual prizes, the best of which was a rather suspicious looking sausage won by **Maj** 'Soprano' **McLean**. The event was a welcome return for the CO, **Lt Col McKee MBE**, who had presided over the event in his past life as OC 61 Sig Sqn (V). There was an element of 'Christmas past' in the shape of the former CO, **Lt Col Allan Lapsley** who floated between guests with all the panache of a career minded TA staff officer. The RMO, **Capt Nicolette** 'Cough please' **Mason** is to be congratulated for her imaginative impersonation of a very drunk doctor falling down after leaning against an unlocked door.

33 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

CO	**Lt Col R. J. Steed MBE**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) R. D. Cowan**

Since the Christmas stand down and the dawn of a new millennium there has been little let up in the workload of 33 Sig Regt (V). First weekend back and it was off to Warcop for the final CMT of the training year, followed closely by the RSIT team inspecting 42 Sig Sqn. The trade training course at Whitburn Camp the following week proved to be very successful, as was the Regimental Officer Selection weekend, which almost resembled P Company selection. We now have a number of young potential officers to lower the average age of the Mess! In between breaths the Regiment is preparing for annual camp in Germany in June, along with the build up training and exercises – is there no let up? Finally, our thanks and goodbyes go to **WO2 (YofS) Jonas, WO2 (RQMS) Beggs, SSgt Hoolachan, SSgt Hutton, SSgt Henley, SSgt Weston, Sgt Goodwin, Cpl Wilkinson** and **LCpl Robertson** who are either moving on to Regiments new or are leaving the Corps. A warm hello and welcome go to **WO2 (RQMS) Forshaw, SSgt Simms, SSgt Allen, SSgt Faulds** and **Sgt Richards**.

There has been strange goings on in RHQ over the past weeks, the CO seems to have been bitten by the 'IIP bug', but instead of the normal reams of paper, we had Ptarmigan Training for the CO's inner cabinet, ie: the Training Major, **Carl Storey**, the Adjutant, **Capt John Harrington** and the CO's driver, **LCpl Scott Wilson** (Why am I doing Ptarmigan training?). (See picture of gruelling training for the answer).

Ptarmigan Training with a difference!
Capt John Harrington, LCpl Scott Wilson and Maj Carl Storey

The next surprise from the CO's office was that all MOD civilian employees were invited by the CO to go on a team building exercise in Wales along with the permanent staff. In the best spirit of adventure training, and ably led by the Adjutant (even if he doesn't know a footpath from a county boundary) the staff of **Angela**, (the green gaitered high heeled AO 55 Sig Sqn), **Jo Down** (Asst Adjt the blonde bombshell), **Andria Crowe** (redundant typist), **Lyn Williams** (the well kitted AO from 80 Sqn), **Lillan Hall** (best Caernarfon bargain shopper AO 42 Sqn), **Irene Taylor** (AA the Barbara Windsor of RHQ), **Eddie Buchanan** (AO RHQ, the only time he had his head above water was when he went for a dingy ride with the ladies!), set off for a gentle walk in Snowdonia, accompanied by the CO, to ensure no slacking or disappearing off to the pub! As the gallant band set off for the summit of Snowdon (oh didn't I tell you we were going up the short route to Snowdon). In pouring rain, low cloud and mist, the day certainly tested us all to the limit. Well bedraggled but having enjoyed ourselves, it was one of the best day's out, and certainly put the exploits of the other teams in the shade. They took pity on us the next day with a RIB ride to Puffin Island.

RHQ has been involved in a number of visits both in barracks and in the field recently. During Exercise Spring Eagle **Brig His Grace the Duke of Westminster** visited the Regiment, and in particular 55 and 80 Sig Sqns. Whilst leaving the 80 Sqn location, the CO escorted the Brigadier to his next location and the Brigadier drove his own Landrover Discovery. As they left, a member of the Cheshire Hunt, that was in the area and knew the Brigadier said, 'Gosh, it's the Duke, he must be driving an incredibly important person, who is it?' The RSM replied, 'The CO madam!'

55 (MERSEYSIDE) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj W. Wyper**
SSM	**WO2 P. Williams**

UPDATE FROM THE SQUADRON

Farewell to **Maj Micah Cummings** who has moved back to his roots in Manchester with 42 Sig Sqn, the Squadron all wish him the very best. The Squadron has a new OC, **Maj Bill Wyper**, who is congratulated on his promotion and moves from 2IC/MTO to the dizzy heights of command. We also welcome **Capt Bob Muir** from 59 Sig Sqn, into the post of 2IC/MTO. With sadness we also say farewell to **WO2 (RQMS) Harry Harper** on his retirement from the TA after 29 years, **Harry** will be missed by all the Squadron. Congratulations on commissioning for **WO1 Tony McFarlane**, but he has to take a drop in standards by being posted to 59 Sig Sqn. The PSAO, **Capt Tom Ponton**, seems to be settling in to the position, but he has to be put back into his box when every now and again he forgets he is no longer the QM. **Capt Derek Deegan** is now well into the job of QM. He has a considerable advantage to most QM's who have served with the Regiment in that being a Kirkby lad, he at least understands what most of the population are saying. The SSM, **WO2 P. Williams**, will be taking a team to the Corps SAAM in the very near future and we hope to bring you an article and photos of our successful team in the next issue. The Echelon Club has reopened after a face lift, and the

Squadron is now taking advantage of the better decor and atmosphere, the 43 inch TV has helped, with the Squadron watching the sports channel, especially the Rugby, when Scotland beat England much to the delight of the OC, PSAO and Master Chef (all 'Jocks').

42 (CITY OF MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd	**Maj M. O. Cummings TD**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Ward**

HANDOVER/TAKEOVER SQUADRON COMMANDERS

At the beginning of March, we said farewell to the Sqn Comd, **Maj Ian Kelly,** and welcomed our new Sqn Comd, **Maj Micah Cummings**, in his place. **Ian** had the distinction of being the only infanteer to command a Ptarmigan Squadron and will be best remembered for writing an excellent and accurate Squadron history as well as designing and supplying our Regimental Flash from his military memorabilia business. **Ian** goes on to pastures new and a rumoured staff appointment with 11 Sig Bde at Donnington. Prior to this, he has been lucky enough to be selected to attend the staff officers course in Canada, and all ranks of the Squadron wish him well in this latest endeavour. **Micah Cummings** is returning to 42 Sqn, where he has served most of his TA career, after a two year spell in Liverpool commanding HQ Sqn (now 55 Sig Sqn). His last appointment with the Squadron was as Troop Commander - Access Troop and we are delighted to welcome him back as the new Squadron Commanderd. **Micah** is the headmaster of a local school and finds that dealing with soldiers is not vastly different to dealing with his pupils, if anything, the pupils are much better behaved.

Maj Ian Kelly, in the white trousers, hands over 42 Sig Sqn (V) to Maj Micah Cummings in the Squadron Officers Mess

ROTHIEMURCHUS LODGE (24-27 FEBRUARY 2000)

The Squadron had a most enjoyable four days skiing in the Cairngorms at the end of February 2000 and managed to arrive when the snow was deep, crisp and even. Rothiemurchus is a Tri-Service and Reserves outdoor centre in the heart of the Scottish Highlands just outside Aviemore and is an ideal base for a ski trip. As well as skiing, it also offers climbing, fishing, sailing, wind surfing, hill walking and clay pigeon shooting, literally something for everyone. The Centre now has its own dry ski slope which is ideal for beginners to master the basics before launching themselves onto the Cairngorm slopes and falling about in public. **LCpl Sue Heaps** distinguished herself by breaking her ankle on getting out of the minibus as she arrived. God knows what she would have done to herself if she had made it to the slopes. Apart from this setback, the trip was a great success and everyone who attended (30 personnel) could ski with varying degrees of success at the end of the weekend.

WO2 (SSM) Graham Ward (centre), surrounded by some of the 42 Sqn party in the Rothiemurchus ski lodge

OPEN DAY 25 MARCH 2000

The Squadron opened its doors to the public on 25 March 2000 as part of the TA National Recruiting initiative. A variety of stands designed to demonstrate Royal Signals trades were provided and nearly sixty members of the general public came through the gates throughout the day. A Freelander Land Rover 1.81 was on offer as first prize in a national draw for visitors to all TA Centres in the Country. The Squadron managed to acquire one in black, from a local dealer, which set off the front of the TA Centre a treat. Unfortunately, anyone connected with the TA was disqualified from entering the draw but it proved a popular attraction for the public, who assumed there was one on offer per TA Centre!

The Squadron's latest bunch of recruits pose for their picture during the Sqn Open Day
Back Row (L-R): Pat Grobicki, James Hill, Matthew Faherty, Peter Simpkin, Gemma Smiddy
Front Row (L-R): Sharon Montgomerie, Faizan Awan, Shezad Mukadam, Cherille Namee

OTHER NEWS

February and March continued to be busy and productive months and as well as the events already described the Squadron took part in the following:

Board of Officers (27-3 March 2000)
Hand-over/Take-over stocktaking board for change of Squadron Commanders.

Regimental Comms Exercise (4-5 March 2000)
Run up for Exercise Spring Eagle at the end of March 2000.

Bring a Boss Night (14 March 2000)
A most successful evening during which soldiers were able to tell their employers what they actually do in the TA and then host them to dinner.

Investment In People Review (14 March 2000)
The Squadron was selected by HQ Scotland (lucky us) to be visited by an IIP Assessor as one of the units representing the District.

Exercise Spring Eagle (18-19 March 2000)
Comd 11 Sig Bde Exercise with participation from 33, 34, 35, 36 and 40 Sig Regts. The Squadron deployed to Winter Hill and the W. Yorkshire border.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Finally, as well as saying farewell to the Sqn Comd, **Maj Ian Kelly**, we lunched out two more stalwarts of the Squadron at the beginning of March. **SSgt Martin Henley**, our long suffering SPSI, and **Eric Griffiths** our long serving senior civilian storekeeper. **Martin Henley** has completed his last tour with the Regulars and is now working for a Communications Cable Company. He is to become a part time soldier and happily will be joining the Squadron in the near future. **Eric Griffiths** has been our senior storekeeper for sixteen years and is almost part of the furniture. He is a real Mancunian and a great character. Sadly he has reached the 65 year marker and has to stand down for a younger person. **Martin Henley's** replacement is **SSgt Sam Faulds**, fresh from 2 Div HQ & Sig Regt, and all ranks wish him a rewarding and enjoyable tour with the Squadron. **Eric Griffiths'** replacement is not really new at all. **LCpl Sharon Blythe**, our stores accountant, successfully applied for the job and has now taken over the whole job as a soldier and a civilian. It is always sad to see people go but we wish **Martin Henley**, good luck in his new career and **Eric Griffiths** a long and happy retirement.

Martin Henley and Eric Griffiths at their retirement lunch. Eric's daughter Janet is on his left hand and on the right is our NRIPS, (SQMS) Bernie Meehan who is wondering if he can afford a steak

59/SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

Sqn Comd	**Maj Chris Heaton**
SSM	**WO2 Bob Paterson**

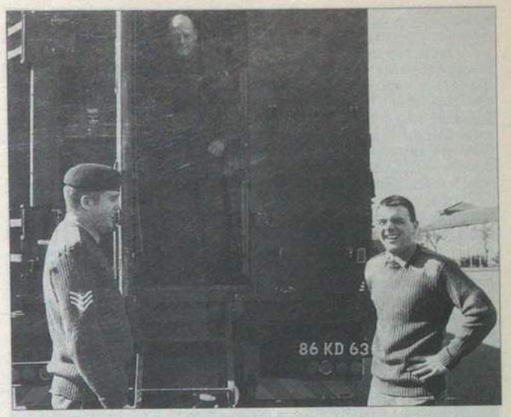
CENTRALISED MILITARY TRAINING

The first weekend training after the Christmas break saw the Squadron attend the Regimental Centralised Military Training weekend, 6-8 January at Warcop. Designed mainly to achieve Individual Training Directives the weekend was made more exciting by including Stages 4 and 5 firing. Although cold everyone enjoyed the weekend.

Is this Sgt Lek Rajmekis leading the way into the NBC Chamber or a new version of Blind Date?

MAINTENANCE WEEKEND

Our recent weekend 22 and 23 January was used to prepare for the forthcoming RSIT inspection. Plenty of good work was carried out and the Squadron looks in reasonable shape at this time. We now look forward to the Regimental and Brigade Exercise hoping to be at least Battleworthy!!



(L-R): Sgt Tom Hankin, Sgt Ted Littler and Sgt Frank Joyce discuss why the mast on the central would not go under the bridge!

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

With the loss of all regular technicians, we were recently grateful for **Sgt Paul Jones** to arrive on six months FTRS with the Regiment.

We recently welcomed back **Lt Paul Knight** from his six month tour in Kosova. We have now said farewell to **Capt Bob Muir** who has taken up the role of MTO and **Capt Alan Richardson** who has retired to RARO. **WO2 (FofS) Ian Outterson** returned from Kosova and has now moved onto new pastures to be replaced by **SSgt (FofS) Andy Owen**.

TERRITORIAL ARMY OPEN DAY

The Squadron used the recent TA Open Day to establish a foothold at Aintree Barracks TAC, where we are moving to in the near future, due to the closure of Deysbrook Barracks. The new accommodation was the home of 55 Sig Sqn prior to SDR and many members of that Squadron now serving with 59 Sqn are looking forward to returning.

EXERCISE SPRING EAGLE

We recently took part in a 11 Signal Brigade Ex. Many new members of the Squadron took the opportunity to enhance their skills in new trades.

80 (CHESHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON - RUNCORN

Sqn Comd	**Maj Fitzgerald**
SM	**WO2 Hale**

EXERCISE PRONTO CALL

The first full Regimental Exercise was soon upon us after RSIT with a deployment to the grounds of Cholmondeley Castle North of Whitchurch. The Squadron was nicely entrenched in a courtyard on the estate when the atmosphere was shattered by the arrival of the RCP. **Cpl** 'Bermy' **Birmingham**, at this stage, had to fight his way out of his 'green maggot' and had been seen to be imparting his vast knowledge of Radio Relay to **OCdt** 'Twinkle Toes' **Southworth**. Many 'bags' were ruffled by the arrival of the RCP but not the 'bag' of **SSgt** 'I've got the scar' **Langley**. 'I'm going to get my 12 hours in whether the CO and RSM are here or not'. A good exercise was had by all with many lessons learnt.

35 (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

XXXV

CO	**Lt Col S. J. Potter TD**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) P. Marshall**

CATCH THE WIND

It takes a special kind of individual who will actually volunteer to suffer serious discomfort, loss of dignity and cope with a huge range of hazards, including the RSM's jokes as well as over exposure to the elements. All of this is in the dubious but honourable cause of securing a place in the Lanyard Trophy Team. It begs the question - who in their right mind would happily give up a weekend lying in a comfortable bed, surrounded by the security of a warm blanket while watching the rain, sleet and snow hammer against the protective window outside, just to venture over Dartmoor and other training areas at the bleakest time of the year? Well I could name the complete intrepid and adventurous team of potential gladiators, but I will resist the temptation and restrict this story to the key players and the comic interludes. Dartmoor in all of its hostile but magnificent landscape is hardly a place to catch the wind blowing through your protective clothing - it catch's you and either carries you along at a comfortable pace or places an immovable barrier making it almost impossible to proceed. Worse of all it makes the 20kg of kit that you are carrying feel like a ton! But that did not deter **WO1 (RSM)** 'Geordie' **Marshall** and his team of doughty warriors when they commenced their training in late February and have since continued over many training weekends. He was assisted by two physical stalwart's and veterans of the competition in the shape of **WO2 (FofS) Pete Stowell** and **SSgt (FofS) Neil Trengrove** who inspired (or more accurately put the fear of god in them) other team members by tabbing along at cheetah like speed. The rest of the team was formed from volunteers from each of the Squadrons.

Familiar faces, that frequently grace the pages of 'The Wire', from previous competitions and other exhausting adventurous and military skills pursuits were apparent.

Capt John Middler of orienteering and cross country fame, **LCpl David Jones** an Annapurna Dragon veteran who joined the training in preparation and hopeful selection for Ex Pioneer Dragon in America, **WO2 Pete Mouland** who rises to any challenge and three girls who give rise to the claim that they are more than a match for any fella in the Regiment, **Cpl Louise Cantrell, Cpl Wendy Geddis and Cpl Teresa Skeehan**. The training itself, like the eventual competition, is extremely tough and requires a high level of physical fitness as well as stamina, personal courage and sound map reading and first aid skills. Spirits during the training amongst all team members and guests have remained high even during the low times, that although funny at the time for those onlooker's, placed great and additional demands on the afflicted. Especially Sgt Kevin Bannigan who found himself negotiating what he thought was a shallow stream only to find him-self waist deep in bitterly cold water & silt. Not to be dissuaded from this setback he quickly picked himself up changed into dry clothing and cracked on. A similar thing happened to Cpl Teresa Skeehan, who was also negotiating a stream and slipped on a turf of grass. To recover from her fall she laid on a deft display of her ballet talents by performing an evasive pirouette – unfortunately this did not prevent the water flooding into her boots and her subsequent scream was carried by the wind many miles over the Moorland! The stage has almost been reached for the final team selections, these will take place in the near future but no doubt while many will be jubilant others will suffer great disappointment – we will keep you posted on the outcome.

unnerving experience. To add some free-falling fiend dropping through a cloud like a missile to my list of fears and dislikes would end my life, as I know it!

However, who am I to cast doubt on an activity that makes normally sane people climb into an aircraft with a pack of curtains strapped to their back and with a cry of 'Geronimo!' leap into the unknown just for fun! Judging by the number of individuals who have scrambled for places on a series of special parachute courses organised by the RSM, there is no shortage of willing volunteers keen to have a go and a brave group of them did just that during March at RAF Weston on the Green. Following two days of intensive ground training our intrepid volunteers, which included **Sgt Colin Richards, Cpl Ray Blanchette, LCpl Simon Brown** and **LCpl Paul Spicer**, were flown to a height of just over 3000 feet in a Islander to participate in their first jump, which for posterity and fun was also captured on video. The first jump was by static line and **Sgt Colin Richards** described it as a strange and startling but exhilarating experience that he is now keen to repeat – take my advice Colin keep your feet where they should be, firmly on the ground!

Cpl Ray Blanchette meanwhile earned himself a dubious nickname after his instructor discovered to his horror that the handles to release his reserve chute were tucked inside his harness. The instructor called him an 'Horses Ass' and was quickly nicknamed 'Trigger' by the rest of the group. It could have been worse **Ray**, they were going to call you 'Muffin'. Joking apart, as the course progressed, confidence and technique improved considerably and most students were able to complete up to eight jumps. At the end of the course all returned to the unit with many stories to relate and with a great sense of personal achievement and

Potential Team Members taking a break on Dartmoor or is it Bleak Leek!

Now what is the Back Bearing that will take me back home

accomplishment. Finally if any member of the Regiment wishes to attend one of these special courses then contact your SPSI who will process your application – vacancies should be available throughout the year.

LCpl Brown and Sig Price
about to board the Islander for their first jump into the abyss

GET OFF MY CLOUD

Having already expressed a degree of bemusement but admiration of those intrepid individuals who freely give up a relaxing weekend at home with the family to engage in some serious physical team building stuff. You will not be surprised to learn that I have completely mixed up feelings for those who willingly jump out of aircraft at 3500 feet! As far as I am concerned the only things that legitimately fall from the sky are rain, aircraft (provided they manage to get up there in the first place) and bird droppings. I have to declare that none of these fills me with any degree of excitement as exposure to the elements and bird droppings leave me feeling wet, cold and miserable and I find flying an unnatural and

REGIMENTAL ORIENTEERING COMPETITION

On Sunday 20 February teams from all Squadron areas less 58 Sqn, descended on Coombe Abbey County Park in Warwickshire to participate in the Regimental Orienteering Competition. Most teams were clearly anxious this year to beat the favourites, 89 Sqn, who have warded off all comers for the past seven years. Was this year going to be an exception, regrettably for the other teams involved unfortunately not. The team entered by 89 Sqn was as strong as ever and their personal skills and

experience won the day with exceptional performances from all team members that ensured the triumphant team lifted the Regimental Trophy once again. As well as the Regimental Trophy award other awards included the award of Regimental Champion to **Cpl Tony Griffiths,** Runner Up **WO1 (RSM)** 'Geordie' **Marshall,** Female Champion **Lt Janet Lawrence,** Runner Up **LCpl Sue Joyce,** Best Officer **Lt Col Stephen Potter,** Best Male Veteran **Sgt Colin Marshall,** Best SNCO **SSgt Phil Weaver,** Best U21 **Sig Sarah Bell** and finally Best Female Veteran **LCpl Louise Cantrell.** To all award winners we extend our congratulations and to all participants very well done! Finally a special thank you is extended to **Capt John Midler** and **SSgt Dave Arnot** for organising such an excellent competition and great day out.

The Champion Team

The Best Male Officer presenting the award
to the Best Female Officer!

NATIONAL TERRITORIAL ARMY DAY

Another great day out promised to be the National TA Day that took place on Saturday 25 March. The advertising was vast, posters and leaflets were distributed and radio announcements took place at regular intervals during the two weeks prior to the day and special directional signs were erected. Our hopes for a good attendance were high especially as there was a special inducement to the public this year in the guise of a free raffle of a Freelander and various Gortex items as well as the promise of a VIP day out with the TA. We set about the mammoth task of transferring our TA Centres into exhibition centres with a wide range of attractions, static displays, interactive displays and freebies to give away. The dan arrived and we eagerly anticipated swarms of local residents to engulf our Centres so we could show them what we do and hopefully encourage many to join our ranks. As usual the weather turned against us and this had a direct impact on attendance. Nevertheless a steady flow of visitors came through the gates although most were children and they enjoyed, in many cases, special one to one treatment. More importantly perhaps is the news that we have gained up to 15 recruits throughout the Regiment and also gained some valuable post TA Day publicity from the local press who attended. So while admittedly not as successful as last year we can claim a measure of success, which after all has made it all worthwhile! To end on a humorous note on Sunday 26 March an unnamed Squadron not far from Rugby, with its external signs still on display, received another ten visitors - each was given a free pen together with an apology!
PS – who won the Day out with the TA?

The kids are all right

THE RIGHT PLACE

The myth that serving in a TA unit leads to a career void was firmly laid to rest when the results of the last Promotion Boards were released and as a result a record number of Regimental hopefuls were selected for promotion to Warrant Officer 2 and Staff Sergeant. It gives the Regiment great pleasure and delight to congratulate the following on their selection for promotion: **SSgt (FofS) Andy Gilpin, SSgt (FofS) Neil Trengrove, SSgt (FofS) Chris Wilson, SSgt Mark Rosenworth, Sgt Mark Evans, Sgt Dave Taylor**. Their hard work and endeavours while serving with the Regiment have bore fruit and most, if not all, are now waiting eagerly to see if their future postings will provide the final bit of icing on the cake.

REGIMENTAL ROUND-UP

Many other events and activities have taken place during the last couple of months including notably another Recruit Pass off Parade, Regimental Trade Training at Donnington, and a Battlefield Tour in Germany: All of these events are reported on briefly in the following article. It's always a pleasure to report on another successful recruit pass off parade and the first pass off course of 2000 was no exception. The parade took place on Saturday 19 February with eleven proud soldiers completing their Phase 1. During the parade the CO presented the award of Best Recruit to a delighted **Sig Dan Ivory.**

The CO presenting the award of Best Recruit to Sig Dan Ivory

Trade training next with an innovative one week crammer course that took place during the week 12 – 20 February at Donnington and which promises to set the pattern for future trade training. The week was run under the control of a special training team headed by **WO2 (YofS) Phil Tonks** who was ably assisted by **SSgt Andy Egan** and **SSgt Andy Lloyd.** The week turned out to be hugely successful with 36 out of 43 personnel passing their trade tests outright. This has gone some way to redressing the deficiencies in certain trades throughout the Regiment and as a result a further course is being run in September – so if you are reading this and you still require your Class 3 trade qualification contact your SPSI now! Attendee's on the course in September can rest assured that they are

unlikely to experience **SSgt Lloyds** culinary swills only his morale boosting sense of humour, but 11 Sig Bde on the other hand are apparently looking forward to the training team doing a spot more landscaping on their behalf! Finally a group of fifteen from the Regiment engaged in a Battlefield tour in Germany during the period 26–31 March. The tour covered the Battle of the Bulge and by all accounts provided stories that were both horrific and thought provoking. As one of the group members **LCpl Steve Bell** reflected when he stated that it was difficult to imagine, when you are surrounded by the natural beauty of the Ardennes, the bitter hand to hand fighting and major battles that took place in this vast area and the lives that were lost as a result. The road to freedom from tyranny and repression is costly and we must never forget the sacrifices made in that noble and just cause that gives us the freedom we enjoy today!

The simulated SCRA(T) Trainer

APPROBATION OF MARKET DRAYTON

On Sunday 9 April, 95 (SY) Sig Sqn shared the honour with other Yeomanry units of the Approbation of Market Drayton. This honour was granted to the successor units of the Shropshire Yeomanry, two troops of which were raised in Market Drayton in 1795. On a cold, overcast but dry day the Squadron under Comd of **Maj Jo Fathers** attended the dedication Church service and marched proudly through the streets of Market Drayton with other Yeomanry units. Taking the salute in the presence of many other dignitaries was the **Lord Lt of Shropshire** and the **Mayor of Market Drayton**. In attendance were the Hon Col, **Col Brian Foxon** and the CO, **Lt Col Stephen Potter.** Following the parade a civic reception was held in the Royal British Legion Club in Market Drayton. Here all involved in the parade enjoyed a light lunch in the company of all the dignitaries.

95 (SY) Signal Squadron on parade

36th (EASTERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col J. A. Allan TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) R. J. Stanton**

WELCOME AND FAREWELL

We wish to welcome **Sgt Del Parkinson** as PSI Cambridge, **Sgt Mick Eades** as PSI Southend, currently on a Board of Officers in Bosnia (who says regulars do not deploy on Ops within TA Regiments), **Sgt John Aloysious Kelly** (thanks Lorraine!) as PSI Trg, **Maj Jim Sykes** as Trg Maj, **Mr Carl Sykes** as EO FSA(son of Trg Maj?) and **Mrs Sharma** as AO HQ Sqn. We hope you all have a good time with the Regiment. We say a sad farewell to **SSgt Si Hill** who is off to Weymouth to run a Hotel, **Sgt Gaz Tuff** on promotion to 2 Sig Regt, **Maj Gary Mason** as SO2 Comms and Tennis, 1 UK Div, **Mrs Higgs** on retirement, **Mr Alan Byrne** and **Sundeep** on a SDR civilian reshuffle and not forgetting the unforgettable **Mrs Iris Burton** who retires after many years of being the fount of all knowledge as AO, HQ Sqn. You will all be sadly missed.

VISIT BY DCOMD 49 BRIGADE

Due to the impending move of the regiment from LONDIST to 49 Bde on 1 Apr 00, the DComd 49 Bde, **Colonel Abraham**, kindly visited RHQ and HQ Sqn at Ilford recently. During his visit he received a regimental brief by the CO, **Lt Col Jackie Allan TD**, followed by an Ops brief by **Maj Mike White TD**. After informal introductions of the regimental officers, **Colonel Abraham** presented TDs in the WOs and Sgts mess to **Majs Dave Watson** and **Mark Baker**. **Maj Dave Watson** started his career in Bedford TA Centre and progressed through the ranks to WO1(SVWO), being awarded the TEM along the way. After commissioning he took up various appointments in 54 Sig Sqn and eventually commanded HQ Sqn at Ilford. He recently took up the appointment of Adjt on FTRS. **Maj Mark Baker** started his career with Liverpool UOTC in 1979. After commissioning he served with various units within the Royal Anglian Regiment, eventually commanding a company at Bury St Edmunds. Under SDR he transferred to 36 Sig Regt(V) as OC RRTT and now commands 44 Sig Sqn at Grays and Southend.

Rear row: Lt Col J. A. Allan TD, Maj M. Baker TD, Maj D. Watson TD, WO1(RSM) R. J. Stanton MAPM
Front row: Mrs Dennise Baker, Col Abraham, Mrs Christine Watson

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj P. J. Minshall**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) A. C. Wells**

It is some time since HQ Sqn featured in the august pages of *The WIRE*, and since the last appearance there have been many changes to the management of the Squadron and in the way we do business. After our attendance on Annual Camp in Germany in September 1999, we returned to start the busy winter training regime of a TA Signal Regiment and quickly settled into the routine of work, work and more work with the occasional interlude of play. In November three members of the Squadron went with the Regimental Adventure Training expedition to the Pyrennes, a full report of which is elsewhere in this issue. In March this year, three members of the Squadron participated in the Regimental Skiing expedition to Germany and **WO2 Terry Butler** took part in an RLC Sailing Expedition to Cyprus. **Sgt Kevin** 'Super Angler' **East** of TM Troop and **SSgt Tony Dale** the LAD PSI competed in the Army Angling Championships. All of this, combined with the monthly Regimental Golf Days and Mondays off, definitely 'stops jack being a dull boy', for the permanent staff at least.

Work has to intervene, somewhere, and as normal the winter schedule of Comms Ex, Trade and Recruit Training weekends along with RSIT, PRE, Stocktaking, Regimental Audits etc and other mandatory inspections have continued, some more successfully than others. In addition the Squadron paraded as part of the Redbridge Remembrance Commemorations on 15 November, this parade was marked by the unique event of the PSAO (who has to remember that he has a uniform, let alone Service Dress) actually marching with the Squadron.

Talking of stocktaking, the Quartermaster, **Maj Phil** 'Whirlwind' **Daisey** has been up to his old tricks, those out there who know him well will need no further explanation – however for the uninitiated, you basically take one quartermaster add a Regiment which needs a good stock taking and clear out and mix the two together (or alternatively light the fuse and stand well back) the result is a powerful mix of invective, hot air and hard work eventually followed by a period of rationale and calm (he has to sleep sometime!) - followed by more of the same. In the end it all proved worthwhile and allows the Regiment to go forward with a clean sheet for the future (however, if you are an SQMS you can now have nightmares about next year). Of course the RQMS, **WO2 Tony** 'Days to Do' **Gaston** is overjoyed as he looks forward to the joys of resettlement and Civ Div.

Any unit is the sum of the personalities within it, and HQ Sqn is no different, the last six months saw the departure of **Maj Dave Watson TD** as OC to be succeeded by **Maj Peter Minshall** in December. **Dave** was supposed to be retiring from the TA, and got an almighty send off, certainly his going away party will live in the memories (of those who can remember it!) for a long time he was having nothing to do with this retirement business and promptly moved upstairs on an FTRS commitment for six months as Adjutant. We welcome **Capt Gordon Shelley** (back into the fold) as Sqn 2IC/QM(V), and the outgoing FSA, **SSgt Gordon Cameron**, back as the incoming RAOWO, **WO2 Gordon Cameron**. We lost a highly regarded and long serving Squadron member when **Sgt Jahan McCready** decided to retire after nearly 15 years service - we wish her best wishes for the future with the family and new job.

EXERCISE SPRING EAGLE 17 – 19 MARCH 2000

Over the weekend, 17-19 March, the Regiment participated in 'Ex Spring Eagle', an 11 Sig Bde Exercise that covered significant areas of England and Northern Ireland. The Regiment established a Euromux network in the Colchester area and also provided an interface with the 11 Sig Bde Ptarmigan fixed trunk network and kilostream links to Northern Ireland and the North of England.

The weekend saw the hand-over/takeover of Regimental Sergeant Majors. Everyone within the Regiment wishes bon voyage and congratulations to **WO1 (RSM) Bob Stanton,**, who was all ready to hang up his pace stick when the CO, **Lt Col Jackie Allan TD**, summoned him to the office and closed the door. 'Oh dear,' he thought, 'a last minute dressing down,' but no, she was delighted to tell him that he had been commissioned and was posted to 11 Sig Regt. **WO1 (RSM) Bob Stanton** said, 'I have really enjoyed my time with the Regiment which has been at times challenging but very rewarding. Many Regular soldiers underestimate the value of the TA, but I have been very impressed with the commitment that the soldiers demonstrate.' The Regiment welcomes his successor, **WO1 (RSM) Dougie Eaglesham,** who joins the Regiment from NCO Leadership Wing at Blandford. The weekend provided an excellent opportunity for him to meet many of the key players and get an idea of the concept of trunk communications and how the Regiment performs that function.

Hand-over/Takeover of RSMs
(L) WO1 (RSM) Eaglesham, (R) WO1 (RSM) Stanton

The Regiment's new Training Major, **Maj Jim Sykes** and the regular Foreman **WO2 (FOS) Phil Holland** had a helicopter cabby to visit **SSgt Sue Baker** who had been deployed to Altcar Training Area for the exercise. **Maj Sykes** was duly impressed with her excellent efforts to co-ordinate the elements of 33, 36 and 40 Regiments at her location. The **TM** then went on to comment on how memorable it had been to fly at such height over the Liverpool and Everton Football grounds (**SSgt (YofS) Tony Martin** remarked that he thought Training Majors were used to hovering at about 40,000 feet). To round off an interesting weekend, the Deputy Commander 11 Sig Bde, **Col Roger Davenport TD**, visited the Regiment at Colchester TA Centre where a large part of the Regiments assets were located.

JUNIOR NON COMMISSIONED CADRE

The Regiment held its annual cadre course over the weekends 26/27 February and 4/5 March, and utilised two different locations. Although the course was initially loaded with the unlucky number of 13 students, this was reduced to the lucky eleven when two soldiers had to depart early.

The first phase was held at STANTA and consisted mainly of theoretical training, though some foot drill was delivered to the students, giving **Sgt Nigel Back** the opportunity to demonstrate his excellent instructional qualities in this discipline. The course then dispersed to their separate TAC's, no doubt waiting with bated breath for the second, and final, weekend. After five days to catch their breath the remaining students were met at Colchester TAC by the welcoming arms of **SSgt Jim Pollitt** and **Sgt Tim Gamble**, and an early start on Saturday morning seen the course depart for the training area to conduct the field exercise. After completing various military command tasks the students moved on to the BCFT under the strict supervision of **Sgt Back**, who again showed that he was the right man for the job. This was swiftly followed by the IS phase, which was held within Colchester TAC and proved to be a bit of an eye opener for some of the soldiers.

On completion of the field training the course formed up for the final parade which was taken by the RSM, **WO1 Bob Stanton**. Congratulations go to **Sig** (Now LCpl) **Price** who was awarded the coveted Top Student accolade by the new Training Major, **Maj Jim Sykes**, and his efforts were duly rewarded with promotion.

STOP PRESS!!

Belated, but sincere, congratulations go to **WO1 (RSM) Bob Stanton** on commissioning and **Sgt Nige Back** on promotion to Staff Sergeant. All ranks within the Regiment wish them, and their families, all the very best in the future. **Nige** – three mentions in *The WIRE* and you get the beer in, you know the score!!

EXERCISE COCKNEY WALTZ II 2–12 MARCH 2000

by Sgt 'Kev' East

Thursday 2 March saw all nine of us literally wedged into the minibus and en route to Austria. A rough ferry crossing delayed our progress by some hours, but we were all kept amused by **WO2** 'Drew' **Johnston's** stories of how to ski properly – that said, we never heard the ski instructor say get into the egg position once! After arriving in Garmish for our overnight stop, we enjoyed the hospitality of some Americans in their equivalent of the NAAFI. They tried teaching us their dancing techniques but, surprisingly, all the Brits insisted on the traditional Squaddie two step, especially **WO2** 'Steve' **Kentish** who maintained that his American cousins were all 'mighty impressed by it'!

The following morning everyone was up bright and early and we headed off to Mayrhofen, where we were met by perfect weather and snow; everyone was now keen to hit the slopes. Once skis and boots had been fitted our instructor, **WO2** 'Andy' **Aspinall**, had to assess everyone's skiing style so that could see just what he was up against — and boy what a challenge he had on his hands!! On the first day **WO2** 'Andy' **Aspinall** compiled a video of the days activities, which consisted of much falling and various dodgey snow ploughs and parallel turns. This formed the entertainment for the evening when we all (me included) sat laughing at one particular fool skiing like something out of dumb and dumber until the instructor pointed out I was that particular fool — well, I could only improve..

Back Row (L-R): Sig 'Vinnie' Wootton, WO2 Steve Kentish, SSgt Anita Smith, WO2 Andy Aspinall
Front Row (L-R): Sig Emma Burton, Cpl Jase Ballard

We took it in turns cooking for each other, with two people providing some form of culinary delight for the rest of the group. This was a challenge in itself, as some people had never cooked for one let alone nine. That said, most of the food was edible and no one went hungry. The rest of the week was spent learning how to improve our ski technique and attending lectures on various subjects such as the weather and ski equipment. As the week progressed **WO2** 'Andy' **Aspinall** also tested our nerve and courage by inserting various small jumps, obstacles and challenges to the routes. These challenges generally ended with great hilarity at the expense of somebody's dented ego. **Sig** 'Vinnie' **Wootton** performed one of the best jumps and actually managed to sit down in the air with his legs straight out in front of him — a sure bet you wonn't land on two feet!

Mayrhofen had one of its many festivals taking place during our stay, and the streets were full of bands, stalls and people. We felt it would be rude not to join in with the locals in their celebrations, and hit the streets with **Sig** 'Emma' **Burton** fooling most of us with her impression of Dolly Parton, complete with blonde wig and hat. We had been following the new Basic Ski Proficiency Course and at the end of the week it was time for our big test. Nerves were plentiful, with everyone trying to remember to 'hug a tree', not let our arms drop, plant our poles and stay on two feet. We all gained our award and sure enough, **WO2** 'Andy' **Aspinall** was right - even on video we looked better, although **Sig** 'Emma' **Burton** still skis like Lady Penelope and **Sig** 'Ian' **Heseltine** can still lick snow with the best of us! After a week of various weather conditions, from bright sunshine to blizzard conditions, we set back for good old 'Blighty' with everyone full of tales of our adventures and achievements. A good time was had by all, and our thanks go to **SSgt Smith** for organising the whole trip.

37 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col P. J. Grogan**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Fisher**

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

RHQ has seen a number of visits over the past period, but one in particular stands out, and that is the visit to Redditch of the Armed Forces minister **Mr John Speller MP**. The Minister's visit coincided with the National Territorial Army Recruiting Day, which took place on Saturday 25 March 2000. After a Regimental brief given by the CO, he was escorted to the Kingfisher Centre by the CO, 2IC, Adjt and RSM, to meet the Soldiers of HQ Sqn at the recruiting stand on a busy shopping day. There **Mr Speller** had the opportunity to speak to members of HQ Sqn and the local public In addition RHQ has seen some personnel changes, saying goodbye to the (RSM), **WO1 Joe Cox**, now known as **Capt** 'Anthony' **Cox** and saying hello both to **WO1 (RSM) Mo Fisher** and to **Maj Tim Pender-Johns**, who takes over the vacant Training Major post.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. Riley**
SSM **WO2 J. Krikorian**

Fantastic, brilliant, great fun, were just a few of the comments being made by a group of 17 professional actors who attended training with the Squadron over the weekend of 21 to 23 January 2000 at Leek Training Camp. I received a request from 'Teddy' **Kindell,** Director of the Redditch Theatre, who wanted his cast of actors to undergo some military training to assist them with a modern version of the play 'Macbeth'. This was an interesting project with good training and public relations potential. A training programme was designed and the actors arrived for their Basic Recruit Training at Leek Camp on the Friday Evening. Reveille was at 0600hrs on Saturday, which came as a shock to the group and comments like, 'But it's still dark,' fell on the deaf ears of **Sgt Matt Bellamy** who had volunteered to wake everyone. After a hurried breakfast, equipment and rations were issued and the actors were transported onto the training area for a demanding programme. The group were detailed into two sections with **Sgt Andy Bennett** and **Cpl Glen Draper** leading Section 1 and **Sgt Matt Bellamy** and **Cpl John McCarthy** leading Section 2.

The morning started with weapon training, followed by field-craft and section attacks. The sections were also shown how to construct a bivi and cook a 24hr ration pack. **Sgt Andy Bennett** who then supervised each section on bayonet practice demonstrated the use of a bayonet. One female member of the group was so enthusiastic when impaling the bayonet into the dummy that the tip of the bayonet broke off. The comment, 'Never mess with a woman,' was heard coming from her

smiling, satisfied grin. The training went on into the late evening with night movement and reaction to enemy contact. By the time weapons were returned to the armoury the actors had been on the go for over 14 hours and they were tired but still full of enthusiasm. They were allowed a lie in on the Sunday until 0630hrs. The ladies were the first to arrive for breakfast but the men had to be woken up, which was a pleasure for the instructors who seemed to enjoy this task. The Sunday training programme consisted of drill and assault course practice. The weather had been dry all weekend but very cold, so much so that there was a thin layer of ice on the water at the rope swing obstacle, but this was soon broken when a few of the actors went in.

Sgt Andy Bennett (left) supervises from a safe distance whilst the actors demonstrate the use of a bayonet

Once the training had finished the actors all said how much they had enjoyed the weekend and how valuable the training had been. Prior to the weekend the actors had commented on how little they had known about the TA but they now understood it's role. The enthusiasm and the way the actors responded to the training was commendable, they were receptive and eager to learn which impressed all the DS. The instructors stated that it had been a pleasure to teach this group and I believe that they also gained valuable experience from the weekend, learning new skills on how to adapt and respond to a group of 'civilians' eager to learn about the TA. The group are all professional actors, who have starred in TV shows such as the 'Bill' and 'Clocking off' and most have performed in stage plays around the country. The Squadron had certainly made an impression on these young budding stars and a tremendous opportunity had been made possible to promote the TA. The Territorial Army needs to promote itself to the local community and become more active in local events if it is to be recognised and accepted. This event achieved this and more.

Hard to imagine these two women had volunteered to rough it with the TA and experience how to live under a makeshift shelter They had a starring role in the forthcoming play as the 'witches'

67 (QOWWY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj R. Hall**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) M. H. Walker**

The Squadron has been surprisingly busy the early part of this Millennium. In particular an OBUA Exercise, Ski-ing excursion and a major Squadron social. My field reporter at SENTA was **Cpl Danny Harford** whose exclusive report will be attached. The ski princess who can give us her piece on the piste is **Cpl Catherine Smith**. The Squadron Social Draw held in mid-January was expertly organised by the brothers **Sgt Mick** and **Cpl Andy Clarke** with the versatile **Cpl Catherine Smith**. Our OC, **Maj Dickie Hall** took the opportunity to invite our new CO, **Lt Col P. J. Grogan** and his lady wife to the event, which they enjoyed immensely. Lots of prizes were won and exchanges done on the night and a great evening was had by all therefore our thanks go out to the above-mentioned organisers. The shooting season is upon us again and the 'dead-eyes' are getting selected and pruned for the main forthcoming competition events, the Corp SAAM in April and the 143 Bde SAAM in May. We had a very good shooting weekend in February where the potential shooters were weeded out and scrutinised by the Regimental Shooting Officer, **Capt Mal Cooper** and the Squadron Shooting NCO, **Sgt Dickie Fisher**. I have the honour to humbly announce that yours truly, **WO2 Ray Campbell**, has been chosen with **Sgt Mick Clarke, Cpl Pete Buka, Cpl Andy Clarke, Cpl Catherine Smith, Sig Neil Pearson** and **OCdt George** to represent the Regiment.

At the time of writing the Squadron is getting geared up for the planned TA Open Day on Saturday, 25 March 2000. We have had the meeting and the briefing with the set-up, and the final rehearsal is upon us soon. Our hope is to high-light our existence in the Stratford/Warwick area and hopefully as a bonus attract the correct type of recruit.

EXERCISE BOTHIE DRAGON II 12-20 FEBRUARY 2000

On the 12 February a small party from 67 Sqn (Stourbridge TAC) headed North for the Regimental ski trip to Aviemore in the Cairngorms of Scotland. We met up with members from HQ, 96 and 93 Sqns en route, the conditions getting progressively worse (for driving) the further North we got. This meant that what could have been a ten hour journey became a 14 hour journey, with speeds of less than 30mph in the Highlands, and lots of pushing required to get the minibuses up to our home for the week, Rothymurchus Lodge. However, after getting the DS minibuses up the hill as well, we were greeted with beer and a Sunday morning lie in (8am!).

The snow already looked promising on Sunday with the need to piste (level out) the snow on the Lodge's own little dry slope. Once we'd had our kit issued a few of us, eager to get our skis on, were more than happy to do this. **Cpl Catherine Smith** fell for a pair of ski boots in Doug's shop at the Lodge and decided to buy not borrow, nice boots though! Then in the afternoon the instructors did an assessment of our skiing abilities (or not) to decide which groups we'd be in. In the evening we did what would become a ritual (weather permitting); in the minibuses, off to Aviemore to try the beverages and test our vocal chords wherever there happened to be a Karaoke.

Due to high winds and closed roads, our first day of skiing instead turning into a day of swimming in Inverness, followed by ski lectures/presentations back at the Lodge. Fortunately this did not happen again. Although due to it still being windy on Tuesday, even the Gun Barrel (a long downhill straight) was hard work - head down and tuck in - and we still had to use our poles to push our way to the bottom rather than get blown back up the hill! **Sig Jo Dean** got promoted to the Intermediate Group, joining **Sig Liz Mansell** and **Capt Fowler-Smith** was promoted to the Advanced Group (although he started to regret it towards the end of the week). **Catherine** managed NOT to get demoted from the Advanced group. Meanwhile **LCpl Fred Smart, Sig Sarah** 'Smelly' **Kennedy** and **Rct Janet** 'Paddy' **Dornan** can ski - even if they don't always listen to their instructor - and now have first hand experience of après ski!

Throughout the week we had all manner of weather, including sunshine, with mostly good skiing conditions - we could have easily been somewhere a little more exotic than Scotland. By Friday the Exercise was starting to take its toll on some of the group, and **Sarah's** bruises started to cover the whole of her body, but this didn't stop us from making the most of our free-skiing day on Saturday (once the mist had lifted) before driving back to our respective TAC's (and the prospect of our comparatively mundane civvy jobs!). A good week was definitely had by all.

EXERCISE 'MILLENNIUM WARRIOR' (JANUARY 2000)

This was an OBUA training exercise held in the Sennybridge Training Area, over the weekend of 7-9 January 2000. Involved in the weekend were 67 and 96 Sig Sqns, The aim of the weekend was to train and practise the Squadron's skill in Operations in built up areas. This was a challenging and fun exercise and there was a great deal learned by everyone. Saturday was split down into three phases, clearance of buildings, fighting in tunnels and sewers and building entry. First we were given a comprehensive brief of Cellini village and a film on OBUA, then we were let loose. Our first phase was the building clearance. Making full use of the purpose built training house we practised room clearance, with the help of the trusty rock grenade. After successfully clearing the building to the satisfaction of the DS we were despatched to our next phase.

The Tunnels: This involved us getting from Point 'A' to Point 'B'. Unfortunately our first effort led by **Sgt Mick** 'Pathfinder' **Clarke** resulted in us going from Point 'A' to Point 'A' without even a glimpse of Point 'B', so emerging into daylight only to find that we were back at the start resulted in several strong words exchanged mostly at **Sgt Clarke** remarking on his parent's possible marriage at the time of his birth. Once more we entered the tunnel only this time we were more successful.

The Blackout House; This passed without any great incidents and we emerged happy to see that it was indeed still daytime, but this phase was still not over yet. One last task and that was us finished.

The Sewer; we dropped into the sewer one by one and crawled, duck walked and bumped our way to the exit. After turning the last corner the exit could be seen by everyone except me. I was at the rear behind **Cpl Andy Clarke** (Yes they are related). Everyone was shouting that they could see daylight. The only thing I saw was a full eclipse of the sewer, that was until **Cpl Clarke** was lifted out and I was then bathed in beautiful sunlight. I emerged like a mole that had been underground for days. That over and done with we moved on to our final phase.

The Building Entry; Here we were introduced to different methods of entering a building other than by the front door. We were also warned not to try any of this at home as wives are generally not impressed to find a grenade lobbed through the window followed by her hubby and several squaddies spraying the room with lead. After a spot of compo dinner, we were given orders for the next day's assault of the village. It was then time to prepare for the next task.

The Night Defensive Shoot; Once the ammo was issued it was time to be positioned in the trenches for the shoot. We were told that the targets would be lit by white light to enable us to engage. The shoot started very slowly until people gained more confidence and then all hell was let loose. Now when a target appeared, twenty rifles trained in on it and engaged. Even though hits were not recorded, I'm sure that the persistent wooden targets were scared into submission. Now it was time for some shut eye before the assault on the village.

The Assault on The Village; Form up for the assault was at 0630hrs on the road leading into the village. A cold night and frosty morning made it an interesting move to the form up point due to many people over shooting the location due to them practising their ice skating techniques. The two Squadrons were to assault and clear a side of the designated street each. 96 Sqn engaged and assaulted the first house, then it was 67's turn. We leap frogged like this until 67 Sqn had reached their final objective. **Capt Barker** of the enemy decided to wait in a connecting tunnel between our present position and the final objective. He was hoping to sneak back into our present position. Unfortunately for him we remembered out training and posted a guard by the mouse-hole, which prevented him from surprising us. Meanwhile 96 Sqn had problems taking their final objective due to the DS over preparing the defences. Finally they succeeded, after a bit of trouble from a persistent non-dying sniper. This just left 67 Sqn with their final objective, which was taken and secured.

During the final assault 3 Section of 67 Sqn thanked our PSI, **SSgt Eric** 'Stop stealing my kit' **Head** in the only deserving way and he was engaged by ZULU style volley fire. After a quick debrief and tidy up it was time for the Squadrons to depart and make their way back to their respective TAC's. It is only left for me to thank all those involved in the organising and running of the phases for without them the weekend could not have been as successful as it was.

EXERCISE HIMALAYA DRAGON
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1999
by Cpl John McCarthy

During the months of September and October 1999 over 180 climbers from all ranks and all Regiments and Corps of the Army completed the largest ever Level Three adventurous training expedition to Nepal. Ex Himalaya Dragon was the British Army's Millennium Expedition. It's objective was to place a military team on the top of every one of the eighteen trekking peaks in Nepal. Of the 180+ personnel 25% were from TA units, four of which were from 37 Sig Regt. I was fortunate enough to be one of those selected. The eighteen months of preparation included obtaining the required minimum qualifications ie: Summer Mountain Proficiency (getting wet in Wales), and Winter Mountaineering Introduction (getting very cold in Scotland). I also raised over £300.00 in sponsorship by mountain biking the Yorkshire Dales Way, selling raffle tickets and the usual extortion of the lower ranks. I was able to obtain several thousand pounds worth of sponsorship from a very generous local corporate sponsor, 'CMR Consultants', a local company specialising in providing businesses with tailor made packages saving money on phone and energy bills. They became the sponsors of my team, which successfully completed Kongma Tse peak at 5,800 metres.

After arriving in Kathmandu the various teams organised themselves and departed towards their different destinations. Ours was the Khumbu region east of Kathmandu involving an internal flight to Lukla, the third most dangerous airport in the world. After almost boarding the wrong plane (on the plane/off the plane!) we eventually came in to land on a runway less than 200 metres long, carved into the side of a mountain and sloping at a 30 degree angle. It was a religious experience. After landing, just when we though it was safe, the plane taxied and hit a stationary helicopter with it's wingtip.

During the next 11 days we climbed over 3000m trekking through amazing scenery and sleeping in small villages. The diet was very repetitive and bland, never quite containing enough calories or protein. The trek became progressively harder as we gained altitude with the lowering amount of oxygen in the air. With only two pairs of underwear and socks and only one opportunity to shower for four weeks I was driven to strip washing in glacial streams. The water was close to freezing and certainly revitalised the body, reaching parts even Heineken never knew existed. The night at high camp (5400m, almost 3 1/2 miles high,) I found uncomfortable with ice inside the tent and very little sleep due to a constant headache and difficulty in breathing. On several occasions I coughed up large solid lumps with blood, which caused obvious concern.

The attempt at the summit the next day was incredible. We started at 0600hrs in sub zero temperatures. It was extremely hard going due to the altitude, even taking photos or drinking left us breathless, I was stopping every 20 paces to catch my breath. The top of Kongma Tse peak - 5,800m is approximately double the total heights of the three highest peaks in England, Scotland and Wales - Scafell Pike, Ben Nevis and Snowdon. The amount of oxygen available is less than 1/2 that at sea level. After returning from the peak I was suffering the effects of mild/moderate acute mountain sickness. My heart rate was 99bpm and oxygen saturation 60 % and I had difficulty with co-ordination and concentration but after losing several hundred metres altitude it improved.

Cpl (Superman) John McCarthy poses on top of the World
He said that he did it the hard way
and actually climbed the mountain instead of flying

During the next eight days we trekked across mountain passes and glaciers to Gokyo peak 5350m, then descended back to Lukla for our return flight to Kathmandu. A few days good food and sightseeing were enjoyed before flying back to Blighty. During the flight back to the UK I started experiencing severe stomach cramps. They continued to become worse whilst returning on the motorway, resulting in stops every half an hour allowing me to empty the contents of my bowels and stomach. I didn't know whether the bottom was falling out of my world or the world was falling out of my bottom. The food poisoning was quite severe; it was a full week before I was farting with confidence. Despite the exhaustion, stomach problems, weight loss, headaches and severe body odour it was a once in a lifetime, awesome experience. The Nepalese are incredibly friendly and the views breathtaking. I would strongly recommend trekking in the Himalayas to anyone.

In appreciation of the welcome and support provided by the people of Nepal the Army is establishing a long-term medical project to supply doctors to the country from universities in the UK. The expedition has also provided detailed medical research into some of the effects of high altitude on the body, details of which are held at the Royal Geographic Institute in London. It is hoped that later expeditions will benefit from this study. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody in HQ Sqn who made the expedition possible by sponsoring me with your hard earned money, and of course the powers that be that thought it was a good idea to get rid of me for a month.

39th (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col J. Crackett TD**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) P. Anderson**

5th (QUEEN'S OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON -BANBURY & OXFORD

Sqn Comd	**Maj Rob Stone**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Philips**

EXERCISE GROUND FORCE
CHURCHILL HOSPITAL, OXFORD

Forget Charlie Dimmock and Alan Titchmarsh, a team of ten enthusiastic members of 5 Sig Sqn renovated an internal garden at the Churchill Hospital in Oxford 'Ground Force' Style over the weekend 26–27 February 2000. The project was dreamed up by the PSAO and instigated to raise public awareness of the formation of the Oxford Tp at Slade Park TAC. Sir Winston Churchill served in the Regiment and was Honorary Colonel until his death, his three brothers and many other famous ancestors also served with the QOOH, so the link with the Churchill Hospital deemed good enough reason to carry out the project and attract media interest.

The team led by **Sgt David Jarvis Cleaver** (JC), a landscape gardener, who designed the garden and **Cpl Kevin Durno,** a joiner, started out early Saturday morning to clear the old slabs, overgrown bushes, weeds and debris from the area and prepare the ground for his new design to include curved pathways, new plants, decking and a pergola. The nursing staff and patients had a full view of the events for the whole weekend and saw the transformation of the garden into a safe and comfortable area to sit out during the sunny days to come. The event, as hoped, attracted the media with all the Oxford Newspapers sending reporters and photographers, but the coup was Central TV covering the whole weekend with interviews at the start and completion of the garden. They also filmed the whole event using a time delay camera so we were treated to a 'Ground Force Style' TV Report on the local evening news the following week. The Osler Chest Unit League of Friends provided the funding for the project. **Sister Jo Riley** said the finished garden is wonderful and that she had not seen a bunch of men and women work so hard and enthusiastically.

REGIMENTAL AWARDS

The Skinners Female Best Soldier for the Year 2000

10 Hours to Go!!
SSgt Paul Johnson, Sgt JC, SSgt Bob Matthews, Cpl Sammy Durno and Cpl Kev Durno

EXERCISE DREAMING SPIRES

On Sunday, 27 February 2000, the Squadron held a navigation exercise using Land Rovers to complete a route identified by cryptic clues using BATCO. Navigation skills and driving standards were critical to the event and teams penalised for any breaches of the Highway Code, checkpoints missed and questions answered. All teams completed the course in the allotted time, or did they, some of the answers to the questions were suspect indicating that maybe not all the check points had been visited. To compete the course, the participants had to find the Squadron 2IC in his inconspicuous (bright yellow) command vehicle which proved more difficult than expected. As a result, observation and special awareness training will be given to Squadron personnel, not to mention refresher training on what a no entry sign means and how to navigate a roundabout.

NATIONAL TERRITORIAL ARMY CENTRE OPEN DAY

The National TAC Open Day attracted only the keen public of Banbury, however the Major, **Cllr Jan Justice** and her consort found time in their busy programme to call in for an hour and sample the culinary delights serve up by **Sgt JC,** or were they hiding from the crowds!!

Sgt JC, Cllr Jan Justice and her consort
at the Banbury TAC Open Day 25 March 2000

The representative of The Master Skinners awarded **Cpl Sharon Scutt,** RLC Chef, the prize for the Best Female Soldier on Saturday 1 April 2000 at Browndown Training Camp. Well Done **Sharon**.

ENDEAVOUR AWARD – *by Sig Claire Goodwin*

Sig Claire Goodwin with the Best Endeavour Award

Sig Claire Goodwin joined the Squadron following the 1999 National TAC Open Day. She has achieved a great deal during her first year by attending Annual Cap, 95% of the Training Weekend and the TA Phase 2 Recruit Course. In addition she has gained her Class 3 Radio Operator Trade. This must rate as an excellent success for a TA Soldier during such a short period of time. On top of this she has a full time job with a Mobile Vone!! Company.

THE SAFE DRIVING AWARDS

5 (QOOH) Signal Squadron (V) wiped the board clean with:-

1st Place **Cpl John Smith**
2nd Place **LCpl Paul Docherty**
3rd Place **Cpl Steve Brady**

The Regimental Safe Driving was consequently awarded to the Squadron. Well done to you all.

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

Sqn Comd **Maj R. Tuhey TD**
SSM **WO2 P. Packer**

The last few months have seen the squadron concentrate on completing the Winter trade training cycle. The one training weekend other than an RTW, was the Squadron exercise based on Operations in Built-up Areas (OBUA), Ex Horfield Warrior. The Squadron PSI (Ops), **SSgt Tony Ward** had spent months organising this event and called in numerous favours from his regular army contacts. It was to become an exercise to remember, it was also the first chance for our new Honorary Colonel, **Commodore I. R. Pemberton RD DL RNR** to visit the Squadron in the field.

EXERCISE HORFIELD WARRIOR - *by Cpl 'Wing Nut' Ewing*

During the weekend 25-27 February the Squadron deployed on a FIBUA Exercise designed around a Peace Support Operation (PSO) such as Kosovo scenario. Friday night saw us move to Pilning Ranges on the outskirts of Bristol to meet up with our transport to the exercise area, Chinooks courtesy of the RAF! It was to be the first trip in a helicopter for many of the Squadron, (especially under a tactical scenario) and many a nervous face could be seen in the dim light. The RAF arrived on time and with no time to consider those nerves the first party with FFR underslung took off for SPTA. On arrival at the exercise area, we made our way to the first nights location, a wooded area next to the field latrines! As you would expect after not much sleep an enthusiastic and very noisy enemy attacked us at first light. A hasty withdrawal to our ERV approx 2km away followed. During the withdrawal a member of our section received a broken leg (Ex Play, inflicted on him by **SSgt Tony Ward** our kind PSI (Ops), who in the dim light picked the heaviest bloke in the Squadron to be the casualty, an accident he said)! Improvised stretcher quickly made, on we went with only a little cursing on the way.

Commodore Pemberton meets Sigs Bishop and Laing, accompanied by the OC

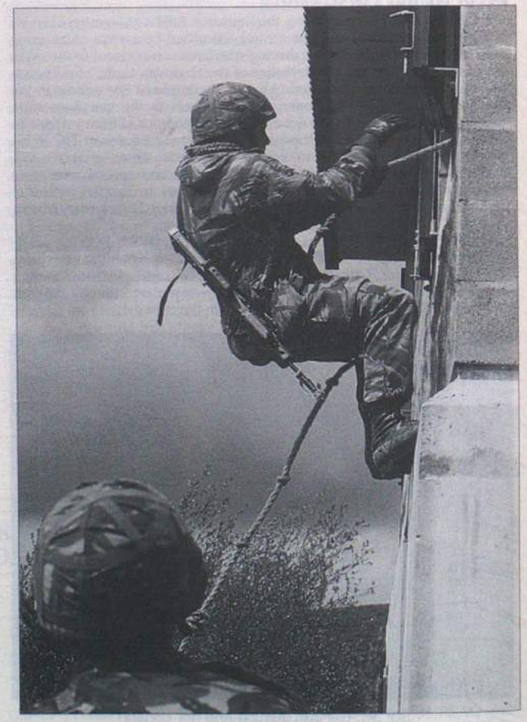
Saturday morning consisted of numerous lessons and demo's on FIBUA training. It has to be said the instruction itself was of the highest standard, **SSgt** 'Spats' **Brodie** and **Sgt Martin Blanchard** (Royal Artillery) are to be congratulated. They put so much enthusiasm into their instruction that it was infectious and enjoyed by all. In the afternoon we had the chance to practice all that we had been taught in the morning. This training was then followed by a final brief from the PSI and we moved off to our night harbour area. During the hours of darkness we mounted three recce patrols to try and establish the strength and location of the enemy in the village we were to attack the following morning.

Sunday 0500hrs - Reveille and pyro issue (Lots, exact amounts withheld in case QM reads this article!). 0600hrs we moved off to the FUP, to our surprise we then came under sustained artillery fire from the village. 0620hrs our own artillery opens up, simulated by 40lbs of PE expertly laid by **SSgt** 'Blinds' **Ward**! That was our signal to attack, for the next one and a half hours all hell let loose, leap froging from building to building and it must be said improving as we got into the swing of it. Then finally the enemy strong hold was in front, ground floor as we found to our cost filled with barbed wire and a GPMG at every first floor window. Entry was gained eventually to the first floor and soon after the DS called a halt. The good guys had, as in the movies, won the day. Exhausted but on a high we sat down and listened to a constructive and detailed debrief from our DS before breakfast.

Once cleared up, and to round off the weekend's training, every one got over their fears of heights and confined spaces on the confidence course. Later as a finale everyone had the chance to throw Molotov Cocktails. Bristolians seemed extremely efficient at this practice, wonder why! A great weekend was had by all, again our thanks to the organisers and DS.

Lt Fensome (R) and LCpl Cornish, Tunnel Rats

'Where is that ruddy house'



The point man gains entry!

47 (MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

Sqn Comd **Maj M. Landsdown TD**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Copsey**

EXERCISE BRAGGEN'S REVENGE

Late on a Friday evening in February, 47 Sig Sqn inserted itself into a Security Force (SF) base in a simulated UN protected enclave near the town of 'Basingrad' on the border between the warring factions of 'Berksovia' and 'Hampovo'. The faction 'players' were kindly provided by servicemen from RAF Northolt and ACF cadets from Uxbridge, based at Honeycroft Hill. During the following 48 hours, in scenarios devised from incidents in the Balkans, soldiers of 47 Sig Sqn set up VCPs carried out numerous patrols and responded to various incidents in support of the local police. Troops were inserted by helicopter and carried out a Cordon and Search Op on an isolated farm making several finds of explosives and light weapons. Other incidents included a simulated helicopter crash, hysterical (unhappy not funny) onlookers and determined journalists. The nerve centre of the whole operation was the Ops Room, capably manned by **Sgt** 'English Bob' **Young** and **LCpl Sophie Spittle**. **SSgt Dave Lambert** stood in as the SQMS proving himself to be a natural ration granddad and a dab hand with the mk1 broom.

The Squadron provided escort duties for VIPs, with mixed results. **Sgt Dave Strevens'** escort patrol was ambushed three times whilst making a determined effort to reach their VIP. Another important task was the clearance of explosives from railway lines, allowing desperately needed food and medical supplies to be moved to where they were most needed. The vehicle checkpoints were busy, as local irregular militia were very active in moving weapons and explosives around the enclave in support of their ethnic cleansing activities. The consequence of this was that the troops had to handle large numbers of prisoners and refugees and it was not always easy to tell which was which. **Sgt Lawrence** 'Forrest' **Vincent-Edwards** took the opportunity to practise some distinctly old fashioned interrogation techniques on the prisoners (see you at the Hague)! The most dramatic incident was a riot on Saturday night, when a crowd of locals, fuelled by alcohol and whipped into frenzy by a local politician, tried to storm the SF base. The Squadron reacted quickly, and the no-nonsense approach of the soldiers on the ground left the rioters in no doubt that the troops meant business, and were prepared to respond with force if necessary.

On Sunday morning, the Squadron was tasked to carry out a thorough search of a factory belonging to the aforementioned politician. The aim was to identify and arrest a suspected war criminal, and also to establish whether the factory was being used in the manufacture of armaments. The troops surrounded the factory and a heavily armed search team went in. After a short firefight three militiamen were dead, one suspected war criminal was in custody and a number of weapons were recovered. The politician was summarily arrested for harbouring a war criminal. This action marked the end of the Exercise, and the Squadron returned to base having successfully curtailed the ethnic cleansing activities of the militia, arrested several troublesome characters and generally given a chance for the peaceful majority to return to a more normal life.

There was a palpable buzz as the troops cleaned their weapons and packed up their kit, although the lack of sleep was beginning to tell. Adrenaline had been flowing and everybody had their own war story to tell. The weekend was rounded off with a quick beer in the 47 Club before returning to friends, family and normality. Finally a MID for **Sigs Clarke** and **Choudhury** who joined the exercise directly from passing out at the Royal Signals Recruit Course. Also a big thanks to the **RSM Paul Anderson, WO2 (RQMS) Mick Ginty** and **WO2 (YofS) Mark Whiting** for all their support and for giving up what would otherwise have been a free weekend for RHQ personnel.

71 (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT BEXLEYHEATH

CO **Lt Col C. H. Turner**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) C. D. Tait**

HELLO AND GOODBYE

Blod passes Cat 'C' at last

The Regiment said farewell to **WO1 (RSM)** 'Blod' **Godwin** in traditional 'Yeomanry' style. The finale was him being led out of the TAC on a horse made for 1 by **WO2 (RQMS)** 'Scouse the Scrounger' **Terry Parle** and his team of merry helpers! **WO1 (RSM) Godwin** is posted to the sunny climbs of JSSU Cyprus on commissioning. The Regiment wishes you, **Mandy** and the little 'Blods' all the very best and good luck in Cyprus. Welcome to **WO1 (RSM) Dougie Tait** who has just been posted in from the 'Iron Division'. Congratulations on your promotion and hope you enjoy your tour with the Regiment.

265 (KCLY) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Hugh Robertson TD**
SSM **WO2 Stuart McHenery**

CROYDON CENTENARY PARADE

This year celebrates the centenary of the Sharpshooters. To mark this momentous occasion we joined with our 'sister' unit, C Squadron of the Royal Yeomanry, for the Centenary Parade through Croydon on Saturday, 4 March. This was the first time that the Royal Signals element of the Sharpshooters had been able to bear arms through Croydon, C Squadron being awarded the Freedom in 1993. It was a fine crisp sunny day which commenced with the obligatory drill practice at early o'clock within the TA Centre. The parade commenced with an inspection from the Sharpshooter's Honorary Colonel, **Julian Radcliffe OBE TD** on the parade square within the TA Centre. We then commenced the marching element of the parade through Croydon High Street, lead by the band of the Royal Yeomanry. A rather interesting concept for all participants having to literally dodge the shoppers along the pedestrian precinct outside Marks and Spencer. The GOC London District took the salute on the steps of the Town Hall at which point we then returned to the TA Centre for an address by the GOC. A thoroughly enjoyable day was had by all participants and we can't wait for the next one in 2001!

NATIONAL OPEN DAY

This year TA National Open Day was held on 31 March. The Squadron displayed several stands at our two local Town Centres of Bexleyheath and Brighton. Both sets of displays were well received by the general public, with many enquires. The open day this year was the high point in the Regiment's recruiting drive, we managed to acquire six potential recruits from Bexleyheath and 16 from Brighton. True to tradition the Squadron managed to field the majority of its personnel in different kinds of military attire, ranging from Blues to Combat 95. The day was viewed by most participants as a reminder to the public of who we are where we are and what we do and the benefits of signing up.

884 TROOP

Since Camp 1999 there have been some changes at 884 Tp down here in Brighton. We are establishing our relationship with our new neighbours in the TAC, the Princess of Wales Royal Regiment (PWRR).

The Weekend One Team with a gap left for Sgt Foy
(L-R): Sgt Hancock, Sig Thomson, GAP, Sig Blaber and Cpl Birch

We are gradually getting used to their way of life – sleeping in muddy cold wet fields in the middle of winter – they don't appreciate the finer side of cosy NCRS trailers do they! Or the instant 'where is the whitener' cuppa. Never-the-less we felt it would be rude to say NO when they invited us to play 'enemy' on two of their Exercises recently – good infantry time for us – not so many chances these days-so off we went. Weekend Round One –**Sgt Hancock, Sgt Foy, Cpl Birch, Sig Blaber, Sig Thomson** – blatting some rounds into 'our' enemy. Knowing where the enemy is coming from makes it all the more fun. The Signallers amongst us learnt quickly, but not as fast as **Sgt** 'Where are my teeth' **Foy** who played the part too hard and fired his cocking lever through his lip and teeth. How DID he do that! It only hurt when you make me laugh he said. True squaddie humour!

On the second weekend **SSM McHenery, Sgt Ridgwell, Sgt Vincent, LCpl Cox, Sig Reeve** and **Sig Cooke** joined us for a fire and manoeuvre exercises- Fighting In Woods and Forests. We quickly learned that close quarter work requires faster rates of fire and Automatic fire was the order of the day. **Sgt** 'Rambo' **Ridgewell** seemed invincible bounding through the trees. **Sig** 'Sapper' **Reeve** relearns the art of tree climbing but being seven foot tall gives him a head start doesn't it! **LCpl** 'I left the map in the rover' **Cox** was nominated as the duty Clansman battery carrier for doing what he does best, 'No Sir I'm not asleep'. Other Troop news we must mention **LCpl** 'PTI' **Foxwell** on his recent engaged – he is still grinning! **Sgt** 'Caravan-Kev' **Hancock** has been presented with two Caravan History books from troop subscription – he will get his own back though now he is appointed as Troop Sergeant! The inseparable **Cpls Sturman** and **Shannon** working hard in the catering dept created the worlds biggest cheese straw for **SSM** 'Stu' **McHenery** on his leaving-do from the Troop on promotion to Squadron Sergeant Major.

70 (EY) SIGNAL SQUADRON CHELMSFORD AND HARLOW

Sqn Comd **Maj Craig Tallents**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Paul Humphreys**

WELCOME HOME

The Squadron welcomes home **Sig Natasha Brown** on her return from Op Agricola and thank 209 Sig Sqn for looking after her during her tour in Kosovo and giving her such a good time.

EXERCISE BROADS WANDERER

Ex Broads Wanderer was an Adventure/fun weekend held on the Norfolk Broads and organised by **WO2 Mark Bell** OC 881 Sig Tp Chelmsford. Boats were hired and 'Admiral Bell' led the fleet across the Broads. The event was very popular and judging by the War Stories afterwards this is likely to become an annual event.

Ex 'Broad Wanderer'
881 Signal Troop Flotilla on the 'Broads'

The Cabin Crew
(L-R): Sig Kerri Franklin, LCpl Charlotte Foakes, Sgt Nick Wilks, Sgt Mark Gatward

TERRITORIAL ARMY NATIONAL OPEN DAY

The TA Centre at Chelmsford, which is shared with C Coy East of England Regiment received many visitors on the Open Day. The Infantry, Cadets and 881 Sig Tp provided Displays. The visitors were impressed we are hopeful that it will produce potential recruits. 881 Sig Tp also provided a Comms and Recruiting Display in the centre of Chelmsford on a busy Saturday they received many visitors both young and old and of course a few of TA age.

Chelmsford Recruiting Display
The OC convincing the young lady that her future is in the TA
(L-R): Potential Recruit, Maj Craig Tallents, Cpl Natalie Gilbey, SSgt Jim Swain

882 Sig Tp Harlow manned both the TA Centre and had a display in the Town Centre of Harlow. At the TA Centre they were assisted by B Coy (Essex Yeomanry) Cadets who displayed recruit training for Cadets. The display in Harlow town centre was the first time the Squadron have been permitted to have a presence in the town. We are hopeful this is something we can build on for the future.

Harlow Stand in Town Centre
(L-R): Potential Recruit, Sig Laura Godfrey, Sig Stuart Raynor

VISIT FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER

The Commanding Officer visited the Chelmsford TA Centre to witness the Handover of the Squadron from **Maj Simon Palmer TD** to **Maj Craig Tallents**. The Squadron hopes that **Maj Palmer** has settled in RHQ in his new post as the Regiment Ops Officer.

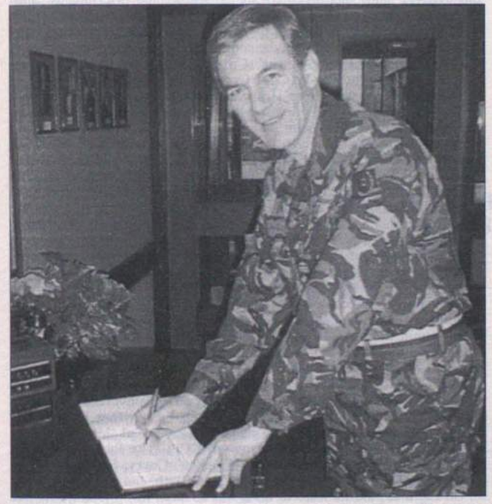
(L-R): Maj Craig Tallents receiving the Squadron from Maj Simon Palmer TD with the Commanding Officer looking on to see fair play

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

2 (CITY OF DUNDEE) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

Sqn **Maj Eric Blyth**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Andy Waterston**

The past three months has been a busy time for the Squadron, with visits from all Comd levels. It has not, however, been all spit, polish and presentations. The visit to the Squadron by the new Dep Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Col C. J. Laurence TD (V)** just happened to coincide with the time honored tradition of celebrating Robbie Burns. The Dep Comd joined the Squadron's Officers and Sergeants' Mess members at their annual Burns Supper on Saturday 22 January 2000. After an aggressive stabbing of the haggis by **SSgt George Cowan** there then followed an excellent selection of Burns Classics, most memorably **Capt Andrew Bruce's** flawless recital of Tam 'O' Shanter (without a note in sight). All, including the incoming Dep Comd 2 (NC) had an excellent evening. As already mentioned the Squadron's Visitors Book has taken a bit of a pounding. The visitors included GOC Scotland, incoming and outgoing Commander 51 Highland Brigade and outgoing Comd, **Brig C. J. Hughes CBE**. Below the new Commander 2 (NC) Sig Bde, **Brig N. C. Jackson MBE** can be seen adding his signature to the already long list of visitors by signing the Squadron's Visitors Book.



In true Squadron fashion promotions were handed out at the unit's Xmas function and congratulations are passed to **LCpl's Rod Hamilton** and **Barry Gayton** on promotion to Corporal and to **Sig Sean Townsley** on promotion to Lance Corporal.

EXERCISE SNOW LION 2000

Exercise Snow Lion is an Army alpine ski championship held in Scotland each year. The Exercise this year was held over the period 14 – 18 March 2000. A member of the Squadron who shall remain nameless (2IC) decided to enter a team from 2 Sig Sqn (V) without telling anyone. A week prior to the event the Squadron was on an adventure training weekend – skiing, which was lucky. The team was picked and briefed accordingly – NOT! The team consisted of **Maj Eric** 'bouncing' **Blyth**, **Capt Joe** 'Nameless' **Meade**, **Sgt Daz** 'Eddie the Eagle' **Collins**, **Cpl** 'Tosh' **McIntosh** and **LCpl Garry** 'Snow Plough King' **Bertie**. The team left sunny (ha, ha) Dundee on Sunday 12 March to take over the accommodation – well, half the team anyway (**Sgt Collins** and **LCpl Bertie**). The other half would be joining us later – as it turned out, much later.

The seeding races started on Tuesday with **Capt Meade** and **LCpl Bertie** taking part. Somehow **Garry** with his snowplough tuck seemed to go down the seeding (I did tell him he'd be better off staying in bed). **Joe** didn't have the best of days and he slipped further down the seeding list. Wednesday was a great day for skiing (despite the really bad hangover) and snow conditions were perfect, not too many rocks poking through. The course was set – Giant Slalom, just a matter of tucking up and making every gate. **Joe** had a good run, followed by **Daz**. Luckily for the other racers, **Garry** had decided to clear the course a little (excellent snow plough turns **Garry**, but its a race). Last came number 163 – he certainly looked the business! Three – Two – One – GO! 'Whoops' was the cry from the Boss as he maneuvered his way down the slope. His first fall came around Gate 10 when his right ski decided to leave the course. His second fall at Gate 14, he was awarded nine out of ten for a triple somersault followed by a double pike. At the finish the Boss looked quite chuffed with himself and went to tell everyone in the vicinity of his great achievement after only three days of skiing.

(L-R): Cpl MacIntosh, Capt Meade, Maj Blyth, Sgt Collins, LCpl Bertie

Saturday was Race Day. This was the one, all the training over and one race left. Race positions were given – **Joe** 108, **Daz** 132, **Garry** 193, 'Tosh' 223 and **Eric** 230. The course was set and was extremely long. **Joe** gave a good account of himself and came in at 1.10, **Daz** not far behind with 1.12. **Garry** gave his usual faultless display and effort with 1.28. We needed 'Tosh' to do a sub – 1 min to have any chance of a team trophy, the pressure was really on. After his seventh toilet visit it was his turn to do his bit. With pressure being piled on by Team Captain **Joe**, 'Tosh' headed off to the start. After the usual barracking by the rest of the team off he went, but minus his usual self-confidence. Down through the first few gates no problem, looking good with his winter woolies on, and size 11 Dr Who boots! Then came the tricky bit of the course and this is where it all went wrong. A civilian entered the course whilst he was in mid tuck/semi snowplough (so he says), losing vital seconds off his pretty average time of 1 min 12 seconds (for a ski instructor). A little while later it was the Boss's turn. He was looking a little more relaxed than during the last race and maneuvered his way through the gates without too much difficulty and finishing with a respectful time (not disclosed, strangely).

As the team sat at the prize giving ceremony it was very noticeable that our table was the only one of about 40 tables with no silverware. Not too downhearted, it was decided that next year was going to be our year and we must start training much earlier.

WHY NOT VISIT THE ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM?
FOR OPENING HOURS RING: 01258 482248

20 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

Sqn Comd **Maj I. G. Standen**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. Lawes**

Since returning from post Op Palatine leave the Squadron has spent a busy few weeks shaking out into our new garages and push starting some reluctant AFV 43's. Is there light at the end of the tunnel? The Squadron welcomes **Sgt Corcoran, Cpl Robins, LCpls Sheppard** and **Nix, Sigs Light, Cannon, Ashdown, Hancock, Brown, Jones** and **Holmes** and congratulates **WO2 (YofS) Bill Walker** on his selection for promotion, and **Capt Rhidian** 'Does this mean I'll have to be responsible now?' **Jones** on his third. The Squadron welcomes its new 2IC, **Capt Ben Fitch,** last seen cutting his rover free from the perimeter barbed wire of the HQ in the middle of the night during his first Brigade Exercise, and bids a sad farewell to **Capt Nick O'Kelly,** who conveniently forgot to load the camera with film for his own leaving photos!

CORPS' SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS - *by LCpl Mat Coverley*

We arrived in Zell-am-See in Austria on the Friday night ready to race on the Monday. **LCpl Tony Ramwell** and **Cpl Si Harris** needed the practice so they arrived a week earlier. On the Monday the weather had deteriorated so much that the officials cancelled the race. The day was spent on the smaller slopes drinking hot chocolate and Glüwine. Tuesday was when the action started, and as the previous day had been cancelled, we raced twice in one day which meant a late finish. At the end of the Championships the team won the minor units competition, second in the Slalom and second in the Combined Units. The overall seedings for the members of the team were as follows: **LCpl Tony Ramwell** was seeded fourth, **LCpl Mat Coverly** was seeded ninth, **Cpl Si Harris** was seeded twent-first and **Lt Rhid Jones** the Team Captain was seeded nineteenth. All gained very good positions ready for the Divisional Championships.

1 (UK) ARMOURED DIVISION SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS
by LCpl 'A' Doyle

After a very successful Corps' Championships the team was ready to take on the best of 1 (UK) Armd Div in Les Contamines in South France. Prior to this we underwent our own pre divisionals in Chamonix. **LCpl Tony Ramwell** took the team through a rigorous week of ski race training. Chamonix was the perfect resort for this with its bustling nightlife skiing. After a couple of days on the piste we had our legs back in and a hangover or two to boot! On Sunday the 16th we departed Chamonix for Les Contamines and the Divisional Championships. Day One was the Giant Slalom seeding in which everybody moved up the ladder especially **Sig Ross Phillips** who did especially well considering lack of race experience. After the GS seeding we had the actual race in which I took a nasty fall in the first race but managed to pull it out of the bag for the second. **Cpl Si Harris** was being his usual self and consistent results got him further up the seedings. **Lt Rhid Jones** was adamant that being team captain meant that he should win every race! **LCpl Tony Ramwell** was struck down with a bout of Asian flu and couldn't match his previous times but did well considering. Following the GS came the Downhill in which the Team Captain, who swapped his brains for guts, managed a splendid time to shoot further up the seedings. The Slalom followed the Downhill in which I did well, romping home fastest out of the team, **LCpl Ramwell** was still suffering and **Cpl Harris** firmly believed that reverse pirouetting was the way forward! Finally we had the Super G which fazed us all except for **Lt Jones** who came home in a very good time to take 49th in the individual combination. Congratulations to the team who came a convincing second in the minor units and first in the minor units Super G. We left Les Contamines in good spirits and we are already planning next year's competition.

EXERCISE VINCENZ DASH

'Mad Dogs and English men go out in the mid-day sun', however, only mad Irishmen dream up ideas to run from Banja Luka to Paderborn! The watery summer sun in the Metal Factory made a fine backdrop to such a bold idea. Two months later at 6am on a very wintery morning the idea seemed more stupid than bold. However, **Capt Crowther** led the lucky eleven out the gates of Banja Luka Metal Factory to begin the epic 1250km (actually it was 1456km thanks to the cunning Slovenian road system!).

Exercise Vincenz Dash began life in Autumn when 1 RHF planned to undertake an identical charity event to their base in Fallingbostel. Never one to let a challenge go by, **Capt Crowther** picked up the gauntlet and began convincing the lucky volunteers how they would enjoy a run back to Paderborn. The object was to raise DM 17,000.00 for a portable incubator for the St Vincenz Krankenhaus, Paderborn. The unenviable task of coercing people into parting with their hard-earned cash was gainfully accepted by the likes of **LCpl 'Oz' Osmond** who definitely showed a flair at relieving soldiers from their D Marks. Likewise, on the home front, the rear party was working hard and commandeered some sizeable funds from some generous organisations. Meanwhile the training sessions continued unabated, thanks to the mundane and ritualistic routine that is Op Palatine and to the inventiveness of the PTI, **LCpl Douglas** of 249 Sig Sqn (AMF (L)). Within no time, it was 3 December 1999 – our final night in Banja Luka. Half the team were quietly getting ready for the early morning start, while the other half had pushed forward to the hand-over point in Croatia. As six o'clock struck on the morning of 4 December, the team began its long haul back to Barker Barracks. The first leg was accompanied by the OC, **Maj Standen**, who set a nice comfortable pace for **Sig Hayley Armour**! From then on we were on our own, as the team found its running legs, the racing snakes forged through Koserac, Prijedor and onto Bosanski Novi well within the allotted time. As **Sig** 'Sprinter' **Flannagan** stormed into Croatia he met our second team – the admin bus (NOT) headed up by **SSgt** 'Yucca Brothers' **Yates**. It would set the tone for the next five days – admin was just not their forte!

Undeterred by some very changeable weather we had ticked Bosnia and Croatia from our list within 24 hours and were heading into the foothills of the Alps. Morale remained high and progress was steady; maintained, no doubt, by an endless supply of Twix and Nutri grain bars donated to us by the NAAFI and supplemented by a wholesome McDonalds meal whenever we could spot the golden arches!!! By the halfway point we had successfully broken the back of the Alps along with our own backs and legs were beginning to ache. Some people just 'grinned and bared it' with the help of some 'Airborne-power' (**Cpl McFaul**); some assured the team that 'it was all in the mind' (**Capt Crowther**) and some overcame it by layering their legs with Deep Heat and running backwards (it was very funny **Sig Flannagan**). The longest stretch was through Germany, so far we had made each checkpoint by eating into out nights sleep but it was worth it. Credit must be given to the police forces of Croatia, Slovenia, Austria and Germany who religiously, at about 3am would confront our bivvies with questions of vagrancy. Luckily a combination of pidgeon German, the luck of the Irish, Jedi Mind Tricks and scruffy fax paper from the various embassies was enough to send them on their way with quizzical smiles and bids of 'Good Luck'. At 2130hrs on Thursday 9 December, with a couple of hours to spare, the exhausted runners ran through the gates of Barker Barracks and straight into the NAAFI for a few well deserved beers and a warm reception party of champagne before heading home for some hot baths. A gruelling six days had been very successful. The anecdotes surrounding this venture, like the niggling injuries, are far too numerous to mention in detail but they will provide many a smile throughout the Squadron for some time to come.

A fitting conclusion to this excellent achievement was held on Saturday 11 Dec 1999 when the team ran/limped/hobbled through Paderborn to the KinderKlinik to present the portable incubator. The event was followed by a warm reception that poured due praise onto all involved. The team included **Capt** 'Don't worry its all physiological' **Crowther, SSgt** 'Yucca Brother' **Yates, Cpl** 'Badge of Courage' **McFaul, Cpl** 'Mo' **Morrison, LCpl Moss, LCpl** 'Stray Dog' **Osmond, LCpl** 'The Journalist' **Daley, Sigs** 'Pete & Hayley' **Armour, Sig** 'Chicken' **Curry, Sig** 'I'm more a 200m sprinter man' **Flannagan** and **Sig Hepworth**.

On a serious note, Ex Vincenz Dash was no mean feat. 1456km over five countries in the middle of winter takes a lot of guts, determination, luck and a massive sense of humour. All those who took part definitely showed those qualities to the full. Bosnia can be rather stagnant and soldiers can leave without any sense of achievement for their efforts. I know that the soldiers who returned from Bosnia on foot – tackled something that most others thought was 'mad' and completed it successfully. Well done to all concerned, no doubt I will come looking for you on my next crazy venture. A final Thank-You to all the units that contributed to Vincenz Dash – your donation has gone to a very worthy cause.

33rd ARMY BOWLING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2000
by Sig Jones (Serving Army Champion)

Yet again Army bowlers descended on Leeds for the 33rd Army Bowling Championships. Another huge turnout from all across the globe mixing veterans and serving members, 154 men and 16 women all trying to be the champion. The competition was broken down into singles, doubles and a team event. All the individual scores being added together for the all events with the top six going onto a round robin final. A fantastic effort from everyone with **Allan Smith (V)** proving to be too good to be stopped by averaging 205 over the whole weekend followed closely by **Sig Jones** and **Kev Horton (V)** both with a 203 average. A lot of good games and series where rolled but by far the highest was **Mark Anderson (V)** hitting a 279 game and a 711 series (three consecutive games).

Results:	Ladies Masters Champion	**T. Cavill**	714
	Men's Masters Champion	**A. Smith**	1146
	Serving Army Champion	**S. Jones**	4679
	Unit All Events Champions	SEME(A)	8447

ALPHA TROOP - *by Sig Hepworth*
Tp Comd **Capt R. Jones**
Tp SSgt **SSgt M Payne**

The rain begins to pour down signalling the return of 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200) from it's operational tour to Bosnia in December 1999. We begin by reassembling 800m of garage space whilst preparing all vehicles and kit for exercise. With wagons in desperate need of their crews due to a four month deployment to Bosnia, we set about our work. Our first problem was lack of vehicles actually on the road and our second would be the lack of manpower. With a lot of teamwork and effort we deployed for a week of training within six working weeks of our return. For everybody this was a good chance for hands on training and the exercise was concluded with good results leaving us well prepared to deploy with the staff officers the following week. With this final hurdle out of the way we could get back to our vehicles and maybe the odd sports afternoon. The Troop is soon to be losing **Capt Jones** - the Alpha Tp morale officer, the Squadron barman - **Cpl Rushton, LCpl Nolan** - the shandy man, **Sgt Cade, Sig Kath Blatcher** and finally **Sgt Steve Mayell**. They will all be missed within the Squadron and we wish them the best in their future postings.

BRAVO TROOP - *by Sig Flannagan*
Tp Comd **Lt P. N. Randell**
Tp SSgt **SSgt J. Crabb**

The troops back from another Op tour of Bosnia were eager to get started back at work. This consisted of moving garages and offices from Barker Barracks to STC and getting crews back to wagons for some sorely needed maintenance. With bums to seats, the Troop started prepping the wagons for the inevitable onslaught of exercises which were about to start. With a lack of commanders, drivers and new faces having to learn the hard way, we were able to deploy on our first Exercise having been back at work for only six working weeks since our last Op Tour. The results of this exercise left the Troop with a good base to work from when we inevitably had the staff with us the following week. After being praised by our OC for a job well done we were able to get back to working on the vehicles, having sports afternoons and going on a well organised brewery trip. The Troop has gained a new face in the form of **Sig Steve Cannon** who is working hard on the Admin wagon. Also we are losing **LCpl Steve Bowring, Sig Sarah Booker, LCpl Davey Carnbell, LCpl Andy Moss** and **Sig Stillie.** Best wishes and good luck for the future.

SUPPORT TROOP - *by LCpl Crawshaw*
Tp Comd **Maj (QM) M. Bohanan**
Tp SSgt **SSgt H. Cappelman**

Support Tp have had a very busy period since the unit returned from Bosnia. The QM's Dept have moved from Barker Barracks to join the rest of the Squadron in Antwerp Barracks. As well as being on Exercise Mailed Might and Mailed Maestro the QM's Dept have been busy planting flowers and painting floors. I would like to congratulate **Sig Daniel Bishop** on going four months between RTA's, the longest period since joining the army, and for coming second on his all Arms Storeman's course. The Troop would also like to say good-bye to **LCpl Micky Gorton** (RLC) who will be missed just because of his dry sense of humor. Also a good bye and farewell to **Sig Booth** who has been posted to 1 (UK) Armd Div. We would also like to give a mention to **LCpl Mooney** because of the amount of work he does (not), **Cpl Tyrrell** who deserves a mention just so that he can put his hand in his pocket for a change and get the beer's in. Just a quick mention of **RQMS Beech** because this is the first chance I have had to welcome him to an extremely busy QM's Dept.

MAINTENANCE TROOP - *by Sig Albiston*
Tp Comd **Capt C. Crowther**
Tp SSgt **SSgt M. Yates**

Life in the gene bay has been pandemonium recently, with the mad rush of exercises. However, as usual the amazing Ed's have coped outstandingly despite losing two of their star players, **Sig Currie** and **Sig Maxwell,** who are out in Kenya chasing wildlife or something. The arrival of **Sig Smith** has seen a working rise of body piercing and strange habits. The gene bay is empty most afternoons except for all the junk that **Cpl Plant** has acquired, as most of the Ed's are out limping around Sennelager training for the Lanyard Trophy. Finally congratulations to **LCpl Gaz Manningham** on the late arrival of his new motor which will lead to the sad parting of his old shed, never mind someone will buy it **Gaz** (try the line bay).

4th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

CO **Maj A. H. Campbell-Black**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D. W. Craig**

SUPPORT TROOP
QM **Capt Pete McElwee**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Paul Buckley**

The past few months have been a busy time for the Troop, with **Sgt Jim Lyons** demanding that all ITDs were completed before the end of March, and the OC that every one was to take their leave before April. **Sgt** 'Horrid' **Ives** our URS Sergeant was over the moon when told that all leave had to be taken, this would enable him to visit his girlfriend and therefore would not have to spend up to three hours per night on the phone. Is it true that you have shares in BT Cellnet? On the 22 March the Officers, Warrant Officers and Senior NCOs of the Squadron along with members from the Brigade (not forgetting the Garrison RQMS, **Mr Jim Kimber**) bid farewell to **Capt Martin Smith MBE, Sgt Gordon Quigley** and their families. The evening was enjoyed with some excellent food, washed down with a small amount of drink. (Yes we have seen the advert on television with regards to alcohol)

ADVENTURE TRAINING

In March **Sgt Jim Lyons** held an Adventure Training week in Wertach (Southern Germany). **Sgt Mick Pryce, Sig Daz Burdon, Sig Fran Francis, Sig Leroy Thewlis, Sig Steve Custy** and **Sig Billy Conley** all left for a well-earned break from the busy life within the Squadron. Day One was a laugh for the first timers, when asked to shuffle forward some went backwards and the rest of us went everywhere. There were legs every where. By mid week we were getting to grips skiing, **Sig Daz Burdon** thought he was the 'Eddie the eagle of the 2000's' and was throwing himself off mountains: you could not stop him and the only way he could stop himself was to turn into a human snowball. Everyone had a good time and some of us have even agreed to do it again - it certainly beats working for a living.

WELCOMES & FAREWELLS

The Troop would like to give a warm welcome to the following and their families: Our new QM, **Capt Pete McElwee, Sgt John Pozzi, Cpl Chris Heap, Cpl Colin Teale, LCpl Gameson, Sig Gordon Tait** and not forgetting our new chef from the Green Howards, **Pte** 'Slops' **Murtagh**. Enjoy your time here and remember you only get back what you put in.

It is always a sad time when the Troop have to say farewell those who have decided to say goodbye to the Army or those that are posted and we have had to say farewell to a few: The Troop wish the following and their families all the best for the future. **Capt Martin Smith MBE, Sgt Gordon Quigley, Cpl Sean Middleton Cpl Stubby Knowles, Cpl Stu Reynolds, Cpl Gordon Nimmo** and **Sig Nige Wilcox's**.

CONGRATULATIONS & PROMOTIONS

We would like to congratulate **Sig** 'Angge' **Angus** and his girlfriend on the birth of their son **Christopher**. Well done to you both.

The past few months have seen some promotions in Support Tp with **Capt Martin Smith** selected for promotions to Major, **WO2 (RQMS) McNaught** to WO1, **SSgt Paul Buckley** to WO2, **Sgt Spike Hughes** and **Sgt Jim Lyons** to Staff Sergeant and **LCpl** (now Cpl) **Pete Dugmore.** Well done to all of you, who said that you will never get promoted in an Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn.

PAPA TROOP - *by LCpl Craig Eden*
Tp Comd **2Lt Dave Hill**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Paul Davis**

It has been another hectic period for the Troop since returning from Christmas leave. This year started with a concentrated few weeks of preparation for second lines which was made all the more difficult with most of the guys away on courses for the Squadron's deployment to Bosnia in June. With second lines out of the way we then faced RSIT, so every effort was made to do all the second line jobs as the Ops team had set a challenge, the best reports for each vehicle (type) crew would receive a long weekend. The Troop won best 436, **LCpl Scott Rose** and **Sig Jim Findlay**, well done **Scott** and **Jim** (that's a crate for the Troop), the Troop also received best 439 for **Cpl Lee Robertson** and best rover det was won by **Sig Lucy Corlett**. This year has also seen three of our guys get promoted, myself (**LCpl Craig Eden)** and **Sig Scott** 'Robo' **Robertson** to Lance Corporal and **LCpl Marcus** 'Polly' **Pollitt** to Corporal (that's three more crates)! Two guys where posted from the unit **Sig Neil** 'Mal' **Mallaburn** to 249 Sig Sqn and **Sig Stu Plant** to 15 Sig Regt good luck lads, also **LCpl Robertson** moved to Oscar Tp. Oh, we went on an all-inclusive mini exercise Monday to Thursday, which was fun! So as this edition comes to a close, the Troop is either away adventure training, on courses, or with the remainder staying behind and holding the fort.

OSCAR TROOP - *by LCpl Ritchie*
Tp Comd **Lt McTurk**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Oliver**

The Troop has been busy preparing for the upcoming Bosnia tour in June. A mixture of the usual ITDs and exercises has been done as well as the normal first and second line inspections. We had a surprisingly good RSIT considering the state of the kit after Kosovo but it proved that there as a lot of hard work put in after the tour. Everyone was glad to get away for leave in February and it was a welcome relief from all the hassles of work. On return we had adventure training either skiing, Lanyard Trophy training, or hill walking in Wales. I went along with 12 others to Wales and did the 'fan dance' around Brecon, lead by **Lt Paul McTurk** who was determined to tell us everything about his homeland - them Welsh hills and valleys. Back to work on 3 April and now we are straight into pre Bosnia training including a lot of cross training in preparation for all the different kit that some operators will have to use. At least we have got some new people to help out in the form of new arrivals **Sig Steve Potts** and **Sig Nicki Earl** and also **LCpl Daz Kirkby**. Unfortunately it will soon be time to say goodbye to **Sig Nicky Dodgson** and **Sig** 'Melter' **Roberts**. Good luck to them in 3 Div and 1 Div respectively. We look forward to the augmentees arriving from 7 Sig Regt, we might even have a full Troop by the time we deploy!

EXERCISE RAT DIAMOND - *by Sig Brierley*

Exercise Rat Diamond
(L-R): Sigs King, Found, Cole and Brierly

It may seem strange for a BFG unit to go hill walking in Wales but when you consider that the aim of the week was to be a cheap and cheerful adventurous 'holiday', it actually proved to be a good option. The plan was to be self sufficient, staying at a different campsite each night and to build up to walking at least a third of the famous 'Fan Dance'. Transport was a huge difficulty but we eventually secured a grant to hire vehicles and drive all the way. Accommodation was tents and food was from Safeway. Easy, simple and safe! Of course there was a bit more to it than just walking. The Exercise OC knew the area well enough to enable us to explore waterfalls, caves, tunnels, cliffs and a few dodgey pubs! We found a campsite at the Castle Inn Pengenffordd near Talgarth and at Pencelli near Talybont to be particularly good with all the facilities including a pub nearby. The first day's walking was over the Black mountains. From there we progressed westwards towards the Brecon Beacons finishing the week with the Fan Dance over Pen-y-Fan, Cribyn, Corn Ddu and others. Of course it was not the 'Full Monty' but a good challenging walk none the less. The week was a success, simple and cheap and we recommend it to any unit short of time, money and instructors as a quick break as long as you avoid any pub near Merthyr Tydfil!

BA(G) MINOR UNITS RUGBY FINAL 11 FEBRUARY 2000
by Sgt Stu Leadbeater

4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (204) and 2 Armd Field Ambulance turned out on a wonderful winters afternoon for the Minor Unit Final. The game started with 2 AFA exerting pressure on 4 Armd for the first ten mins, 4 Armd were camped in their own 22 metre line, then an opportunist try (**Cpl Marcus Pollitt**) broke the deadlock by hacking the ball on to score in the corner. 4 Armd Bde then settled into their game with the forwards starting to dominate in the scrum and loose play led by **Maj Steve Burton** allowing the three quarters to show their talents, running in try after try. At half time the score was 31-0 to 4 Armd Bde. The second half started out with 2 AFA putting up a sound defence but the seeds had been sewn and 4 Armd played some great flowing rugby with both forwards and backs linking together entertaining the crowd and pleasing the coach (**Sgt Stu Leadbeater**). The whole team stuck to the task at hand giving 100% commitment in both halves and enjoying the third half. A special mention should go to **Sig Gaz Reason** playing his first senior rugby match.

Try Scorers:

Maj	**Steve Burton**	x 2
Maj	**Will Bramble**	x 1
WO2	**Dean Briers**	x 1
Cpl	**Marcus Pollitt**	x 2
Cpl	**Rob Sirignano**	x 1
Sig	**Frazer Anderson**	x 1

Conversions:

Cpl	**Marcus Pollitt**	x 5

4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (204)
BA (G) Minor Units Champions 1999/2000-05-03

19 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

Sqn Comd **Maj P. Peel**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. Mitchell**

After a long six months, the Squadron has at last returned from Kosovo with only a few minor hiccups. With all the kit now returned to Catterick, we have a short time to turn around the vehicles before departing on more expensive leave. Almost immediately after returning from the fantastic Kosovan weather, our minds turned from operations to drill as we prepared for the Medals presentations. **Brig Cook** came up from the heights of 11 Sig Bde to present (almost) all members of the Squadron with their well-earned Campaign Medal. The seniors later retired to the Sergeant's Mess for the presentation of LS & GCs to **Sgt** 'Mac' **McGibbon** and **Cpl Ian Kirkland**, and the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal to **Sgt Aidy Lines**. Well done to you all! The day was finished off by an even more well-earned post-tour/Christmas/Millennium celebration at Darlington Rugby Club. Despite **Capt** 'Misinformation' **Griffiths's** attempts to keep the OC away from the party, he did eventually turn up (via the football club), and the Squadron had a good night, (though absentees were noted)!

ALPHA TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt John Griffiths**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Jase Smithurst**

As the Millennium tour of Kosovo started to draw to a close, the arrival of 7 Armd Bde from Hohne was welcomed by all. The outbreak of red rats around the HQ was a sure sign that we would be going home soon and prompted a new high of morale as well as a couple of celebratory two can nights in the bar. The vast majority of the Squadron had the rough end of the stick, having to drive all the vehicles to Thessaloniki and load them on to the ship. Meanwhile, the Brigade staff, Ops team and most of the SNCOs got to fly home direct from Pristina a day early, or that was the plan. The move down to Greece went fairly smoothly up until the point where the plane arrived without any baggage bins and we had to load the entire luggage into the main compartment. However, despite this hiccup, everyone remained relatively calm, safe in the knowledge that the flight from Pristina had been moved to Skopje and delayed by 36 hours and we would be getting home before the staff and SNCOs. He who laughs last……. It was then straight on leave for a week before coming back to the joys of recovering vehicles from the ship. It was with a puzzled surprise that we found we had gained an extra 436 during the voyage, that changed to entertainment when it materialised that 38 Engr had not discovered that they were missing one. The next four weeks were then spent spending all the money that had been saved in the previous six months as the troop departed to various locations around the world. Most had a good time and returned to work refreshed. Unlucky Tommo.

BRAVO TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt Simon Bristow**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Mick O'Brien**

19 Mech. Bde HQ and Sig Sqn were finally leaving Kosovo. With the arrival of 7 Bde smiles were starting to return to the faces of the Squadron.

By the time it came to the drive through to Greece the smiles had turned to huge beaming grins. It was a long drive through the night but the need to gets home kept everyone keen and awake. The smiles were torn from our faces when we were faced with the awful task of loading our own plane with all of our wpns and kit. All of this had to be done in the pouring rain and I am sure that everyone had some choice words to say to Cosair for delaying our flight and making it a miserable one. The Squadron all enjoyed their post tour leave but it was soon time to be back at work. The fun wasn't over yet as the Squadron had organised a millennium party, which was held at a local rugby club. The party went on late into the night, too late for some people. **Sig Ross** 'Full Monty' **Hunter** was found asleep in the toilets but thanks to the rugby club staff managed to make work the next day all be it a little worse for wear!

Although the Squadron is busy turning around the dets from Op Agricola II we still have time to say goodbye to **Sig Shepherd**, **LCpl Gray** and **Capt** 'Where's the Christmas tree?' **Toze** (much to the REME's relief) and all the others who have left the Squadron within the last six months. You will all be missed especially **Cpl Vickers** by his best mate the Yeoman! Good luck to you all. We would also like to welcome the newcomers. Do you know what you are letting yourselves in for?!

SUPPORT TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt (QM) Graham Reith**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Steve Legg**

Early April, Year 2000 and Support Tp are back to work after a winter tour of Kosovo with loads of stories to tell. **Sigs Ian Garbutt** and **Phil Reid**, led what we thought was a competition to have as many crashes as possible in the brigade MT section. **Sig Richie Calladine** was a close third. After a month's leave it was back to work in sunny Catterick with a lot of new faces and appointments. **SSgt Steve Legg** is the new Troop Staff Sergeant taking over from **SSgt Bob Low**. **Sgt Mark Brundle** takes over the Tech workshops from **Sgt Daz** ' I'm not a control freak ' **Bailey**. Massive welcomes to the Troop's newcomers, **Sig's Feltham**, **Grant**, **Hill**, **Sutcliffe**, and **Watt** to the MT, **Cpl Wood**, **L/Cpl's Bassett**, **Scarcliff**, **Tomkow**, **Sig's Leather**, **Marsh** and **Wibberley** to the Tech workshops. Sad farewells to the escapees, **Cpl Andy Porter**, **Sgt Jim Burnham** and **Sgt Daz Bailey.**

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

LPHA TROOP - *by Sig Paul 'Flash' Gordon*
Tp Comd **Capt J. Lambeth** R SIGNALS
Tp SSgt **SSgt C. McKenna**

Alpha Tp has been its customary hive of bustling activity since we returned for the new school year in January. A week after leave had finished the Troop found itself deploying very early one Monday morning down to Salisbury Plain for the Squadrons' annual shakeout exercise, Partheon Shot. Thanks to support from 3 Div, we could deploy our Ptarmigan assets for the first time in ages. Consequently the Relay and Systems operators amongst us actually had something other than guarding the camp to do whilst the rest of us went off to win the war. There have been numerous changes to the Troop Orbat since the New Year. Not only have a number of vehicle crews moved for a change of scenery, but there have been some notable departures and arrivals. **Cpl Jo Ruth** and **Sigs Kris** 'Afkal' **Letton**, **Stu Downard** and **Neil** 'Jacko' **Jacklin** have all departed for new lives in Civvy Street. We wish them well and look forward to seeing them sometime soon. We welcome in **Cpl Jeff Farnes**, recently arrived from Ireland, and **Sig Dan** 'Sonic' **Seager** who comes fresh from Blandford and keen to do any course that will get him a badge (Don't forget to get the beers in lads!). In between exercise turnaround, first line inspections and pre-deployment preparation we managed to squeeze in a trip to the Imperial War Museum. An excellent day was had by all, particularly **Sig** 'Tel' **Bacon** who enjoyed the museum so much that he's vowed to go back again in his own time for another look round. An anorak and bobble hat has been indented for on his behalf in light of this announcement.

BRAVO TROOP - *by LCpl 'Simmo' Simpson*
Tp Comd **Lt R. A. Hamilton** R SIGNALS
Tp Sgt **Sgt D. Owen**

B Tp ended the year by having not one but two Christmas bashes. The first was in a local pub where the Troop strutted it's stuff to mixes created by DJ, **Sig Fletcher**. The second was also held in a local pub where **LCpl** 'Robot Mary' **Murray** arranged a game of pass the parcel containing all sorts of interesting surprises. He got his parcel a few weeks later when his second tape cam through – well done! Other congratulations go out to **LCpl Russell** and his wife **Claire** on the birth of their baby daughter, **Kea** and **Sig** 'Breath of fresh air' **Frost** who is now happily engaged to **Cheryl**. Our Troop **SSgt Tony May** left us to go to 7 Sig Regt and **Sig** 'OJ' **Olejnik** departed to Civ Div to live with her new husband in Wiltshire. **Sig** 'Dougie' **Donnelly** arrived just after Christmas leave from Blandford and was promptly sent on Pre Para, a nice welcome surprise to the Troop. Our Troop **Sgt Dave** 'Gravy' **Owen** returned to work with the New Year's resolution of getting away from the garages as much as possible. The troops were given different tasks of organising trips out, the first of which was a visit to London's National War Museum organised by **Sig** 'Romford' **Chacksfield**. The Troop met at Waterloo train station and walked the short distance to the museum. An hour later we left the museum shell-shocked from the Trench Warfare and London Blitz experience to go sightseeing around the city. The London Eye wasn't working and as much as **Cpl** 'Health and Safety' **Barringer** wanted to visit the Dungeons in the Tower of London to see all the sharp cutting implements. The Boss, **Lt Hamilton**, decided that it would be safer to crack on to Covent Garden. **LCpl** 'I'm' **Good** and **Sig** 'All' **White** impressed no one with their juggling skills when they thought they were better than the street entertainer. The day came to an end with **LCpl** 'Septic' **Childs** and **LCpl** 'No Crypto' **Simpson** driving back to Colchester, in time to get the Troop back to prepare for Ex Eagles Flight.

B Troop at the Imperial War Museum,
thereby proving that they went where they said they were going
before going on to re-enact scenes from the blitz

CHARLIE TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt A. Courage** R SIGNALS
Tp SSgt **SSgt P. Hatton**

The first Squadron exercise of the new Millennium saw the Troop deploy onto Salisbury Plain for Exercise Partheon Shot. The Troop's main effort was to carry out four-man patrols across the plain and to set up Op's overlooking the Squadrons' other comms assets and to report the findings to a base station in York manned by **LCpl Chris Cant.** All patrols went well apart from c/s 33D comprising of **Cpl** 'Bob' **Hoskins, LCpl** 'Scotty' **Finn** and **Sigs Spence Blackmore** and **Steve Jones.** They were compromised in their OP and after using a cover story that they were from the Duke of Wellington's Recce Platoon were forced to run away! 48hrs later, the patrols recovered to a RV to get a good night's sleep prior to carrying out a parachute the following day. The weather was favourable so twenty jumpers travelled down to RAF Lyneham and boarded three aircraft. After the usual roller coaster ride, the green light came on and the Troop dropped onto Everleigh. A big hello goes out to **Sig Newell** who has arrived straight from Blandford. Congratulations go to **LCpl Barnes** and his wife **Olivia** on the birth of **Callum** and also to **SSgt** 'Kebabs' **Read** on his promotion to WO2.

MT TROOP - *by Sig 'Jim' Metcalfe*
Tp Comd **Capt M. Schofield** R SIGNALS
Tp SSgt **SSgt D. Goldsworthy**

MT have a number of obligatory announcements which no *Wire* article would be complete without. Congratulations to **Cpl** 'Rab' **Burns** and to his wife who have recently had a baby boy. In addition **Sgt Mark Makings** and his wife have had a child – we wish both couples a good

night's sleep! MT has had a new arrival in the form of **Sig Hoggett** who has been posted from 7 Sig Regt, thereby giving **Cpl** 'Kit' **Knight** another problem child to deal with. The LAD would like to welcome **Cfn Paul Austin**. 'Cheerios' go to **LCpl** 'Phil Collins' **Humphries** who has decided to fly the nest for Civ Div. **LCpl Fogarty** has eventually completed his Para training having waited two years for his jumps course! **Sig Burgoyne** and **Sig** 'Crazy' **Craven** have recently completed their motorbike courses and are looking forward to forming their own 'Black Widows' club and terrorising the local OAP's. OC Sqn orders here they come!

(L-R): Sig Paul 'Stan' Bowes, Cpl John 'Yes I am quite mad' Wilson Sig Neil 'Thumbs up lads, I'll be a civvy by the end of the week' Jacklin, LCpl Lee Chamberlain, Sig Gaz Lawson and LCpl Ange Wright recreate a scene from the Blitz in a London pub following their trip to the Imperial War Museum

MT Tp has continued to lead where others fear to tread and have been busy getting as many people on their bike course as possible. The MT biker gang has grown to disproportionate levels and is now at the stage where unless you can hang in with conversations which run along the lines of, 'Have you seen the new..?' or 'That's a schoolboy's bike…' then you are treated as an outcast. **Sig** 'Hoggy' **Hogget** has successfully managed to break MT's 100% pass rate and has consequently been relegated to start his own push-bike club. **Cpl** 'Mick' **Fernie** has upheld the professionalism expected of MT Tp. Despite training hard for the Lanyard team, 'Mick' has unfortunately carried out more inspections of the back of the Jack Wagon than anyone else and can report that it is in good order. **Sig** 'B' **Burgoyne** is due to depart to Kosovo soon for a war ravishing tour of eight weeks. Best of luck to you, war hero!

SUPPORT TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt S. Clarke** R SIGNALS
Tp SSgt **SSgt P. Latimer**

Support Tp hit the ground running this year and found itself deployed in February on Ex Eagles Flight closely followed by NITEX, the RAF's annual live firing exercise. For this the Tp deployed to RAF Leuchars in Scotland, where, other than watching **Capt Clarke** departing for another round of golf or off to steal more boulders for his rockery, the Exercise was very low key and presented us few problems. On a more interesting note was the Troop's day out to the nation's capital. After what seemed an eternity on the road, we eventually got to Chelsea Barracks where we posed for numerous photos before **Cpl Stuart** and **Cpl** 'Baby face' **Angel** stole the prize for best piccie by happening to find **Richard Attenborough** sitting in his Rolls Royce. After an extensive sight-seeing programme, the Troop headed off to Romford for the dog racing. The aim had been to arrive before the racing started but after **Cpl Stu** 'I passed P-Coy and now I'll go on the sick' **Sharman** had got us suitably lost, the racing was well under way by the time we got there. Welcome to **Cpl** 'I'm Scottish but my name's a Romanian orphan's' **Stojanovic** and **LCpl Browning**. Farewell to **Cpl** 'Cheeky Northern monkey' **Bird**, **Cpl Angel** and **Cpl** 'Tudor' **Williams**. Finally a big hello to **FofS Sturman**, not because he's done anything but because he hasn't got a crate in for ages!

228 SIGNAL SQUADRON REAR PARTY

OC Rear Party **Capt A. C. Cox**

Whilst the bulk of the Squadron is deployed to Bosnia it goes without saying that there remains the solid few back in Aldershot. The Squadron changes in role has ensured that everyone back in Aldershot remains busy in particular the QMs and MT Departments. **Cpl** 'Dis' **Disley** has been sorting out the new equipment table where lesser men have failed and it will all be in place for when the Squadron returns. **Sgt Sheard** has also had his work cut out arranging transport seemingly for the whole world on their returns from theatre. Between these two Departments they have managed to take on more vehicles for **Sgt Gray** in the LAD to work on in preparation for what promises to be a busy return of the troops. **Sig** 'I am not a secretary' **Yates** who has been working in SHQ wishes to say farewell to the Squadron as he leaves for Blandford to re-trade as a technician. The Squadron wishes to say hello and welcome to **Capt** 'Joe' **Cox**, the new Admin Officer and **Sigs Burke**, **Hedgecock** and **Fairbrother**. **Sigs Hedgecock** and **Fairbrother** have already made their mark in the Squadron by frightening to death anybody daring to travel with them. **Sig Hedgecock** has also been used extensively by the AO to sort out any IT problems he may have had. Well done to both **Cpl** 'Al' **Wilson** and **Cpl Griffiths** for passing their track instructors courses and boy are you going to be busy soon. There has also recently been another successful families lunch held in the WO's & Sgt's Mess, where many a tale was told. Also a big thank you goes to our local Woolworth who donated six boxes of Easter Eggs for the troops in Bosnia. A final note must go to the FofS, **WO2** 'Lance' **Marshall** who can't wait to get back to Theatre after his gruelling time technically rebuilding the Squadron with help from the recruits from Blandford.

238 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS
OC **Maj (TFC) Dave Gilchrist**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Ewan Hall**

The Squadron is now in a state of transition and we have said goodbye to the previous OC, **Maj Steve Hunt**, at short notice. OC Oscar Tp, **Maj (TFC) Dave Gilcrist** has taken on the responsibility until the new OC designate, **Maj Ian Seraph** arrives, but a date has yet to be confirmed. The Squadron has had several visitors during this period. The new Comd 2 Sig Bde, **Brig N. C. Jackson MBE** paid a flying visit for an initial brief on the role of the Squadron within the Army Communications and Information Systems Group (ACISG), Squadron State and Ceremonial commitments and the present situation within Chelsea barracks have kept us busy. The new Lond Dist Comd Comms, **Maj Tim Bushnell** with the OC designate, **Maj Ian Seraph**, visited for a longer briefing session.

This is a quiet time for the Squadron as a whole as we prepare for the coming silly season. The Squadron is busy planning Troop, Squadron and Brigade adventure training for late in the summer and slotting people into courses as much as possible. We have also just completed our first one week ITD package for the new training year, getting them out of the way early.

Congratulations go out to the Training Wing, **SSgt Si Hadley** and wife, **Kirsty** on the birth of their first child, **Chelsie Victoria**, and to the Chief Clerk, **Mr Terry** 'Worm' **Marsh,** on the birth of his third child, **Samuel** 'Sheringham' **Marsh**! He's got to increase the attendance down at Millwall somehow! SHQ also saw the transfer of it's very own Jennifer Aniston lookalike, **Mrs Laura Allen**, from the bustling world of the Civilian Admin Office to the relatively quiet Orderly room! This was achieved despite a huge tug of war between the staff in the two offices. The Chief Clerk may have won the battle but he isn't too confident about winning the war, **Maj** Steve **Hunt** may have been posted to HQ 11 Sig Bde, but his e-mail legacy lives on! The CAO, **Mrs Helen** 'Hadrians Wall' **Stevenson** was obviously upset by this move and can now be found wandering the corridors of SHQ not knowing which door to knock on for advice! The Squadrons' pin up girl, **Mrs Maureen** 'Mum' **Dishot**, obviously thought that the best way of getting out of typing the confidential reports was to lay on a beach in Spain for two weeks! This ploy didn't work as they were still waiting for her when she got back! Don't worry **Maureen**, a cup of tea will make it all better!

MIKE TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt (TOT) Bob Nicol**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Andy Cannadine**

This latest reporting period has seen one arrival and one farewell to Mike Tp. A big friendly Hello is offered to **LCpl Paul** 'JP' **Thomas** and his wife **Tracy** on their arrival from Blandford after 'JP' successfully completed his T3. We hope they enjoy their time here in London. Farewell to **Cpl Paul** 'Boney' **Bone** who has been posted to 8 Inf Brigade over in Northern Ireland. The Troop wishes him well not only on his posting but with his forth coming T1 crammer and entrance exam. Congratulations go to **Cpl Dean Spiers** and his wife **Tracy** on there own arrival, namely **Nathan.** The last few months have been relatively quiet. Radio Section were recently involved with the State Visit of **Queen Beatrice of Denmark**. The Section of one, **Sgt** 'Twiz' **Twizell** is now preparing for the summer 'silly' season which will include involvement with the Queen's Birthday Parade, RMT 2000, the Queen Mother's 100th Birthday Celebrations and the Scottish Opening of Parliament. The ACISG Section continues in its primary role of golfing and skiing. Indeed the Section welcomes back **Sgt Chris Jacobs**, **LCpl Paul** 'Smudge' **Smith**, **Sigs Ben** 'Mongo' **McFaul** and **Chris McGuire** from the arduous skiing exercise that is Winter Warrior. The PA Section continues doing its 'PA thing' assisting the LUOTC with their Annual Dinner, the TA with the Courage Trophy at Longmoor. The Section also looks forward to a busy summer!

OSCAR TROOP
Tp Comd **Maj (TFC) Dave Gilchrist**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Karen Ripley**

A fairly quiet time in the main from the workaholics within the Squadron. The Tp Comd, **Maj Dave Gilchrist,** has departed the shores of Oscar Tp for the time being, he now resides in the higher echelons of society called Squadron Headquarters. Talk about perks of the job, **Maj Dave Gilchrist** was only in office a week and he's off to Nepal for three weeks leave. **SSgt Karen Ripley** has allegedly put in for POHR as she is now in the chair for the Troop, but the likelihood of **Karen** dipping her hand into her pocket to buy the troops a drink is slim.

The Troop would like to bid a final farewell to one of the great London stalwarts, **Sgt Debbie Gosnell** who leaves us on retirement from the army after 23 years of service. (Approximately fourteen of which were spent in Chelsea. It is not often that any individual can say that they were in London when the blitz was on, then finished their career in the same location! The OC Sqn, **Maj Steve Hunt** was at a loss of things to say about our **Debbie**, so after a few phone calls around the globe and to records in Glasgow, he was told to go and speak to the pensioner's in the Royal Hospital, as **Debbie** had resided in Chelsea longer than most of the occupants there. Needless to say the story's were unprintable for a publication like this, but the dining out was excellent. The Troop and the Squadron will miss you **Deb's** and we wish **Charlie** and yourself all the very best for the future.

Another London old girl has left these shores for pastures new, **Miss Faye Doncaster** has left us after serving four years in the Corps as a signaller and then two years as a CO4. We hope you have a fab time travelling the world **Faye,** just remember we expect a postcard from every destination. Replacing **Sgt Gosnell** in the ADA is **Sgt Lindy Lawrence,** who leaves London Central COMMCEN after the shortest tour on record, we hope you have a pleasant stay and a wonderful time in your new employment **Lindy.** The Troop would again like to welcome back **Sgt Fergie Anderson**, after yet another detachment to Nepal, we hope you had a good time **Fergie** and kept your nose clean. The sporting member's of Oscar/SHQ have again got off to a flier in the inter troop competition, having only just today won the squash, this goes to prove that the badminton win was no fluke either, oh the sweet smell of success!

RADIO TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Andy Wilson**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Si Schofield**

The Troop ranks have swelled by two since the last publication, hello **LCpl Carr**, arriving from NI, and **Sig Howland**, returning to 'Blighty' from 1 ADSR. Both have arrived during 'down time' for the Troop and both have made an impression! Being a 'specialist ' unit, it is understandably easy to arrange convincing pranks for new arrivals. **LCpl Andy Carr** was informed on his arrival that as part of ceremonial tradition Radio Tp still uses semaphore as a means of communication and that as a new member of the Troop he would be required to take a test, which would be assessed by his new boss and Troop Sergeant! He was issued the required flags and instruction booklet and told to practice, which he did at home, with his wife assessing! Later he was paraded on the main square of Chelsea barracks and put through his semaphore paces with a growing crowd forming, to his credit he did very well! Obviously the practice paid off - well done Andy! All blame for that one lies at the feet of **Cpl** 'Bart' **Storey**. Luckily we hadn't arranged a prank for **Sig** 'I'm not sure what LTA means' **Howland** on his first day, because he never showed up! He was found sat at home with his feet up, explaining that he thought the LTA was his last day of leave and as long as he paraded 'sometime' during the day everything would be all right! - nice try, better luck next time!

Our one ceremonial commitment for the period was the State visit of the **Queen of Denmark**. A fairly low key affair, **HRH Queen Elizabeth II** greeted **HRH Queen Beatrice of Denmark** on a cold winters afternoon in Windsor. As ever everything went well, communications wise, for the Troop

Our main role does not involve 'normal green' activities, so given the opportunity and time, as now, we always have plenty of volunteers to taste the 'real' world. During this period we have supplied willing bodies to 3 DSR, to gain experience using standard radio equipment and living in the field. All returned feeling they had learnt new skills and improved old ones (especially tent construction!). **Cpl** 'Bart' **Storey** and **LCpl Andy Carr** (yes, those of the semaphore!) deployed to Blandford to help the ODDETTE trials, proving they can use modern equipment as well. Finally the Troop, as normal, has formed the Squadron shooting team for the forthcoming Corps SAAM. Our team was picked from a cast of fifteen and will compete against Squadrons with a pool of well over a hundred! Congratulations to **LCpl Bull** of Mike Tp, he joins the shooting team for the subsequent Lond Dist RAM, to make it a truly Squadron event! We will see how we perform in the next issue.

241 SIGNAL SQUADRON

THE VISIT OF COMD 2 (NC) SIGNAL BRIGADE BRIG N. C. JACKSON MBE

On the 30 March 2000, 241 Sig Sqn were very proud to welcome Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde -**Brig N. C. Jackson MBE** to the Squadron lines. Touring the SHQ the Commander met various Squadron personalities and teams, receiving briefs regarding the forthcoming ACISG reorganisation and the part to played by the Squadron. Finally, the visit was finished off by the Commandder presenting **Sgt John Blyth** his much deserved LS&GC and the NATO medal to **Mr Stuart Duncan. Mr Stuart Duncan** is a civil servant Technical Grade 1 (TGI) who volunteered and recently completed an eight month tour in Banja Luka, Bosnia. (Of course your wife, **Sharon** needn't know about the extra money you got!)Your secret's safe with us and the rest of the Corps .....

Brig NC Jackson MBE presenting Sgt John Blyth his LS&GC and Mr Stuart Duncan his NATO medal

ARE YOU READING YOUR OWN COPY OF THE WIRE?
IF NOT, MAKE THE YEAR 200 THE YEAR THAT YOU START
TO SUBSCRIBE, TELEPHONE: 01258 482085/482087

243 SIGNAL SQUADRON

CORPS INTER UNIT CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS
by WO2 (SSM) 'Paddy' Morrow

It was another of the OC's fine ideas that we enter the Inter Corps Cross Country Championships which were held at Bulford on Wednesday 9 February 2000. Once again **WO2 (SSM)** 'Paddy' **Morrow** had another miracle to perform in trying to find a number of abled bodied members of the Squadron who could rise to the challenge. This he did with remarkable ease having run down the Squadron nominal roll and earmarked those who had managed a pass on the BPFA. As usual it was left to the individual to train in his or her own time as trying to get everyone together for formal training as usual proved to be a nightmare.

The day of the event arrived and we donned our new cross country strip and tactics were discussed. The ladies' race preceeded the men's and our girls put up a spirited effort coming fourth overall. The men's race as for the ladies was started by **Brig Shaw** (HQ LAND). Everyone set off at a pace, notable **Sig Ronnie Warwick**, the SSM who adopted his normal slow start theory thinking he would soon catch up with **Sig Warwick** but too his amazement **Sig Warwick** kept on going coming a creditable 34th overall. With all the team home safely it dawned on us that we had actually done quite well. It wasn't until the scores started to appear on the score board that we realised that we had in actual fact won the Minor Units. The OC was overwhelmed at our surprise win and is now more determined than ever that we enter into anything and everything. One oversight though Sir, where are the beers?!!

Well done to all who took part with a special mention to **WO2 Bernie Smith** who won the Ladies Veterans race.

THE TEAM
(L-R): Capt Turnbull (Event Organiser) Sig Ronnie Warwick, Brig Shaw, Cpl Gregory, LCpl Joyce, LCpl Welsh, WO2 (SSM) Morrow and SSgt Lawrence

249 SIGNAL SQUADRON (AIR MOBILE FORCES (LAND))

fEXERCISE ADVENTURE EXPRESS 2000 - *by Lt Preston*

This year's northern deployment was quite an epic: live EW, man-pack RRBs, FFR skidoos, on board with Dutch Marines, Very High RRB Sites, working with Czech Helicopters and searching for the perfect meal amongst multi-national rations. We also hosted our fair share of visitors including D C in C (Land).

The deputy Commander in Chief discusses Pay 2000 with Sigs Gould, Whitelaw and Patterson

During the Field Training Exercise we played the role of a hostile force attacking NATO over a dispute about the Senja Oil Fields in the North. The scenery in the entire area is harsh. Mountains loom out of the fjords as triangular peaks that would look more at home in the Himalayas. The mainland has huge streaks of water cutting through it, making movement from one side to the other a time consuming task. On one occasion Rebro Bravo, under **Cpl Walsh**, was resupplied by boat. To make matters worse for communicators the deep valleys used up rebros very quickly indeed and in order to bring in the furthest location, the Log Base, **Cpl Kenny** was dropped off on a feature the height of Ben Nevis. Throughout vile conditions he managed to keep his trailer rebro on the ground until the tent broke and the antennas began blowing away. To make matters worse for communicators the EW teams were out in full force. The American direction finding and Canadian intercept teams provided great assistance and then coordinated a particularly effective false 'Endex' call which resulted in ninety per cent of the enemy going home early. On the Jamming side the Norwegians gave the Headquarters a difficult day which spooked the younger members of the team but the combination of the second in command's brief and the experience from former EW operators prevailed to ensure the command net was never dropped.

The final mention should go to the Foreman who had an interesting exercise attempting to establish Satcom links above the 69th parallel: an impossible task. Having requested extra help from the far end and been turned down, he eventually travelled one hundred kilometres to the south and proved the equipment. As soon as he returned even the best location wouldn't work. Never mind. However, a notable victory as they manfully struggled until testing data over VHF worked perfectly. Is this the future for AMF Comms?

TRAILER REBROADCAST 82H - *by Sig Gould*

On 9 March 2000, **Cpl Kenny** and **Sigs Gould, Hasset, Ward, Cook** and **Lawson** deployed onto a mountain top at 1089metres to provide comms for exercise Adventure Express. We were dropped in by helicopter at about midday to dig the position in and bridge the distance to Log Base, the most remote station. On arrival we quickly started digging and soon found that the position had a thin covering of snow on top of solid rock. As we couldn't dig down any further we began building snow walls. After a quiet first night without any snowfall, we noticed that the wind strength was beginning to build and that the extra help brought to establish the Rebro could not be flown off due to poor flying conditions. Over the next two hours the weather deteriorated further, with high winds and heavy snow. The Pilot now decided it was too dangerous to fly. During the night we all crammed into a four man tent and a trailer 'nine by nine' tent and got little sleep whilst the site was gradually destroyed by the wind and snow. The following morning the site was rebuilt despite the poor weather and the repairs we made were strong enough to survive the next night. Fortunately we managed to regain some rest as the evening calm set in. However, the lads were beginning to speak their minds. **Sig Cook** provided the classic quote, 'This is worse than Survival night,' referring to the long night during the basic ski and survival course.

Our situation began to improve when after an hour of waiting, the extra men were flown off back down to Echelon and we settled into some kind of routine. Now down to just three people, everything started to run smoothly with each of us knowing our job. This continued until day five when power started to become a problem.

On the fifth day the first generator broke down. Initially we thought this to be just a minor problem as we had two spares. Unfortunately the others had also suffered in the weather and we couldn't start either of them. After twelve hours of hand cranking generators and a few blisters, we had still failed to start any of them and the weather deteriorated once more. Now the wind was blowing so hard that we had to hold onto the tent to prevent it blowing away. The nine by nine had turned into a huge kite despite the fact we had dug it in. Going outside had now become too dangerous in the wind that made standing up very difficult. Once outside in the blizzard we got disorientated in seconds and found it impossible to find the antennas. Further orders told us to break the Rebro and send a sitrep every hour on the hour, and get as comfortable as possible. This is easier said than done in a nine by nine with three generators, three blokes and all their kit. **Cpl Kenny** was starting to look extremely concerned by now and was even less happy when we were told to stay put until we ran out of rations.

After a mentally tough night the wind once again died and we could inspect the damage done. The EVHF whip sections had snapped off during the night and we had greater difficulty with tents. The four-man tent had suffered three snapped poles and the angles on the nine by nine had broken. We continued to call in reports and hoped the helicopter would come sooner than later. Fortunately before we knew it the Czech pilot had braved the conditions to come and rescue us. No sooner had the helicopter arrived than we threw on our bergans and we flew off with orders to abandon the radio kit for collection at a later date. On arrival back at Echelon we were relieved to be alive and in the warm. The comments started flying, 'Oh well, if you lost the tent, you could always build a 'snow-hole.'

THE NORWEGIAN JEIGER COMPANY - *by LCpl Bury*

I deployed to Norway on 30 January initially to the South. Once the Squadron had completed the arctic warfare training we moved up to Storsteines in the north to take part in Exercise Adventure Express. This is where the fun began. The moment we got off the plane it was blowing a gale and the temperature was hideously low. I was less than impressed as I was expecting palm trees and white beaches. After sitting around at Storsteines for about four days a job came along. I could see the Yeoman, Foreman and **SSgt Allan** looking my way and smirking. I could read their lips, 'Buzz will do it.' Unfortunately I was the only bloke there and I was going on an unusual task. The Yeoman asked if I wanted to deploy with the Norwegian Special Forces on Skidoos (Snow-bikes). I immediately said no, but off I went anyway. I was to provide secure HF Comms back to AMF(L) Headquarters from the back of a Skidoo, not quite in my job description. Fitting out an FFR Snowbike, nice one YofS.

After a short while it was time to deploy and I was to rendezvous at a bridge at 0900hrs. I turned up at 0850hrs and saw a bunch of lunatics flying about on snow bikes and was horrified at the thought of being a passenger. Soon enough I found out I was to be attached to the Jeiger Company and was introduced to the Company Commander, the Second-in-Command and the Reece Officer. They were all extremely friendly and spoke excellent English. The plan was to load sixty-seven snow-bikes and move them into enemy territory. As we carried the scheme out it started to look a little cowboy-ish. However, when we got onto the area I could see why these people were a little more than the average infantry company. Their fire power, observation and riding skills told me they were something special. Riding on the back was quite a different experience. If you don't put your body weight in the right place at the right time you are off the back and in the snow. Getting back on with a PRC320, spare batteries, webbing and weapon on you is not easy in deep snow. The speed we were to travel at was faster than fast. I'd never seen anything like it and thought I was going to die on several occasions. At 70 miles per hour through trees and at night is slightly mad but normal for these blokes. The temperature was –25 standing still as the 'Huey' Helicopters flew over us. Luckily they didn't spot the company and we were soon doing 80mph across a frozen lake. The cold was unbearable at that speed but I realised that I was wrapped up in kit better than that of my hosts. During the next couple of days we attacked ten targets causing mass mayhem amongst the enemy. The experience I had with the Jeiger was excellent and we worked so well together that we will be doing cross training in the future.

MANPACK REBRO - *by Sig Galtress*

In Northern Norway in a moment of infinite wisdom, 249 Sig Sqn decided that it would be a good idea to deploy a man pack rebro, just to see if it could be done. What an excellent idea. I was woken up at 2300hrs and told I was deploying at 0600hrs with the RRB. I got up and started to pack my Bergen, then I unpacked my Bergen and proceeded to refill up my Bergen with radio kit. By the time I'd finished it weighed about the same as I do. I finally got to bed at 0200hrs, then back up at 0500hrs ready to deploy, as planned, at 0600hrs.

In total four of us deployed **Lt** 'The Boss' **Preston, LCpl** 'Fruity' **Fielding, Sig** 'Shminka' **Johnstone, Sig** 'Az' **Galtress**. The journey to our drop-off point was via another detachment to collect some kit. Then it was off on our skis up the mountain. The ski up the mountain itself was not actually that hard apart from the weight. **Lt Preston** was pulling a pulk as well as carrying kit in his Bergen and 'Fruity' was doing the usual thing required of an airborne soldier, carrying a ridiculous amount of weight. Once we arrived there we had the task of digging in the tent and setting up. We set about this straight away, but during the non-tactical phase there was no great rush. A couple of hours later we had dug a pit big enough for a house and we could get the kit working. Once we were in and set up we established communications and had to wait until we were told to make the rebro, so obviously we had to find some thing to occupy ourselves. That something was food.

As if by perfect timing the moment we had finished our food we were told to make' the RRB. The task was made more difficult by a weak HF Sigs Eng Net link and a broken trailer Rebro not far away. However, we proved that a man-pack rebro can be operated in North Norway. Once 'made' the RRB operated until we run out of battery power, which was about 24 hours and nine batteries later. Having finished, it was time to arrange our pick up at the bottom of the mountain. We had plenty of time so we had yet more food then proceeded to pack up. **Sig** 'Tent Rhino' **Johnston** with his amazing tent admin packed up first, before being kind enough to let the rest of us do so. Once we had packed it was time to ski down, which I have to say was a lot more leisurely than skiing up. When we were finally picked up it was back to HQ Admin Area and then I was off again on my det after two hours. In summary the man pack RRB was a success and it was proved it could be done. I think everybody on the RRB enjoyed it and gained valuable experience from it.

259 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. H. Fraser**
SSM **WO2 D. Ewing**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

After a hectic start to the New Year the Squadron was pleased to welcome the new OC, **Maj Jon Fraser** and his family from 39 Sig Regt. With only a month's notice he did well to arrive with family, two cars and the loss of only two MFO boxes. The Epicentre's recent Karaoke night ended in disaster when **Sgt Jon** 'Tone Deaf' **Driver** and his similarly talented wife **Janet** decided to celebrate his promotion to Staff Sergeant by singing selected hits from Chumba Wamba. A truly eye-watering experience. Also selected for promotion is **SSgt Jim** 'Beastmaster' **Duncan** who will gain promotion to WO2 when posted to 7 Armd Bde and Sig Sqn (207). The Squadron will miss **SSgt Duncan** and his wife **Linda**, who have done much to arrange social functions for the Squadron including an Austin Powers and a Cowboy night in the Jimmy Club. With one event left in the Hodgson Shield competition Epi Tp already have the

cup in the bag. Dhekelia Tp come in next followed closely by SHQ. Airfield Troop finish last although they continue to make match fixing allegations.

The Troodos Mountains have had an impressive snowfall this year which has enabled skiing trips to be organised. Twelve members of the Squadron attended the NEFSKI Championships with mixed fortunes but although it's not quite the Alps it is good to be able to ski and then return to warmer climes at sea level at the end of the day. With the temperature now starting to creep back towards the twenties and summer just around the corner it's easy to laugh as we reminisce on Battlecamp over a few cold beers but for some, at the time, it was no laughing matter. The annual two-week exercise is a chance for some to revise rusty skills and for others to show off newly learnt skills. A good idea in theory but what was the reality?

EXERCISE BRAVE STANCE - *by Sig Atkinson (War Correspondent)*

Once again it was time for 259 Signal Squadron to answer its call to arms. Weapons were drawn, orders were given and the war paint started to make an appearance. After collecting even more kit to fill our bulging Bergens the Squadron finally deployed out onto the Melanda Training Area to begin the first phase of the exercise. The purpose of this phase was to revise basic infantry skills and those ever-elusive infantry tactics, which of course the Royal Signals are world leaders in.

After a quick 'who can lose the most kit during the bug out' competition we moved quickly into the main part of the exercise consisting of a Peacekeeping type Operation. The mission was to protect the peace loving Greenlanders from the evil tyranny of the dreaded Redlanders, lead by their illustrious leader **Capt** 'My smock is like a shield of steel' **Handibode**. Using their exceptional battlefield skills the glorious 259th of Foot managed to secure Paramali village which served as a patrol base for further operations, which included the prevention of refugees returning to their trap-filled village. The situation was resolved after some tense discussions, **SSgt Jim** 'Whisper mode' **Duncan's** smooth approach of 'move out or be beaten into unconsciousness', and some shameless boiled sweet bribery. After a few successful engagements which left one enemy with a nasty graze to his arm to the slight expense of three friendly sections, the 259th pressed on with its mandate under the military genius of **Capt** 'Anyone got a cab' **Morris**. The two platoons rose to the challenge with gusto. Under the valiant and cunning leadership of **Lt** 'Golden Doss Bag' **Kemp**, OC 1 Pl, and **2Lt** 'Can I have a slice of bread?' **Covey-Crump**, OC 2 Pl, the stranglehold of the villainous Redlanders was smashed.

The Company moved out of the village to prepare for one final assault that would remove the enemy forces for good. All the troops minds were focused on the assault with the exception of **Sig** 'Buster Gonad' **Baldwin** who had picked up a slight groin strain in the earlier operations. Having swept through the enemy like a wind of death there was little else to do except pick up the dead, and the bass of course, and make it back for tea and medals.

NEFSKI CHAMPIONSHIPS 2000 - *by Lt Kemp*

For the first time in nearly ten years there has been enough snow on the Troodos mountains for a full skiing competition. The Squadron entered three teams into the competition and had high hopes of coming away with several major injuries. Day One saw the Giant Slalom competition. The early morning course inspection seemed to unsettle some people especially those who couldn't even side-slip the course without falling over. Some overcautious skiing put some of the better skiers further down the order than they would have liked although **Lt Kemp** put in a creditable performance to finish twelfth. Day Two was the time to throw caution to the wind and go for Death or Glory. Excellent skiing by **Sgt Wildish** placed him eighth which acted as a demonstration for how it should have been done to **Lt Kemp, Sgt Waring, Sgt Nicholson** and **Sig Hulland** all of whom failed to make it to the finish. Congratulations to **Sgt Wildish** who was placed twelfth in the combined results. In all the competition was a great event to attend and the skiing proved to be excellent. Let's hope we won't have to wait another ten years for the next competition.

EPISKOPI TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Sarah Covey-Crump**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Jim Duncan**

With all the courses and detachments its hard to keep track of everyone. Some people however are going not to return… At long last **Sgt Dave** 'Cornelius' **Wildish** managed to escape with only his fourth excuse! He has left the Squadron for 35 Sig Regt to be with wife **Sharon** and any day now, child number two. Best wishes to **Dave** and the family. **LCpl Lee** 'Huggy' **Bearfield** was the longest serving Troop member and has moved to 30 Sig Regt under the premise that he will be able to spend more time with his girlfriend. **Lee**, we didn't realise you had a girlfriend in Bosnia! Get writing those blueys mate and brush up on your Serbo-Croat. **Sig** (now LCpl) **Daz** 'Wookie' **Baldwin** departed for the province and a life of rigging. We should have known something was wrong when he constantly refused to sleep on the top bunk, no surprise then to learn that he had a very brief stay and now has his feet firmly on the ground at 21 (AS) Sig Regt. **Sig Idris Davies** is now at 8 Inf Bde attempting to play every sport that the Army has to offer. **Sig** (now LCpl) **Gav** 'Colonel' **Darke** was successful on his RCB and will soon be savouring the delights of RMAS. **Gav**, we were only joking about the plums you put in your mouth so it might be a good idea to take them out now. **Sig Sue** 'Olive' **Taylor** is posted to 101 Log Bde and Sig Sqn on promotion. **Sig Marv** 'Nugget' **Nugent** has got a posting to JCUNI. We hope that things turn out well for you. Finally a big hello to **Sig Kenny Campbell**, straight from the factory. Welcome to the Troop.

AIRFIELD TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Gareth Kemp**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Bob Stenhouse**

With so many of the Troop either in, just come back or about to go to Kosovo it seems that everyone has got a medal except **Lt Kemp**. With so many of the Troop away, the work load has picked up considerably, luckily just when it seemed that we were fighting a losing battle reinforcements arrived in the shape of **LCpl Hansen**, with his wife **Sarah**, and **LCpl Morris**. Welcome to the Troop, we hope you will be happy here. However, it's not all work and no play, several of the more gullible members of the Troop were persuaded by **Cpl Danny Rudd** to take part in the Akrotiri 10km road race. Although no medals were won at least the search party was able to find **SSgt (FofS) MacGregor** and return him to his wife **Lorraine** who was accusing **Cpl Rudd** of trying to murder her husband. Congratulations go to **LCpl** 'Barney' **Barnett** and **Sig Danny McGurk** for representing the Army (Cyprus) at rugby and football respectively, against the RAF. With all this sporting talent, the Troop's next aim is to complete the Akrotiri 100km Rowing competition. So far we have ten willing volunteers so that's about 10km each… Can't be that hard can it?

JOINT SERVICE SIGNALS UNIT RAF DIGBY

1 SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Calum Clark**
Sqn Coord **WO2 (Supvr R) Phil Sandford**

It's all change again with elements of 1 Sqn playing musical chairs in time for the spring. Farewell to **SSgt Richie Maddock**, vacating the Squadron Co-Ord chair for pastures new and welcome to **WO2 (Supvr R) Phil** 'Don't call me SSM the RAF don't like if' **Sandford,** who has moved all of ten metres across the corridor. Au-Revoir to **F1t Lt Darren Thorley** who's gone off to the Balkans for six months and as a result, hello to **F1t Lt Rob Keir**, who has also moved across the corridor to take up the post of Sqn 2IC. Another farewell is to **WO2 (Supvr R) Dave** 'Stomin Norman' **Fuller** who has vacated the Ops WO chair to let **WO2 (Supvr R) Phil** 'Hockey or Squash today Sir!' **Barclay** sit down.

A FLIGHT

OC **WO2 (Supvr R) Pete Stockell**

It's that time again to detail the lively 'C Watch' scene here at JSSU Digby. It's a mixed bag of comings and goings with the odd skiing skives thrown in for good measure. We've got **Cpl Steve Roche** back from a gruelling NI Det, **JT Dave Mowbray** back from the edge (or was it 4 Sqn) and **JT Jon Peters** joining us from some day-job or other. **JTs Steve Horrel** and **Wazeeha Laher** have settled in nicely having left the lap of luxury that is Chicksands. We've got our fair share of departures too. **CT Dave Smith** has left for Civ Div and we've lost **JT Ingrid Poulton** to a cushy little number on days, along with **JT Lindsey Tolin** who is expecting her first baby in May. On the more temporary side of things, our only RN presence, **POCT Iain** 'Tug' **Wilson** is off on a promotion course, so good luck to him. **LCpl Jim Patton** and **JT Jim Rothwell** are down in Chicksands on respective upgrading courses and **Cpl Ade Moseley** and **JT Ben Crossley** have vanished on long courses. **JT Leah Middlewick,** having just recovered from her killing schedule of ski and biathlon training/races and a 23km military patrol in the Army Divisional Championships, also vanishes on a long course. **Cpls Nicky Collins** and **Chris Gunn** are currently away on detachment and also missing in action is **Cpl John Duke,** detached to 4 Sqn trying his hand at Army things for four months. Finally, spare a thought for **Sgt Steve** 'Up the Pilgrims' **Lyne**, travelling the length and breadth of this fine land waiting for Plymouth Argyle to slot in a goal or two, or maybe just pushing home a slightly threatening attack.

B FLIGHT

OC **WO2 (Supvr R) Eddie** 'Anyone for Tennis!' **Fisher**

Over the last few months, the Watch has seen numerous changes, mainly due to postings and detachments (as usual). The seemingly never-ending problem of manning is handled by **SSgt (Supvr R) Chris** 'I can't walk but I can run' **Cullington.** Manning the Watch is a bit like trying to fill a bath with the plug out. A 'GEMS' suggestion to take cuttings of Operators and dip them in 'Bob Snoddin's Hormone Rooting Powder' and grow some new Ops for Spring has been given serious consideration. Regardless of these problems, morale has remained stable and on odd occasions, reached near unheard of high levels. This has been due to the admirable efforts of various junior members of the Watch, in organising Watch social gatherings, including leaving dos and Ten-pin Bowling outings (all involving a few drinks of course). Still to come is Greyhound racing down at the track at Peterborough. Thanks to **Cpl Julie McNelis, JT Rachel Lynch** and **LCpl Marie Porter**. We await what delights the summer will bring us.

We welcome into the Watch **Cpl Julie McNelis,** moved from within the JSSU itself, as is her husband **Cpl** 'Mac' **McNelis**, recently returned from his T1 upgrading course. We say hellos to **LCpls** 'Bongo' **Baker** and 'Ginge' **Ware** freshly in from Chicksands. A welcome back to **Cpl Lyndsay Bebington** on return from the delights of a Bosnian winter, along with **Cpl** 'Mac' **McKechnie** returning from a more southern detachment. Farewells to a number of personnel, including belated goodbyes to **Cpls Sam** and **Dave** 'Beef' **Kirton** on being returned to Civ Div. The 'Beef' **Kirtons** will be sorely missed. Goodbye also to **Sgt Mike** 'Exciting to be with' **Surtees**, now happily instructing at Chicksands, **Sgt** 'Jaffa' **Martin** is now off on his Supervisors Radio Course and is 'coping', it has been reported. On finishing this he will be off to the other side of the island to 14 Sig Regt (EW) again. Lastly, not to forget a great Watch character lost, and now in the process of joining Manchester Police is **LCpl Stacey Webster** - so all you drug-dealers and joy riders beware!

Congratulations to **Cpls Mac** and **Julie McNelis** on tying the knot. This was done in Skegness at Fantasy Island and all attending had a great time. Well done also to **Cpl** 'Mac (Who says you can't get drunk on your wedding day? I'm steaming!)' **McKechnie.** Also congratulations to **SSgt (Supvr R) Chris Cullington** on getting spliced, bravely on April Fool's Day!

3 SQUADRON TRAINING FLIGHT - *by Cpl Dusty Miller*

Sqn **WO1 (Supvr R) Paul Skeith**

This WIRE Notes lark is becoming a bit of a habit now, but it makes a pleasant change from doing the office Admin! It must be said that of the 13 people in the office, only four are actually bona fide Royal Signals soldiers. (The rest have been *promoted* to Honorary Royal Signals, even the Intelligence Corps people!)

To kick off, congratulations on **CT Clive Stephens, Cpl Pete Best** and **Cpl** 'Dusty' **Miller** for taking part in the annual BT Swimathon. All three completed 40 lengths of the pool and raised somewhere in the region of £200 for charity. It must be said though that **Cpl.** 'Dusty' **Miller** was suffering during the swim from drinking too much free Guinness the night before. (St Patrick's day you see!) **WO1 (Supvr R) Paul Skeith** continues to improve his IT skills with a week spent down at the local Interactive Learning Centre, (or so he tells us ...). **SSgt (Supvr R) Frank Dalton** continues his quest for excellence in management (At Digby!) and is forever giving out his 'One Minute Well Done' stuff He is due to take his final exam soon, so good luck mate. **Sgt Sue Wright** has taken delivery of a new BMW Z3 sports car. It's a black convertible and the local authorities have been notified of the registration nurnber! A few changes have taken place since the last edition of the wire. **SSgt** 'Dags' **Dagnell** joined the Flight and has hit the ground running having taken over from **FS Tomlinson. Sgt** 'Chads' **Chadwick** should be back from his holiday in the Falklands and will be welcomed back with open arms. (After all, with the current Notes author on his way out someone will have to step in!) **Sgt** 'Sim' **Morley** has been posted and will be on top of Troodos Mountain by the time this edition is out, also going soon is her husband, **Sgt Mark Morley**, however, he is leaving the forces to follow the flag (or skirt?) and will be seen on the beach sipping cocktails. **Cpl** 'Dusty' **Miller** is due out on PVR to work as an instructor for Erricson's. We wish him and his wife **Sarah** all the best, but remind him that he is not allowed to threaten students with physical violence if they don't listen to him!

NEWS FROM THE CADETS & UOTC

MERSEYSIDE CADET FORCE

Col Paul Acda, Regimental Colonel Headquarters Royal Signals, made a specially invited visit to Merseyside Cadet Force Headquarters at Altcar Training Camp. He was welcomed by the Commandant, **Col Ian Thomson**, they being no strangers to each other as they had served together both at 38 Sig Regt (V) and 2 Sig Bde. The purpose of his visit was to present certificates and badges to five cadets, who had successfully passed their Signals course. However, he also spent part of the day watching a cadet company, of a hundred cadets, on their Training Weekend. Merseyside ACF has forty detachments, three of them are affiliated to the Royal Signals. A number of cadets have joined as Regulars with the Royal Signals over the past years. At the presentation ceremony the Colonel also met **WO1 Joe Brougham**, in command of Signals training and **SSgt John Waters**, both ex-59 Sig Sqn (V). The Deputy Commandant of Merseyside ACF is **Lt Col Joe Moreland**, also an ex-regular of the Royal Signals.

Merseyside ACF would like to take this opportunity to thank the Commanding Officer and all ranks of 33 Sig Regt (V) for all their support.

Colonel ACDA with the five successful Merseyside ACF Signals Badged Cadets who successfully passed their Signals Course. Sgt Robert Potter, Cpls Stephen Feeney, Craig Roberts, Daniel Hussey and Cadet Chris Cuisek, plus Commandant Col Ian Thomson (third from right) and WO1 Joe Brougham and SSgt John Waters (L and R) both ex-59 Sig Sqn (V)

HF RADIO COMPETITION BETWEEN ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS AND ACF & CCF SIGNALS UNITS

EXERCISE WINTER WOOLLY 2000

The Exercise which took place on 20 January 2000 was a first joint HF radio exercise and short competition for the Royal School of Signals and the ACF & CCF signals units. The Royal Signals participation was by Yeoman of Signals course members at Blandford, competing against cadets and adults of the cadet organisations. The aim was to see who could make the most contacts over a winter evening period on 13 different frequencies. The RSS teams were organised by **Capt Myles Cook** and **CSgt** 'Mo' **McPhail,** both Royal Marines, who have been great supporters of the cadet signalling organisation during their tenures of office in Blandford. Needless to say the competition was fierce and suffice to say some of the rather elderly ACF and CCF adults displayed a keen competitive edge. The main spearhead of their initial operations was led by **Lt Col Tim Elford** of Ardingly College CCF, who quickly moved into an unassailable lead by amassing an amazing total of some 34 contacts in the first two hours. However, **Col Tim's** greater interest in the culinary delights of life forced him to retire after two hours and one can only assume his gourmet supper forced him to an early bout of slumber, since he failed to resurface afterwards. In the meantime, in the cold at Blandford the Yeomen including **Sgt Van Dinteren** of the Royal Netherlands Army quickly learned that both the cadets and their adults were spoiling for a fight and that age and treachery will always outwit youth and enthusiasm. Nevertheless the course quickly picked up the tricks of the trade and two of their four teams had reached over 30 contacts by the time that the elements forced them to retire. From the warmth of their various HQ at Bridlington, Dollar, Rugby and Winchester our intrepid band of ACF & CCF teams continued to battle it out on the lower night frequencies. After over four hours of operating **Lt John Wresdell,** Bridlington School CCF and **Maj Mike Vokes,** assisted by **SI Ian Dummer,** Hampshire ACF were left fighting out who should be champion. During the evening other stations were able to join in at various times and these included Herts ACF (two stations), Warwickshire ACF, Birkenhead School CCF, Glamorgan ACF (Penarth), Hants & IOW ACF (Totland Platoon), Dollar Academy CCF, Prior Park College CCF (Bath) and Exeter School CCF. Everybody seemed to enjoy themselves and agreed it was a very useful exercise. It is hoped that the ACF & CCF Signals units will be able to be of assistance at a future date to courses at the Royal School. of Signals.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON OFFICER TRAINING CORPS

Tp Comd **Capt Joel Curry** 94 BY Sig Sqn (V)
PSI **WO2 (SSM) Harry Kemp**

INTRODUCTION – *by WOCdt Liz Rossiter*

In October, after a summer of adventure training and sun-seeking holidays, 12 (R. SIGNALS) Tp ULOTC formed up for another year of arduous, testing but fun training. New additions to the Troop included 17 OCdts from A Coy and more importantly **WO2 (SSM) Harry Kemp** as our new PSI. However, this welcome is short lived as he is due to move in April on promotion to fill the post of RSM in Blandford. As much as we congratulate him on his promotion we are sorry to see him leave us. Good luck Sir, or should we be saying good luck to the soldiers in Blandford!

Well what of the OTC and what have we done to date?

BLANDFORD 29-31 0CTOBER 1999 – *by WOCdt Beth Richardson*

The first 12 Tp weekend for the year saw us down in Blandford for a liaison visit to the home of the Corps, whilst most other troops stay in transit accommodation during their weekend training we were fortunate enough to get our first taste of the Corps Officers' Mess and were privileged to stay there for the weekend. Revising but in most cases re-teaching Voice Procedure was first on the programme, for some reason our standard certainly kept the PSI amused. Antenna building and a small competition followed and then with the military training completed, it was time to sample some of Blandford Camp's entertainment facilities, namely the bowling alley. After dinner back at the Mess it was then off to Blandford town for the evening. An experience that won't be soon forgotten.

If we had ever wondered why the PSI and the Troop Commander left early the night before we were soon to find out with a trip over the confidence course. With the previous evening's indulgence sweated out it was back to the Mess for a tidy up before a very entertaining presentation from the SORLS team. Many thanks to **Capts Sophie Davies** and **Andy Greenfield** for giving up their Sunday morning to speak to us and to the staff of the Officers' Mess for looking after us so well.

EXERCISE COASTAL INVASION 19-21 NOVEMBER 1999
by JUO Matt Revell

The JUO posing as usual

On the evening of Friday, 19 November we were split into 4x2-man detachments and told to make our way to a map grid reference, just to the south of Winchester, for an exercise which simulated the detachments being a Brigade HQ and three Battle-groups. However, we didn't all make it as **OCdts Pete Street** and **Alex Siddell** when told to go to junction 4 of the M3 broke down at junction 3 of the M3! Not one to bother the RMP for recovery **Ocdt Street** just phoned the AA and promptly got towed to the exercise area.

The Troop Commander set the scene with some well thought out scenarios. They started with an invasion of the South coast of Englan and we were tested not just on our Voice Procedure but also on keeping our maps up to date and properly marked as well as the basics of detachment routine and discipline. The locations of the detachments were conveniently situated on the Troop Commander's parents' farm, so after the work, as ever with 12 Troop it was time to play and the last night was spent in the swimming pool and sauna followed by a debrief with a BBQ and a few beers. Sunday morning was spent practising our marksmanship principles by means of a clay pigeon shooting competition. Once again another good weekend and many thanks to **Capt Curry** for setting it all up.

The end of Battle PT and we all survived

LIAISON VISIT TO 1 MECH BDE HQ AND SIG SQN (215)
by OCdt Osa Emohare

12 Tp's liaison visit to Tidworth was advertised as a calm social walkabout and a nice time driving and learning about their armoured vehicles. What somebody (namely our PSI) forgot to mention, was the four mile tab, log race and the upper body session with the Squadron PTI's.

Arriving on the Friday night we were met by **Lt Brunton**, Troop Commander of Sabre Troop. He led us into the bar warning us that the 'natives' had just come off exercise so they were concentrating more on the assortment of beverages behind the bar than they were on their radios and other comms equipment. However, this changed the following morning when the strangely bright eyed and bushy tailed soldiers keenly explained their roles and tasks within the Squadron. Their enthusiasm and professionalism was surpassed only by their ability to consume alcoholic beverages. We came away well informed and very impressed. The talks by the Squadron Commander and the Troop Commander of Sabre Tp, outlined the tasks undertaken by the Squadron and also charted their careers to date. The many and varied postings highlighted the fact that a career in the Royal Signals is much more varied and rewarding than the civilian equivalent.

Saturday evening in the bar started off with a curry dinner, the quality of which was beyond what the students were used to. The rest of the evening was taken up by a very enjoyable games night. Although we lost to the Squadron overall, they were not impressed when we took the points in the boat race – Yes students can drink too! Sunday was the tab and log run which sorted us all out for the drive back to London. Our thanks to all at 1Mech Bde for hosting us, this was without doubt the best weekend to date.

THE SPORTING SCENE

BADMINTON

The Inter Corps Badminton Tournament took place at Beaconsfield over the period 26/27 November 1999. Six Corps were represented at the 1999 Tournament. They were drawn into two leagues of three.

The draw, unfortunately, put three very strong teams, R SIGNALS, REME and RE, in the same league, with last year's winners, the AGC, drawn in the other league with the RLC and Infantry. The competition consisted of a 'round robin' of matches within the respective leagues, the top two in each league progressing to the semi-finals.

The Corps squad was only a couple of key players short for the competition, but with depth in the squad, we were able to produce a very strong team. The week started at Blandford with a couple of days training in order to select the best pairs for the competition, although we never practised all permutations due to a couple of players not being available for all the training sessions. Having shaken off all the cobwebs, the team were ready to go to Beaconsfield and were quite confident that this was our year. The Royal Signals have not won this competition since 1972.

The following pairs were selected to play against the RE and REME on the first day:

Pr1 **Lt Mike Morton** (1(UK) Div) and **Sig Ady Abbott** (21 Sig Regt (AS))
Pr2 **Sgt Steve Pengelly** (RSS, Blandford) and **Sig Ben Ford** (1(UK) Div)
Pr3 **Capt Guy Bowdler** (11 Sig Regt) and **Cpl Paul Merchant** (RSS, Blandford)

The team played magnificently as the other Corps teams could only watch in awe at the power of the smashes of our No.1 pair, **Lt Mike** 'Take that' **Morton/Sig Ady** 'And that' **Abbott**, who never lost a game throughout the whole tournament. Not to be out-done our No.2 pair, **Sgt Steve** 'I want to be Captain' **Pengelly/Sig Ben** 'I need a fag' **Ford** won all their games in this match. Pair No.3, **Cpl Paul** ' I've got a new racket' **Merchant** and **Capt Guy** 'I'm the new Army Badminton Secretary' **Bowdler** also played very well winning their crucial games against the RE and REME third pairs.

On the second day, having reached the semi-finals, we were lucky enough to have been drawn against a weak Infantry team. **Capt Guy** 'My shoulder hurts' **Bowdler** was substituted for **Sig Paul** 'Do I have to' **Cadogan** (RSS, Blandford). This was **Sig Cadogan's** first taste of badminton at this level but he rose to the occasion and played exceptionally well, partnering **Cpl Merchant**, winning their first game. Unfortunately, this was to be **Sig Cadogan's** last game as **Sgt Andy** 'I had other things to do' **Ball** arrived to strengthen the team for the final. **Sgt Ball** needed a warm-up game before the final as the Irish were about to give us the match at 6-0 up, **Sig Paul** ' I'm happy about that' **Cadogan** stood down again. The match was won easily, 9-0, although it gave the team a chance to warm-up before the final.

The REME also had a late arrival which strengthened their team, thus enabling them to win their semi-final against a confident AGC. Having already beaten the REME in the league, the Corps team were quite confident about the final outcome although the score could be a little closer this time. Towards the end of the first round matches, the team were trying to give their manager, **Capt Terry** 'I'll buy the beers if you win' **Inman** an ulcer. **Lt Mike Morton/Sig Adt Abbott** slipped up and their first game went to 'set' points. **Sgt Steve Pengelly/Sig Ford** lost their first match and **Sgt Ball/Cpl Merchant** took their match to three games. After a quiet word from the 'manager' and the threat of 'no beers', the team turned the match round and demolished the opposition with another 7-2 victory.

Congratulations to the team on a splendid performance. We now have the trophy in our hands for only the third time since the competition started . Let's hope we get to keep it for a few years. Should there be any closet players in the Corps who wish to play for the Corps team, contact **Capt Terry Inman** on Blandford Mil Ext: 5404.

SKIING

ROYAL SIGNALS ALPINE SKIING SEASON 1999-2000

Another successful season for the Alpine Skiers of the Royal Corps! The season started with the Royal Signals Corps Camp and Championships run over four weeks on the Kitzsteinhorn Glacier in Kaprun, Austria over 19 November - 19 December 1999. The camp began with three weeks training for all levels of skiers, with individuals split up according to ability, not unit. All units were accommodated centrally in a 5-star youth hostel in two and four-man rooms with en-suite facilities. The hostel also has a bowling alley, pizzeria, two squash courts, sauna, gym hall and table-tennis room. Night life in Kaprun and Zell-am-See leaves little to be desired, although obviously no 'school day drinking' was allowed to interfere with training! Weekends were spent on 'cultural' trips to Salzburg to enjoy the Christmas markets and glühwein stands, or to the PX in Garmisch for Christmas shopping.

Race week was put together by a very experienced team headed up by **SSgt Andy Brown,** now in his 18th and last season racing with the Corps. He was supported by **Maj John Dakin, WO1 Kev Algar, Sgt Dean MacKenzie,** and **Cpl Andy Dawson.** Representation from the Germany units was high, with only 7 Sig Regt failing to enter a team. 14 Sig Regt (EW) was the only UK unit to be represented this year, a downward turn from last year. The Units represented were 1 (UK) ADSP, 4 Armd Bde & Sig Sqn, 7 Armd Bde & Sig Sqn, 7 Sig Regt, 14 Sig Regt (EW), 16 Sig Regt and 20 Armd Bde & Sig Sqn & RAF Digby. 16 Sig Regt, Captained by **Lt John** 'Admin in China' **Lyons**, and encouraged by **Cpl Tony Orange,** who also won the prestigious prize for first in the Men's Individual Combination.

Sig Marcus Taylor, from 14 Sig Regt (EW)
racing at the Divisional Championships at Serre Chevalier, France

The season continued with various teams moving to Serre Chevalier and Les Contan-fines for the respective Divisional Championships on Ex Spartan Hike 2000. Approximately 140 raced on each of three mountains, each team trying to secure a place amongst the 110 who are selected for the Army Championships, also run in Serre Chevalier. Congratulations to 16 Sig Regt who were the only Royal Signals unit to qualify as a team with **Cpl Tony Orange, Cpl Findlay, Cpl Richie Turnbull** and **LCpl Graeme Rennie. Cpl Stu Foster** (30 Sig Regt) and **Cpl Chris Sweeney** (RAF Digby) qualified as individuals, and in the female squad were **Lt Kate Simmonds** (ATR Bassingbourn), **Lt Fi Stewart** (14 Sig Regt (EW)), and **Cpl Gina Atkinson** (30 Sig Regt).

Cpl Gina Atkinson relishes the joys of the Downhill
at St Morritz, Switzerland

The Army Teams, traditionally selected at the end of the Army Championships made a swift getaway this year after two days racing, due to a dates clash with the Inter-Services. **SSgt Andy Brown** came out of retirement to race for the Men's Army Team, and all three R Signals females in the squad made the Women's Team and headed to the dizzy heights of St Moritz. **Lt Kate Simmonds** achieved third in the International Ladies Combination, and picked up a handful of other silverware and medals.

All in all a fantastic season was enjoyed by all. Sadly this year we say thank you and goodbye to **SSgt Andy Brown,** who not satisfied with spending five months a year skiing has left the Army to spend 12 months a year skiing, setting up business in Zell-am-See. His immeasurable contribution to Corps and Army skiing cannot be quantified, but has been appreciated over the last 18 years by all skiers great and small. Best of luck **Andy**, we'll be out to visit! Also this year we say farewell to **Maj Paul Ford,** who has spent many years racing, and who has also been Manager of the British Ladies Army Ski Team since its inception. He leaves the Corps to become Secretary of the Army Winter Sports Association, where he is sure to keep his eye out for the Royal Signals skiers of the future.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED in competing in the 2000/2001 ski season with the Corps as a team or individual but do not how to organise it please contact **Lt Fi Stewart** at 14 Sig Regt: (EW) on 94359 5858, or **Sgt Dean MacKenzie** at 16 Sig Regt.

ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB

Admiral	Brig C. J. Burton OBE
Commodore	Brig H. H. Ham CBE
Vice Commodore	Maj D. C. A. Ellis (94371 5299)
Rear Commodores:	
Offshore	Lt Col R. J. Good (94331 2441)
Dinghy and Day boats	Maj J. F. Calvert (94777 2204)
Windsurfing	Maj D. I. Gilchrist (94631 4219)
Yachtmaster (UK)	Maj J. S. Stuart (Mob: 0796 7043868)
(Germany)	Capt I. C. Gray (94371 2216)
Retired Members Representative	Lt Col (Retd) M. J. P. Collins
Secretaries:	
General	Maj K. Whitehead (Mil: 94381 2531)(Civ: 01985 222531)
Windsurfing	Capt A. J. Mould (94344 5111)
Soldier Members:	
Offshey	Cpl D. Sangster
Dinghy	LCpl S. Southan
Windsurfing	Cpl A. Varney

ROYAL SIGNALS WINDSURFING CLUB

After a period of absence from the pages of *The WIRE*, the Royal Signals Windsurfing Club is back in print. However, before we get into the news, a quick explanation of who we are. The primary aim of the club is to encourage long board racing in the various leagues throughout the Army. This includes the Inter-Corps league, in which there are five race meetings per year, the Army Championships and the Inter-service Championships, not forgetting, of course, the Royal Signals Championships. To support the racing, the Corps has a fleet of race boards and rigs which are rented annually to the top sailors to enable them to compete. On the short board front, the club co-ordinates a team entry in the annual Forces Fun-Board Championships which takes place in Holland in September. In addition to its racing activities, the club also provides a forum for all keen windsurfers and maintains a database of instructors who are potentially available to support unit courses. Anyone interested in finding out more about Royal Signals Windsurfing should contact the club Secretary, **Capt Andrew Mould**, on 94344 5111.

Results from the 1999 Season: The Club had a very good season in 1999. On the individual front, some notable achievements were recorded -

Maj Peter Bowles	Army Lightweight Champion
SSgt Norman Finnegan	BFG Race-Board Champion
Cpl Pete Hoggart	Joint Services Novice Champion
Cpl 'Gaz' **Pope**	Army Novice Champion
Cpl 'Reg' **Varney**	Joint Services Runner-up, Super-Heavyweight
Maj Dave Gilchrist	Forces Fun-Board Champion, 4 Div Overall Champion, Captain of a victorious Inter-Services Army Team, London Region Overall Champion, National Inland Veteran Champion,

These successes were reflected in a large number of individual trophies at the Royal Signals Yacht Club AGM. These were presented as follows:

The Meiktila Cup	awarded to **Maj Dave Gilchrist** as the person with the racing record last season.
The Bolitho Prize	awarded to **WO1 John Fradley** as the person in the 'V Club who has done most to encourage sailing.
The Commodore's Cup	awarded to **Cpl Pete Hoggart** as the most promising newcomer to the sport.
The Admiral's Bowl	awarded to **LCpl Gaz Pope** as the most promising young sailor.

The Corps Windsurfing Championships was held at Weymouth, with the following results:

Champion Major Unit	30 Sig Regt
Champion Minor Unit	238 Sig Sqn
Overall Champion	**SSgt Norman Finnegan**
Lightweight Champion	**Maj Peter Bowles**
Heavyweight Champion	**SSgt Barry Raine**
Novice Champion	**Cpl Pete Hoggart.**

RESULTS FROM THE 2000 SEASON

The Corps has made an excellent start to the current season. At the first event of the Inter-Corps series, we achieved first place. At the second event, held at the start of April, we achieved a convincing second place, some way behind the very strong REME team, but comfortably in front of the rest of the opposition. Providing we manage to field a full strength team for each event, we stand an excellent chance of winning the competition.

Look Forward. There are plenty of opportunities for windsurfing during the coming season in the Inter-Corps League. However, the best chance to get involved is at the Corps Championships which will be held from 27 - 29 September. Entries are sought from individuals and unit teams. Watch this space!-

Members of the Windsurfing Club
Standing (L-R): Lt Col White, Cpl White, Maj Bowles, Cpl Hoggart, Maj Gilchrist, Brig Burton (Admiral RSYC), Cpl Pope, Sgt Bennett
Kneeling, Capt Mould, Cpl Varney

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SAILING, OFF SHORE, DINGHY OR WINDSURFING TELEPHONE THE APPROPRIATE SECRETARY AS SHOWN IN THE HEADING ON THIS PAGE

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

President: The Master of Signals

Chairman: Major General A. Yeoman CB

Vice Chairmen: Brig N. F. Wood 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; Lt Col C. N. Lightfoot N Ireland

General Secretary and Treasurer: Col A. R. Carter MBE — **Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col I. J. Hamilton**
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J. Cornick — **Administrative Officer: Mr. P. J. Cuckow (Membership & Records)**

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. Internet: www.royalsignals.army.org.uk/museum/rsa.htm

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 News: Mr Leslie Perrier, Hon Secretary of the Jersey Branch has a new address; 14 1/2 Elizabeth Lane, St Helier, Jersey JE2 3PH. **Howard Loates** has been elected as the new Hon Secretary of the West London Branch. **Howard's** address is; 34 Mill Way, Feltham, Middx TW14 0JX. Tel: 0208-348 0950. The Shropshire Branch has a new Secretary; **Chris Talbot**, whose contact details are; 34 Gains Ave, Bicton Heath, Shrewsbury SY3 5DQ. Tel; 01743-353233. Thank you **Howard** and **Chris** for offering your services. Our thanks also go to **Brian Gibbs** for all his hard work and co-operation as he hands over to **Steve Nobbs** as Hon Secretary of the Norfolk Branch. **Steve** can be contacted at; 12 Lacey Rd, Taverham, Norwich NR8 6ND. Tel: 01603-869364. **Ian Lorimer**, Hon Secretary of the Preston & Blackburn Branch has moved address to; 55 Notredame Gdns, Blackburn BB1 5EF. Tel No is unchanged. **Trevor Holyoake** informs me that the Bedford Branch now meets on the last Thursday of each month in the Royal Signals Bar at the Drill Hall, Bedford Road, Kempston, Bedford, starting at 2000 hours. **Pat Maloney** is trying to set up a new Branch in Germany and would be pleased to hear from any former members of the Corps who live in or around Osnabruck. Contact **Pat** at; Lorser Strasse 7, 49596 Gehrde. **Brian Overland** has taken over from **Bob Rowland** as Secretary of the Peterborough Branch. **Brian** can be contact at; 5 Ambury Gdns, Crowland, Peterborough PE6 0LT. Tel: 01733-210624. **Bob** has served on the Branch Committee since its inaugural meeting in 1976 and it is good to report that will continue as Branch Chairman. The Torbay Branch now has a 'splinter group' based in Exmouth. It is known as the 'Exmouth Group' and anyone intested in joining should contact **Tom May** at; 46 Rose Way, Exmouth, S. Devon EX8 2RP. **Ron Toft** has handed over the post of Hon Secretary of the Nottingham Branch to **Eric Harris**. **Eric** can be contacted at; 4-12 Selston Rd, Jacksdale, Notts NG16 5LE. **Lesley Banyard**, Hon Secretary of the Loughborough Branch has moved to; 27 Brook Street, Shepshed, Leics LE12 9RE. Tel: 01509-503 585. Branches need your support - if you don't already belong to your nearest Branch, why not join? It's not a 24 x 7 x 52 commitment. Contact this office for details of your nearest Branch.

Calling all former despatch riders: Mr A. E. 'Bert' **Thurling** is trying to set up a Reunion Club for former DRs. If you are interested, please contact him at; 44 Portland Rd, Hayes, Middx UB4 8LG.

Association Rule Book: The RSA Rule Book has been reprinted as at April 2000. Those Branch Secretaries who did not collect at the AGM/Branch Reps Meeting in April should bid to this office for their requirements. Bids should indicate whether the Rule books should be sent by post or collected at the Reunion (which is preferable). All previous issues of the RSA Rule book are now superceded.

Annual Reunion: Your last reminder that the Annual RSA Reunion will take place at Blandford over the weekend 24/25 June 2000. All Association members and their guests are welcome to attend. Those who plan attending have until 16 June to return their application forms to Assn HQ. All members are advised that if they have not pre-booked their meals, they will have to make their own feeding arrangements. Meals in Messes will be provided only for living in members.

Corps Carol Service: Circumstances have forced the change of date for the Corps Carol Service from Tuesday 12 December to Thursday 21 December 2000. All current and former members of the Corps are invited to attend this event, held at St Stephens with St Johns Church, Rochester Row, Westminster, starting at 1800 hours.

Freedom of Richmond: Being held over the weekend 16/17 September 2000, for more details contact your branch secretary or Association HQ. All members of the Association are most welcome to attend, to take part in the March Past and to enjoy the curry supper in the Sgts Mess in the evening. There is the traditional Church Service and March Past on the Sunday morning. Branches who plan to send a contingent, are asked to let this office know the details, in order that the organisors can have an idea of how many are coming.

RSA Annual General Meeting: This year's AGM was again combined with the Branch Representatives Meeting, and held in Chelsea Barracks on Saturday 8 April, with the kind permission of OC 238 Sig Sqn. 120 members attended, representing 57 of the Association's 86 Branches. It was good to see our old friends **Doug Woolford** and **Bill Harmsworth** from the Royal Hospital, Chelsea. **Bill** had been very unwell last year, but is now thankfully much better. **Doug** looked as fighting fit as ever. Many members traveled a fair distance to attend and their efforts were much appreciated - including; **WO1(RSM) Mark Rouse** from SHAPE, **Maj (Retd) Pat Maloney** from Osnabruck, plus **Norman Strachan** and **Doug Bartlett** who put a thousand miles on the clock by coming down from Aberdeen. The meeting enjoyed a report by **Col Andrew Carter** on financial matters for the past year and by **Lt Col Ian Hamilton** on Welfare. The Regimental Colonel gave an interesting briefing on the latest happenings within the Corps. Everyone I spoke to afterwards said how much they had enjoyed the meeting. The Master of Signals closed the meeting by announcing that **Maj Gen Alan Yeoman** was standing down as Chairman of the Association at the end of this year and handing over to **Maj Gen A. H. Boyle CB**. My personal thanks go to **Maj (Retd) Bob Bates** of 238 Sig Sqn for setting up all the arrangements at the meeting.

Association Appointments: Brig N. F. Wood has succeeded **Brig C. T. Garton** as Vice Chairman Area 1. **Lt Col (Retd) C. N. Lightfoot** has been appointed Vice Chairman Northern Ireland.

The Royal Tournament: Tony Langham is organising a national campaign to save the Royal Tournament. He says he has over 17,000 signatures, but needs more. If you would like to help, please contact **Tony** on 01722-504539.

New Life Members: Those recently enrolled Life Members of The Association are shown below. Our good wishes go to those embarking on a second career - we hope that they stay in touch with Association HQ.

Rank and name	*Branch*	*Service*
Sig Sydney Southern	RHQ	1942-47
Sgt Denis PUDSEY	RHQ	1966-95
SSgt Jerry D'alquen	RHQ	1965-87
Sig Lewis Ross	RHQ	1947-49
Sig Stanley Martin	RHQ	1990-99
Cpl Chris Binnington	RHQ	1986-99
Sig Ronnie Jackson	RHQ	1940-46
Sgt Arthur Arris	RHQ	1947-50
Cpl John Tait	RHQ	1969-82
WO2 Bob Snow	Dorset	1975-00
LCpl Alma Barron	Rotherham	1952-54
Sig Philip Carr	Rotherham	1954-56
LCpl Brian Davies	Rotherham	1953-56
Sig Frank Glossop	Rotherham	1951-53
Sig Jim Roe	Rotherham	1950-52
Cpl Mick Stone	Rotherham	1953-55
Sig Kathryn Wilkinson	Hull	1993-Date
SSgt Graham Hackett	RHQ	1965-89
Cpl Brian Jacobs	RHQ	1991-00

WO2 Steve Hughes	RHQ	1976-00
Sgt Martin Kendall	RHQ	1984-95
SSgt Martin Gillard	RHQ	1975-99
Sig Jimmy Dutch	RHQ	1960-70
Cpl Nick Campbell	RHQ	1984-98
Sgt Bob Witherstone	RHQ	1976-93
Sgt John Shipp	Beverley Ex-Boys	1951-66
Lt Terry Linsdell	Beverley Ex-Boys	1952-67
Cpl Ted Geldart	Beverley Ex-Boys	1954-62
Sgt Norman Biffen	Beverley Ex-Boys	1950-60
Cpl Brian Angell	Beverley Ex-Boys	1952-62
WO1 Bob Huxtable	Dorset	1959-82
WO2 Joseph Brougham	Liverpool	1968-88
LCpl Victor Burgess	Peterborough	1952-54
WO2 Gerry Garland	RHQ	1960-82
Cpl Roberta Campbell	N. Ireland	1985-99
Sig Kristian Letton	RHQ	1993-00
Cpl Michael Smith	Beverley Ex-Boys	1951-58
Cpl Don Price	Beverley Ex-Boys	1950-57
Sig Lionel Powell	Beverley Ex-Boys	1953-56
Sgt Peter Lasota	Beverley Ex-Boys	1950-68
Sig Mick Mears	RHQ	1952-54
LCpl Bob Cunningham	RHQ	1984-97
WO1 Derek Curley	RHQ	1948-68
Sgt Paul Jennings	RHQ	1972-92
Sgt Stephen Phillips	RHQ	1976-00
Sig Thomas Bremner	RHQ	1989-98
WO1 Michael Dobson	RHQ	1966-92
Sgt G.T. Skey	Dorset	1981-Date
Sgt Chris Harvey	RHQ	1980-90
WO1 Peter Mcinally	RHQ	1976-99
SSgt Adrian West	RHQ	1977-00
LCpl Gary Illman	RHQ	1991-00
Sig Richard Hugget	RHQ	1991-00
Cple Jason Trimmer	RHQ	1985-99
Sgt Mark Haworth	RHQ	1988-99
LCpl Alan Boot	RHQ	1952-55
Dvr Frank Luscombe	RHQ	1940-46
WO2 Harry Hemstock	Beverley Ex-Boys	1951-78
WO1 Joseph Jackson	Beverley Ex-Boys	1951-76
Sig Colin Jewell	Beverley Ex-Boys	1949-51
Sig John Thomas	Beverley Ex-Boys	1950-53
Maj Geoff McKie	Beverley Ex-Boys	1951-85
Cpl Donny Brough	RHQ	1965-89
Capt Kathy Ker	Catterick	1971-95
Sig Geoff Warburton	RHQ	1940-45
Cpl Jack Anderson	12/15/18 AFSR	1945-48
Sig Peter Laidlaw	RHQ	1964-71
LCpl Rob Dewhurst	RHQ	1987-94
Cpl Graham Cox	RHQ	1939-46
LCpl Christopher Beard	East Kent	1959-67
Sig Jack Hilton	South London	1948-50
Dvr Bramwell Holland	RHQ	1945-48
WO2 Bill Barron	Rotherham	1951-62
Cpl Alwyn Gresser	Rotherham	1950-52
Capt Philip Clifford	RHQ	1974-00
Lt Col Guy Meakin	RHQ	1967-00
Lt Col Bob Weston	RHQ	1974-00
Maj Paul Ford	RHQ	1972-00
Maj Andy Allman	RHQ	1984-00
Maj Howard Hughes	RHQ	1988-00
Capt Andy Carroll	RHQ	1995-00
Capt Geoff Ashwell	RHQ	1970-00
Capt Lianne Neil	RHQ	1996-00
Maj Andy Hill	RHQ	1979-00
Maj Rab Mulholland	RHQ	1979-00
Maj Gavin West	RHQ	1965-00
Lt Col Mike Anderson	RHQ	1967-99
Maj Mark Alexander	RHQ	1982-99
Capt Roberta Davis	RHQ	1988-99
Capt David Seymour	RHQ	1991-99
Maj Bob Munro	RHQ	1987-99
Cpl Bob Mason	Dorset	1972-94
SSgt Rob Hay	RHQ	1971-93
Sgt Jim Duncan	Beverley Ex-Boys	1951-69
Cpl Muriel Belson (nee Hall)	RHQ	1939-43
Sig Nick Wallis	RHQ	1993-99
Cpl Archie Goode	RHQ	1965-80
LCpl Tom Robinson	RHQ	1981-97
LCpl Alvyn Muggleton	Loughborough	1947-49
SSgt Richard Federl	RHQ	1953-76
Cpl Ted Crocker	RHQ	1950-52
Sgt Chas Cowell	RHQ	1976-00
Cpl Archie Mulholland	RHQ	1952-61
Lt Col Neil Yeoell MBE	RHQ	1980-00
Sig Garry Wright	RHQ	1980-86
LCpl Will Hughes	RHQ	1946-49
Cpl Gordon Rye	RHQ	1954-56
Lt Col Nick Naylor	RHQ	1964-00
Sig E. Whittington	Swindon	1942-47
WO1 Ted Hunt	Beverley Ex-Boys	1952-78
Lt John Kendall	Reading	1992-date
Sig Len Patten	RHQ	1941-46
Sig John Vine	RHQ	1945-48
Sgt Chris Morgan	RHQ	1980-94
Cpl Daniel Hill	RHQ	1993-00
Cpl Bob Giffard	RHQ	1976-00
WO2 Alex Sim	Darlington	1951-74
Sig Fred Hudgell	RHQ	1944-47
Cpl Stewart Feely	RHQ	1976-00
Sig Ewan Stewart	Manchester	1989-96
Sgt Bill Morgan	RHQ	1943-47
Lt Col Geoff Strivens	RHQ	1967-00
Cpl Stan Sach	RHQ	1948-50
Cpl Mark Gibson	RHQ	1979-93
LCpl Gordon Baxter	Beverley Ex-Boys	1949-51
Sig Gary Jones	RHQ	1982-90
Sig Cliff Smith	Poole	1940-46

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

In March we enjoyed a Musical Evening presented by **Robert Webb**, a woodwind musician, classical and jazz. who teaches, and indeed is music tutor at the Gordon School. He came with an army of instruments ranging from piccolo to one of astronomic proportions and afforded us a most entertaining evening. We were joined by members of the Aldershot Branch of the WRAC Association, several of whom had played in their Corps Band so the audience was not without its experts.

In April our AGM (yes, we already had one in October) was the occasion of our Spring Luncheon. This function, held at the Garrison Sergeants Mess was well attended by Members and guests and ably organised by **Joe Fairbairn** a serving Member of our Branch and Committee. The justice done to the food says much for Bpritish beef, and for the great job **Joe** and his Staff do on these occasions, which make no little contribution to the success of the Branch. We always are pleased to have **Joe** and **Jane Fairbairn** with us. We were happy to have the company of our President, **Maj Gen Henry Hild MBE** and **Janet**. We missed them at our previous event as they were away in the New World. Welcome home.

BRISTOL BRANCH

SSgt Jayne Burn, who apart from being a committed serving TA soldier, is also a very active member of the Bristol Branch of the Royal Signals Association and was, for a time, our Branch Secretary. We were all delighted when she announced her engagement to **Mr Rod Tuck** , and several members of the Branch were present at her wedding and the reception on 19 February, which was also both **Jayne** and **Rod's** birthdays1 so a double (or should I say 'triple') celebration. Both the wedding and the reception were held at The Beeches Hotel, Bristol. Her bridesmaids were **Sgt Filomena Zamparelli** (another Branch member), and **Cpl Kerri Hall** – both members of 39 Sig Regt (V). A Quarter guard consisted of **WO2 Phil Packer, WO2 Phil Martin, WO2 Lou Carr** and **SSgt Dave Williams** – also from 39 Sig Regt (V).

The bride leaving the ceremony flanked by her Guard of Honour

CARDIFF BRANCH

The closing months of the old year saw our usual Annual Prize Draw closely followed by the Christmas 'Sing-a-Long' in which latter we were ably augmented by the Cardiff Flute Ensemble with their accompanist, our Treasurer, **Daphne Powell**. Then, within a month the Branch held its Millennium Dinner & Dance. The occasion, held at the BBC Wales Social club, was a sell-out and we were honoured by the presence of our Area Vice-Chairman, **Lt Col (Retd) John Billingham**, and his lady, **Dr Joan French**. The doctor and our Entertainment Officer, **Carol Richards**, gave us invaluable service when one of our veterans , **Ken Bladen**, was taken ill and had to be taken to hospital. Happily **Ken** was soon on the mend and returned to us at our next meeting.

Our AGM in January saw the return of Officers unchanged from last year – surely a tribute to their satisfactory performance! On 19 January a large turn out of members attended the funeral of one of our most steadfast comrades, **Mr Bill Morgan.** Arrangements made by our Secretary, **Bill Davies**, as always, ensured an impressively dignified ceremony with a 'Corps' of Standard Bearers under the command of our own Standard Bearer, **Mel Collier**, dipping standards whilst a trumpeter in full dress, from the Royal Regiment of Wales, played the 'Last Post'. Branch Chairman, **Eric Powell**, gave the oration. **Bill's** family were most fulsome in expressing their appreciation of the Branch's involvement.

Representatives from the Branch attended the Wales National Millennium Service at Llandaff Cathedral, which was attended by the Lord Lieutenant, the Archbishop of Wales and other civic dignitaries. The next major social event in our calendar is the Summer Buffet and Dance to be held at the BBC Wales Social Club in June. Tickets are already reaching the 'sold out' stage.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Towards the end of last year the Glasgow Branch wrote to East Kent and a number of other Branches, asking whether they would be prepared to raise funds for new sets of Bagpipes for their Pipe Band. **Jo Barrett** and **Marion de Rose** recommended Car Boot Sales and off they went to Ramsgate with goods donated by the Branch members. Later **Trevor Allison** and **John Ballantyne** had their turn and all together collected £100 which was sent off to Glasgow. With a copy of the cartoon.

Sunday 13 February was the Branch annual Ten Pin Bowling competition, nearly 40 competed ably supported by a growing number of less agile distaff who cheered on their Husbands/Wives/ children and grandchildren. The winner once again was one of the **Andrews'** family, best Lady was **Marion Ballantyne** and just to balance the books the wooden spoon went to **Roy Andrews'** grandson **Stephen** age 9, who we are sure will follow in his Uncle's footsteps next year.

Sunday 13 March 59 members met at the Dog & Bear, Lenham to listen to a fascinating talk by **Trevor Allison** on his experiences of working with the Corps Y Service in Berlin from 1964 to 69. Members gave him a well deserved round of applause.

NEW MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome **Mr Peter Witt,** Chislehurst. **Peter** served as a Territorial in 144(HC) Sig Regt, 329 Sig Sqn and 39 (City of London) Sig Regt. Also welcome to **Mr Richard Gibson** and his wife **Pat** of Sittingbourne. **Richard** served as a Driver from 1952-55 and was in Japan, Korea and BAOR interspersed with periods in UK. Also **Mr Gordon Waylett** of Aveley, Essex. **Gordon** served as National Serviceman from 1949 in ITR Catterick and War Office Sig Regt before joining the TA in 44 Div Sig Regt as a SSgt (FofS) before leaving in 1966. He had come as a guest of **Frank Castle** for the bowling and so enjoyed the company that, despite living in Essex has joined and we welcomed him formally at the lunch, last Sunday.

AU REVOIR

Sadly **Maj Ron** and **Marjorie Acott** have resigned as they are about to move house to Littlehampton to be near their family. they have been regular supporters of Branch events and we shall miss them.

VALE

We are saddened to report the death of **Capt Arthur Hayles** on 14 January 2000. Who served from 1939 to 1946 in North Africa, Italy, Lebanon and Cyprus. Our condolences go to **Jose** who herself was a Colonel in the QARANC.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

Having survived the Branch AGM in February when the election of Officers for the year 2000 did not exactly please everyone, our March meeting look the form of a social evening our Guests being the Members of the Royal Engineers Association. The skills of Members of both Associations were shown on the shooting range and later when they took part in an interesting quiz. Food provided by **Ian** and **Debbie Wolfe** and **Kim Greer** rounded up a pleasant evening. **Ian** and **Debbie** are at the moment embroiled in finalising arrangements for our annual formal dinner to be held on Good Friday 21 April, 2000. The food has been ordered, the band has been booked so all we have to do now is to look forward to it.

This year we will not have our serving TAVR Members at the Blandford Re-union, due to a clash of dates with Annual Camp but Organiser, **Edgar McCall** has arrangements well in hand for a good representative number who will attend the Re-union.

In a few weeks time **Harry Stanley**, (Foundation Member and 50 Year Badge holder) will become 87 years young and we hope to celebrate this with him at our April meeting. We still meet an the third Wednesday of the month at Clonaver TAVR Centre, Belfast. Do join us.

SWINDON BRANCH

On Sunday 6 February 2000, members and wives attended a Dedication Service at St. Marks Church, Swindon. The object of the dedication service was for a new 'kneeler' woven in the Regimental Colours with the 'Jimmy' painstakingly embossed in the centre as depicted on our Standard. The Service was conducted by the **Rev John Lees**, with the church choir in attendance. The cost of the 'kneeler' was paid for by Branch members. Also present were representatives from the Royal Engineers, Royal Artillery, Korean Veterans and Royal Navy Associations. After the Service, members retired to the TA Centre to 'wet the baby's head'.

(L-R): Tom Davies, Peter Howells, Rod Mansfield, Ted Little and Derek Ferris

SOUTHPORT AND DISTRICT

The Branch held our Millennium Dinner Dance at the famous Scarisbrick Hotel at Southport. The hotel did us proud providing us with a huge millennium cake. The cake was big enough to give most of the guests a slice to go with the champagne. Over ninety guests turned out for the event including a full table of Royal Engineer Association members. Our Guests of Honour, **Brig (Retd) Bill Backhouse** and his wife **Keri** were warmly welcomed by all members. The Brigadier told some very funny stories about his time down the road at Liverpool. Everyone agreed that the dance was excellent.

On a sad note the Branch has lost two members, our President **Murdoe MacLeod** and **Bill Whalley.** Both men will be sorely missed by the Branch. Many Branch members attended both funerals.

Graham Krinks has agreed to become our new President. **Graham** has assured the Branch that he will turn up on time for the meetings. **Charlie Christian** an old member has returned to the fold after a long absence. Welcome back **Charlie.** Anybody interested in joining us would be welcome to do so. We meet on the third Thursday of the month at eight o'clock at the Conservative club, Bath Street, Southport.

Front Row (L-R): Eddie Armor, Dave Carrier, John Reaney, Graham Krinks, Bruce Gillingham, Brig (Retd) Bill Backhouse Peter Dooley, Bernard Moorcroft
Back Row (L-R): Dick Taylor, Frazer Gordon, Danny Monks, Andy Tait, John Roberts, Tommy Thompson, Jimmy Johnson

WEST WALES BRANCH

First on behalf of my wife **Linda** and myself I would like to thank all who helped us in our efforts to form a Branch of the Association in West Wales. Also to the retired Corps members who came to our meeting to discuss this possibility, which enabled us to form the Branch on 21 May 1999

West Wales Branch at the RSA Lunch 27/01/00
Back Row (L-R): Jim Jarman, Hugh John, Capt Ivor Anderson, Peter Mathews, Chris Braid, Gordon Jenkins, Col Billingham
Front Row (L-R): Gwyn Edwards, Gwyn Phillips, Elgan Davies, Linda Davies, Maj Derek Roberts

It has been a slow but steady progress in our first year. We have held three functions so far, A curry supper in December when **Col Andrew Carter** was our guest. He gave a very good talk on the progress of the Corps and the Association. Many of our members have been away from the Corps. for quite a number of years and appreciated the talk by **Col Andrew** very much. Our next function was a belated Christmas Millennium lunch, our main guests were **Col John Billingham** and **Capt Ivor Anderson BEM** who is the President of the Llanelli Branch of the Royal British Legion. On this occasion we were joined by our wives, partners and friends and a very good time was had by all. Our next function was a Quiz Night held in March against the Star Hotel, Swansea Road, Llanelli. This to was a successful evening with one of our teams winning on the night. Our next adventure will be a trip to Blandford which is in the organising stages at the moment. We hope to make the trip in mid April.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our members for supporting our meetings and functions, especially those who travel from Milford Haven, Whitland, Carmarthen, Ceredigion, Port Talbot, Swansea and the Swansea Valleys with out their support the Branch may well not have been formed.

THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH IN DEED.

If there are any more retired or serving members in the West Wales area who would like to know more about the Branch please contact **Linda** or **Elgan** on 01554 776493.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

In March our AGM was held in Hounslow Barracks, courtesy of the Devon & Dorsets who have taken over from the Duke of Wellington's Regt, the 'Wellies' having moved off to Germany. This Meeting is special as it also is the occasion of our Great Fish & Chip Night when Members come from far and wide to partake of their national dish, ferried from a local chippie courtesy of the Branch and organised and chauffeured by **Sheila Ruff.**

We combined with the Hounslow Branch of the Burma Star Association for their Annual Dinner at the Civic Centre, after which the floor is cleared for dancing and the interval features a traditional rendering of 'The Road to Mandelay' lustily delivered by old salts of the Burma Campaign and the Indian Ocean. We were happy to have with us our President, **Maj John Daw BEM** and **Margaret,** who cannot always be with us as they now are resident on the Hampshire coast.

254 OBA - SOUTHERN CHAPTER

28 March - A dozen ex-boys and their wives converged on the Upland Park Hotel, Droxford, for their annual dinner under the attentive eye of mine host, **Ex-RSM Brian Lay. Jim** and **Rita Braid** from Clacton, **Bill** and **Sheila Leech** from Exeter and others from nearer home, began arriving in the early afternoon and soon the ante-room was resounding to the conversation of old friends meeting once again. At dinner a place was set for those unable to be with us and we stood for a moment to remember **Danny Daniels** and **Doreen Wood. Ken Wood** felt able to join us and was warmly greeted. **Ken**, it was, who found this hotel and who initiated these dinners. Until recently **Doreen**, in her wheelchair, accompanied him and we had all admired the cheerfulness, courage and fortitude of this charming lady and **Ken's** love and devotion in caring for her. After a fine meal with ample choice for everyone, **Brian Lay** provided a decanter of fine port which only just managed to complete the circuit! Unusually the meal passed without incident although **Maureen Soward**, with characteristic panache, managed to set fire to her menu card.

After breakfast a delegation departed for Modbury for **Danny Daniels**, funeral and on 3 April another gathering of twelve or more ex-boys and their wives, including the **Rev Jim Ireland** who had travelled from York, joined family and friends to say farewell to **Doreen Wood**. The service included a solo rendition of Amazing Grace sung with great sensitivity and crystal clarity.

Jess Weir has invited the Southern Chapter to meet next at the Royal Signals Museum on 4 May with the option to take lunch at Humph Bahadur's Gurkha Restaurant.

BEVERLEY EX-BOYS ASSOCIATION

A Committee Meeting was held on Sunday, 26 March at our Chairman, **John Edison's** house at Clanfield, near Waterlooville, Hampshire and we would like to thank his wife, **Sue**, for the extremely good lunch and their hospitality. Our Vice-Chairman, **Mick Teague**, travelled all the way from Blyth in Northumberland and our President, **John Beasley**, from London, whilst the rest of the Committee came from Bournemouth and Southampton. A proposal had been put forward by **Bill Gray** and **Mick Teague** that **Maj Jimmy Fyfe** should be made Honorary Life President, which was agreed, and a certificate will be presented to him in due course.

Last year at the RSA AGM a proposal was put forward that a building at Blandford be named 'Beverley' in memory of the 6 (Boys) Training Regiment. **Lt Col (Retd) I. J. Hamilton** has informed us that this has been put forward to the Garrison 'Naming Committee'. The Membership has grown to 134 members and **Mike O'Donoghue** is very kindly launching a website to advertise our Association and also for recruiting. We have been advised by **Cliffe Webb** that he could be the longest serving ex-boy as he served from May 1952 to October 1993 making a total of over 41 years. Can anybody beat this?

Plans were finalised for the 50th Anniversary Reunion Weekend to be held on 7-8 October at the Museum of Army Transport, Beverley and further details can be obtained from the Branch Secretary. **Tony Hull**: 01202-770261.

REUNIONS

The 60s 16ers
(1960s 16 Signal Regiment
incl HQ BAOR Signal TroopReunion Club)

Our fifth annual reunion will take place on 1-4 September 2000.
Do you qualify for membership of this thriving reunion club?
Have you registered? 222 former friends/colleagues have.
Contact **Chris Bartlett**, 45 Whitehouse Road, Leigh on Sea, ESSEX SS9 5SR, Tel:01702 524620 or E-mail: chris60s16er@tesco.net
Why not visit our Website: Http://homepages.tesco.net/~chris60s16er

3rd DIVISIONAL SIGNALS REUNION CLUB

At the invitation of the RSM, **WO1 Gany Stoker**, and with the blessing of the CO, **Lt Col N. Couch** Royal Signals, we held our 4th AGM and Reunion Luncheon in the WOs' and Sgts' Mess at Picton Barracks in Bulford on Saturday 25 March 2000. Our Guests of Honour on this occasion were **Maj Gen John D. Stokoe CB CBE**, Representative Colonel Commandant and his wife, **Jennifer**. Other guests from the Regiment were **Lt Col Neil Couch, Capt Terry Crane** with his wife **Mary** and standing in for the RSM (away on duty! In New York) the PMC, **WO (SSM) Jim McNaught**, with **Alison**, his wife. A special guest this year was **Peter Cuckow**, from RHQ, with his wife, **Sheila.** We started to assemble in the Ante Room at 1100hrs because that was when the bar opened and spent the time waiting for the AGM to start at 1200hrs by refreshing ourselves and chatting. The AGM was an extremely long one this year lasting for 15 minutes after which we went back to the drinking, sorry refreshing, and chatting to await the arrival of our guests. The guests duly arrived, were greeted and then escorted into the Ante Room where, after doing a few introductions, the escorts melted away leaving the guests free to meet old friends and, we hope, to make new ones.

The Mess Manager announced Luncheon at 1300hrs and we went into the Mess to find the tables set with Regimental Silver and looking quite magnificent and were served a meal which more than matched the setting. Our President, **Brig Ronnie Stoneham** started the after lunch proceedings with a few apposite remarks and after Toasts to HM The Queen and the Colonel in Chief introduced **Maj Gen Stokoe**. The General gave us a short resume of his antecedents and told of how he had just missed out on the chance of a posting to 3 Sig Regt. He carried on to give us an interesting and amusing speech on the changes in the Corps's *raison d'etre* and how the young men, and women, of the serving Corps had risen to the challenge and made Royal Signals a byword for excellence. The President then proposed the Toast to The Regiment after which he invited the CO, **Lt Col Neil Couch**, to give his traditional Report to the Shareholders. **Col Neil** in his response told us that the Regiment was nearly all back in Bulford from the Balkans and that apart from a fairly large detachment to the Joint Service Communication Unit in the Falklands all ranks were now back in the UK and busily employed in training in their primary task of providing services and communications for the Divisional HQ. He went on to say that they had still managed to do quite well in sporting matters and that various adventurous training opportunities had been well supported. He was proud of the Regiment and said that we had every reason to be proud that our successors were carrying on the great traditions of the Iron Div.

It then fell to **Maj Derek Roberts**, our Chairman, to introduce our 'first footers' who were **Col Bell**, with his wife, on a visit from Australia and taking the chance to attend a Reunion, **Maj Steve Bresloff** and **Mr Elgan Davies** with his wife **Linda**. After thanking the Committee for their help during the year, particularly during last summer, he went on to propose the Toast to The Ladies. The Secretary then read out apologies for absence from some members and explained the circumstances involved in some of the cases especially that of 'Pedlar' **Palmer**, who had dropped something heavy on *his* foot. (He is alright now and able to go for *his* pre-prandial glass of sherbet). He then proposed the Toast to Absent Friends.

Normally, apart from the raffle, that would have completed the Luncheon but the Secretary, in great secrecy, had arranged a little surprise with the help of the General. He gave to the General a salver on which were two Honour Members Badges and Certificates. The General then asked **Derek Roberts** to stand up and accept his Honour Badge. **Derek,** after picking his jaw up, managed a few words of thanks before whispering to the Secretary, 'You devious swine,' or words to that effect.

Gen John then explained that the second Honour badge was for **Maj Ken Smartt**, our Vice President and erstwhile long serving Chaiman who was unable to attend due to illness (You will all be pleased to know that **Ken** is getting better and hopes to join us at Bulford in the summer). He

Maj Derek Roberts
being presented with his Honour Membership Badge by
Maj Gen John Stokoe

asked **Derek** to present **Ken** with his Badge, with the General's congratulations, when he visits him in May. We are all very proud at this recognition of the hard work put in over many years by those two members. The raffle, which was organised as usual by our Treasurer, **Ernest**, assisted by **Kathleen Percival, Janice Pickard, Les Wright, Bill Barnard** and **Colin** and **Joan Spencer**, raised £98-00 towards Club funds thanks to the many donations from kind members, so many in fact that we had to double up on the prizes or we would have been all afternoon calling them out. (**Bob Piper** did not fail us and provided a handsome carved bellows showing a Jimmy and the 3d Div sign). We are most grateful to the CO, the RSM and all in the Regiment for their hospitality and kindness to us during the weekend.

SERVED IN KOREA?

A REUNION IS BEING ORGANISED FOR ALL RANKS WHO SERVED IN KOREA.

THE DATE SUGGESTED IS THE REGIMENTAL DAY IN JUNE.

PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ATTEND THIS MOSTIMPORTANT REUNION. INTERESTED?

Please Contact: **Roy W. Painter** on: 0181 440 0104
55 Parkgate Crescent, Hadley Wood, Herts, EN4 0NW
or: **Ron Larby** on: 0181450 6885
178 Braemar Avenue, Neasden, London NW10 0DS

EX-PERSONNEL OF 1 WIRELESS REGIMENT 13 & 14 SIGNAL REGIMENTS AND 225 SIGNAL SQUADRON

All those who served at Langeleben, near Königslutter, Germany, between 1951/92, please note that there is a Reunion Association and that all are welcome. For details please contact:

John Gant
37 Headland Avenue, Seaford,
E. SUSSEX, BN25 4PZ
Tel/Fax: 01323 893937

This year's Reunion is to be held over the weekend 8-9 September at Loughborough LEICESTSHIRE. Any old Langelebian that is interested should contact;

Ernie Callaghan (Secretary)
12 Carisbrooke Avenue,
Bexley, KENT, DA5 3HS
Tel/Fax: 020 8300 7577

DO YOU REMEMBER RED LEADER?

IF YOU DO THEN YOU MUST HAVE SERVED IN 2 SQUADRON,7 SIGNAL REGIMENT IN 1972 – 1974.

John 'Boysie' **Oakes** is trying to arrange a reunion in Aldershot over the w/e 1-2 July 2000 for all those past members of the Squadron who served under **Maj Paul Webb** and who have an aversion to Dubonnet! Interested? Then please contact **John** at:
1 Blenheim Park, Aldershot, Hants, GU11 2HS
Tel: 01252 323340. E-mail: john-oakes@bigfoot.com.

LOST COMMS

Maj James Massy Hewson - 27 April 2000 marks the 30 anniversary of the death of **Maj** 'Jim' **Hewson,** who left a widow **Jane** (nee Sanders, now Stockill) and two sons **John** (then seven years old) and myself, **Aubrey** (then five years old). At the time of his death he was Officer Commanding 1 Sqn, 16 Sig Regt in Krefeld, where he had a full military funeral. He served previous to this at 11 Sig Regt, Helles Barracks in Catterick from 1965 to 1967 in the Military training wing. Prior to that at 19 Sig Regt in Changie, Singapore from 1962 to 1965.

I know that he joined up and reached the rank of Corporal and then attended Sandhurst in Mons Coy in 1952 and Gaza Coy in 1953/4 and he received his Commission on 12 February 1954. I have been told story's that he was OC, Kohima Tp, at the Junior Leaders Regiment in Denbrey from 1959 to 1962, and that there was an incident of a fire in one of the accommodation blocks there. He met my mother in Rheindahlen in 1958 while he was serving with 19 Army Group Sig Regt (?). Apart from the above details his military history is sketchy to me.

If anyone who knew him or could fill in any further details of time and places he served I would appreciate hearing from you. I would like to know what he was like to work with or for, how he affected your life and what part he played in it. Any correspondence, please E-mail me at bookmark start: AJMH161@ hotmail.com or write to:

SSgt Hewson
AtacCS SST
Armstrong Building
Blandford Camp
Blandford Forum
DORSET
DT11 8RH

Norman Hands of 23 Weston Way, Woking, SURREY, GU22 8RW, is looking for **Ex-Sig Robert Smith** who was a Telegraph Operator between 1958-1960 and was last heard of in Wolverhampton. Anybody who has any information can contact **Norman** at the above address or telephone him on: 01932 401140.

CLOSURE OF 39 INFANTRY BRIGADE WARRANT OFFICERS AND SERGEANTS' MESS

The 39 Inf Bde WOs and Sgts Mess will close on 31 July 2000 and all members will then join the Lisburn Garrison Mess. Anyone who has made a presentation to that Mess and would like that gift returned is to contact WO2 (RQMS) J. B. Kay on Lisburn Mil 42943 or 028 92 609943. All unclaimed presentations will be handed over to Lisburn Garrison Mess for display.

Does anyone know what happened to **Sgt Don Camsell**, 'Cammy'? He joined London District Signals from Canterbury in the 1940's, dressed in cavalry gear. He came, I believe from the south of England, and we were Sergeants together in LDS. He volunteered for Airborne Troops, after the unit were taken to see a recruiting film in a cinema in St John's Wood, London, where we were based at that time. I left the unit having volunteered to train in Combined Operations, and lost touch. If anybody has any information please contact: **Jim Prentice,** 7 Hilton Court, Hilton Road, BISHOPBRIGGS, G64 3EA.

From: **Jack Flannagan**
Jack Flannagan & Crystal Lehtimaki
420 Fieldstone Drive
Kingston, Ontario
CANADA
K7K 7E2
Tel: 613-546-4103
E-mail: crystalize.musicstudio@sympatico.ca

Dear Sir,

I am searching for friends who we lost touch with once the family was posted. **Maj** (then Captain) **Paul Boscher** is with the Royal Signals and we met at the Canadian Forces Base Kingston (Ontario, Canada). This was – 1994/97.

Paul was an exchange officer serving with the Canadian Signals in Kingston. When they left Canada, **Paul** was promoted to Major and transferred to one of the Royal Signals groups in Germany. We received a letter from them with their return address soon after they left, but the letter had been mangled by the various post services and the address was illegible.

I would appreciate it greatly if anyone who has information could contact me at the above address, telephone or E-mail
With Thanks……..

Gwyn Phillips has sent us two photographs from his National Service days. **Gwyn** would very much like to make contact with the guys in the photos. Should anyone recognise anybody **Gwyn** can be contacted through **Elgan** or **Linda Davies** on Tel: 01554 776493, or at 17 Bradford Street, Llanelli, Carms, SA15 1ET.

Tony Evans is sat at the back
in front (L-R): 'Taff' Phillips, Pete Clark, Harry Mayghan, Eddy Bray

Back Row (L-R): Pete Clark Tony Ennis, Harry Maughan, Derek Watson
Middle Row (L-R): Eddy Bray, 'Blanco', Don Okill
Front Row (L-R): Mick Barker, Bill Jefrey, 'Taff' Phillips

Paul Quinn is looking for any 'anecdotes from your 'Service' days about the antics of 'the old and bold'. He says, 'Just because you don't attend reunions and/or get-togethers it is no reason to cut yourself off from your old comrades. Put pen to paper, and let me make sense out of it so that all may laugh.'

He also says that with enough 'input' he hopes to make a reasonably sized booklet which could be sold through the museum. This is your chance not only to help the Association raise funds but also your own chance to carve yourself a small niche in history. You will not get any financial reward for your tale , but your name will go down in print so that it can be read in a hundred years.

All you 'old and bold' put pen to paper and contact **Paul Quinn**, 12th 15th & 18th AFS Regiment's Association South East Area Rep, 32 Windsor Way, Polgate, EAST SUSSEX, BN26 6QD or telephone: 01323 482471.

From: **Peter John Cunnington**
16 Pallas Place
W. Australia
AUSTRALIA 6155
E-mail: pjcunno@iinet.net.au
Tel: 08945 70351

Dear Sir,

Greetings and Salutations, I am writing with a request Next April 2001 my old Australian Regular Army unit is having a reunion. In fact I am organising it and one of my mates in the unit back in the 1970s left Australia and joined the British Army. We were both in 103 Signal Squadron Royal Australian Corps of Signals, based in Townsville N. Queensland. I would like to catch up with him and also advise him of the upcoming event. The idea being that he may decide to have a holiday over here!!!

His name is **Brian Richard Cross**. He sent me a picture of himself on completion of recruit training at the Signal School at Catterick (I think). If my memory serves me correctly he hoped to go into the operator trades. Another mate who was fortunate enough to go on an exchange programme mentioned that he saw him in the army in Germany, that was also in the late 70s.

Is it possible that some can help? Should you have any information please contact me at the above address.
Many thanks……..

CORRESPONDENCE

UP THE POLE

A few weeks ago a striking picture caught my eye. I can't remember where it was, but it showed a soldier up a telegraph pole; busy connecting up some cables seemingly oblivious to the desolation of war scattered all around him.

I'd seen that chap, in that position before! It was in Germany in 1945, near Buckeburg, some time before the war finished. He was up a pole immediately beside a main road, or MSR as the Americans called it. The road was very busy - moving tanks, troops and supplies forward whilst lorry loads of German POWs were being shipped westwards. Everywhere was covered in dust and dirt. It caked and cracked on the sweating faces. The chap up the pole wasn't wearing khaki - his uniform, like his face, was a dirty grey!

I got to know that chap, and others in his unit, they were the Air Formation Signals. They worked with us from Normandy to Bad Eilsen. I had the transmitter site for 2nd Tactical Air Force HQ and handled much of the Ops traffic to various Wings and Squadrons. Usually, my site was several miles from the HQ and therefore the AFS had the critical job of finding a 'copper' connection. Very often this was by means of several 54 pair cables over some pretty grotty territory. Sometimes they were lucky, as when I was sited on Brussels race course and they could make use of some local telephone circuits.

I haven't heard anyone singing the praises of the AFS, (NOT the Auxiliary Fire Service), during or since the war. I would like to go on record to point out that the Tactical Air Force would have had some major problems had the AFS not 'got through' with their 54 pair cables, (and maintained the circuits)!

I SALUTE THEM

Jack Marshall MBE
Squadron Leader RAF (Retd)

From: **K. A. Wheatley**
16 Stapleton Close
Paignton
S. DEVON
TQ4 7DX

Dear Sir,

With reference to the February 2000 issue and the reorganisation of 21 Sig Regt and 81 Sqn in particular. I see no mention that 81 Sig Regt was a component of the Army Emergency Reserve until disbandment in 1967.

As an ex-member of the AER (Lon Dist, 87 & 80 Regts) I am aware that the AER was unfortunately never in the limelight, which is probably why we were disbanded, not having the 'clout' of the TA at the time.

You mention that 50 Sig Regt came into being in 1950. I seem to remember that when the Supplementary Reserve was reorganised into the AER in 1952/53 due to the influx of the National Servicemen it was rapidly expanded, many new units being formed in 1953. My own Regiment, London District Sig Regt, AER, went to a camp in Chester (Blacon) and in September of that year, we did not have an RSM, only an RQMS and eight Sergeants. We were told that this was not unusual as an Air Formation Signal Regiment in camp, prior to ourselves (50th?) started out with two Corporals who 'tossed-up' for the RSM and RQMS slots.

Does anyone have any memories of that time?

When we were disbanded in 1967 we were told that our numbers were to be perpetuated as Squadron Numbers, my own (80th) went to a Sqn of 33 Sig Regt. I believe that 81 Sqn was originally attached to 40 (Ulster) Sig Regt.

With regard to the old AER Numbers, last summer I was talking to a R. SIGNALS Staff Sergeant in Gibraltar who was a member of such a squadron and he stated that he did not understand why his Squadron was numbered as it was. I feel that this is somewhat sad as the Army is based on tradition and most Regiments teach Regimental History. Of course the Corps History takes preceded but I would have thought that Squadron members would have the knowledge of their forebears.

Yours Faithfully.....

DONATIONS

RSA West Wales	£ 20.00
RSA West London	£ 100.00
RSA Guernsey	£ 50.00
RSA Bedford	£ 100.00
RSA Lincoln	£ 75.00
RSA Nottingham	£ 50.00
RSA Bristol	£ 20.00
RSA Norfolk	£ 100.00
RSA Cotswolds	£ 30.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£ 20.00
3 Div HQ & Sig Regt	£ 150.00
Lt Col J. R. Rahilly	£ 50.00
Mr R. W. Moyle	£ 5.00
Mr C. B. Williams	£1000.00
Mr K. J. Byrne	£ 11.00
Mr G. Garland	£ 10.00
Mr R. Burgess	£ 25.00
Mr L. J. Vine	£ 4.00
Mr F. Chadwick in memory of Ken Hart	£ 25.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of Vincent Martin	£ 10.00
Mr F. Shore in memory of Col G. H. T. Shrimpton	£ 25.00
Mrs N. Hooper in memory of Lt Col S. P. Irwin	£ 10.00
Mrs M. M. Rich in memory of Lt Col S. P. Irwin	£ 10.00
Lt Col & Mrs D. E. ED. Morris in memory of Lt Col S. P. Irwin	£ 50.00
R. B. & G. A. Sinnick in memory of Lt Col S. P. Irwin	£ 10.00
D. B. & D. M. Wright in memory of Lt Col S. P. Irwin	£ 20.00
C. Wood in memory of WO2 D. R. Daniels	£ 25.00

LAST POST

Bramham - Cpl I. M. Bramham	Served 1964/79	Died
Clifford - Cpl M. J. Clifford	Served 1960/72	Died Dec '94
Daniels - Sgt D. R. Daniels	Served 1943/82	Died 21/03/00
Hayles - Capt A. Hayles	Served 1939/46	Died 14/01/00
MacLeod - Lt M. MacLeod	Served 1939/46	Died 05/02/00
Maddern - Mr A. J. W. Maddern	Served 1939/44	Died 16/03/00
Martin - LCpl V. Martin	Served 1942/47	Died Apr '00
McKenna - Sgt C. McKenna	Served 1970/92	Died 29/03/00
O'Shea - Sig T. O'Shea	Served 1950/59	Died 25/04/00
Stubbs - Lt Col Sir J. Stubbs KCVO	Served WWII	Died Mar '00
Tobutt - Cpl E. G. Tobutt	Served 1942/46	Died 15/04/00
Whalley - Dvr G. W. Whalley	Served 1942/46	Died 15/02/00
Whiteman - Sig L. J. Whiteman	Served 1940/46	Died 23/04/00

Macleod – Lt Murdo MacLeod who died on 5 February 2000 after suffering a severe heart attack was President of the Southport Branch of the Royal Signals Association since 1989. **Murdo** was born on the Isle of Lewis, in the Hebrides, some 81 years ago. The only son out of six children, he had the strength of character that such a tough environment builds. He retained a great love of the place of his birth visiting it and his family as often as he could.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, in 1939, **Murdo** joined the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders. In 1942, having transferred to REME, he was posted to the Far East and from July 1942 to November 1943 he was in the REME workshops at Agra. In November 1943 he was sent to OTS Mhow until 4 March 1944 when he transferred to the Royal Signals OTS Mhow until July 1944. A broken arm then curtailed his activities until November that year. December 1944 saw **Murdo** with Beach Assault Signals Arakan until June 1945, then in July , of that year, he joined Beach Assault Signals 26 Division, Bombay. He spent some time at GHQ Delhi and also Bangalore before returning home in December 1945.

After being de-mobbed in 1946 he was taken seriously ill yet on recovery went to university in Galashields to study Textiles Technology. After a short period in the Islands he returned to the mainland working for the Shirley Institute, finally ending up in a senior position with Courtaulds. It was his work with them that brought him to Lancashire and in particular to Manchester. A keen musician, it was whilst he was playing the cello with a friend, who was a violinist, that he met **Vera** and began a friendship which was to lead to over forty three years of marriage, setting up home in Manchester and later in Southport.

Murdo was a keen sportsman, playing tennis in his youth and also badminton and latterly golf. He became, amongst other things Secretary, President and Vice-President of the Southport Tennis Club, Hillside Golf Club and at the time of his death was associate with some thirty five different organisations. He was also a former Secretary of the Textile Institute, a friend of Southport Library and a member of the Lyric Singers in Southport.

Murdo was an active member of the Southport Branch of the Royal Signals Association and was our President from 1989; he was also a member of the Indian Signals Association. We are indebted to **Maj Joe Croker** for providing details of **Murdo's** service in India. At the time of his death **Murdo** was also Chairman of the Burma Star Association, Southport.

Murdo's funeral service took place at St. George's United Reformed Church Southport on 14 February and a Guard of Honour was provided by the Royal Signals and Burma Star Associations, both Standards were paraded. **Rev K. Summers BD**, the minister, gave a moving appreciation of **Murdo**, who had been an Elder of the Church. He was, said **Rev summers**, a staunch Presbyterian whose faith had dominated all that he did and had been. We shall miss him greatly. We send our sincere condolences to **Murdo's** widow **Vera**, daughter **Judith** and son-in law **Geoff,** their son **Steven** and all the wider family.

Bell – WO1 Henry 'Harry' **Bell.** 'Harry' was evacuated from Dunkirk on 1940 with the British Expeditionary Force and went on to serve with the 1st Army in North Africa, Italy and Germany. After the war he served at HQ Fountainblau from 1945 to 1951 then with 30th Signal Regiment including spells at Rheindahlen, Laarbruch and Maastricht. He finished his service as Recruiting Officer at Reading. He was a life-long supporter of the Association serving as Secretary of the Jersey Branch from 1975 to 1998 when due to failing health he had to retire.

Some 12 members attended his funeral on 16 February accompanied by several of the wives. The Branch standard was on display and his medals and insignia of rank were displayed on the Union Flag which adorned his coffin. In the words of his son, 'He was not only an ardent supporter of the Corps, but he was also a well loved and respected family man.' He will be sadly missed.

Peplow – Michael J. Peplow joined the Corps as an Apprentice in 1960. He saw service in Germany, Lybia and with the Trucial Oman Scouts. He left as a Sergeant in 1975 to become a technician with the Saudi Air Force. **Michael** was a Life Member of the RSA and lived in Harrogate. He died on 13 March 2000, following a short illness.

Whalley – Dvr George William Whalley died on 15 February 2000 from a heart attack after being taken into hospital in the early hours of the morning; he was seventy six. When called up early in the war **Bill** joined the King's Liverpool Regiment and then in 1942 transferred to the Royal Signals as a Driver. He landed in Normandy shortly after 'D' Day and saw action in France, Belgium and Holland. **Bill** served with the Guards Armoured Division Signals, 79th Armoured Division Signals, 11/2 Corps Signals.

After leaving the army **Bill** worked in the fruit and vegetable trade in Liverpool and was very well known and respected in this sphere of his life. Whilst living in West Derby, he was for many years in the Liverpool Branch of the Normandy Veterans Association and was the Branch Secretary, he was also a member of the Liverpool Branch of the Royal Signals Association.

Eleven and a half years ago the family moved to Ainsdale, near Southport, where **Bill** was again very much part of the local scene and had many friends in many organisations including the Church, the Lodge, the Bowling club and Ex- Service Associations. He joined the Southport Branches of the Royal Signals and the Normandy Veterans Associations. He was the RSA Standard Bearer for four years until he needed an operation on his knee in September 1995. **Bill** was also Vice-Chairman of the Normandy Veterans Association until his death.

A full congregation gathered at Ainsdale Methodist Church on 23 February for a Service of Thanksgiving for **Bill's** life. He was essentially a cheerful, warm hearted, outward going family orientated man who will be , like so many before him, sadly missed by all of us in the Southport Branch of the RSA. Our condolences go out to his widow **Muriel**, daughter **Ann,** grand-children **Sarah** and **Thomas** and to his sister **Dorothy.**

Campbell – Sgt Alexander 'Alec' **Campbell** died suddenly on 15 January 2000. 'Alec' served from 1971-1993 and was stationed in the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland and Germany. He completed his service at 21 Signal Regiment and returned from RAF Wildenrath to Colerne with them. 'Alec' and his wife **Isabelle**, who was a clerk in Regimental Headquarters, both in BAOR and UK before her death in September 1999, had many friends throughout the Corps. Both were known for their friendliness and willingness to help others. 'Alec' will be greatly missed by all who knew him and our sympathy is extended to his family in Barhead, Glasgow.

Serebriakoff - Victor V1adimirovitch Serebriakoff died at home aged 87 on 1 January 2000. He was most famously associated with MENSA. From 1954 onwards he built up the membership from a dwindling four groups to a world wide membership of 100,000 and was Honorary President of International MENSA till his death. But there was another side to his rewarding career, less well known, which concerns his service in Catterick Camp from 1945 to 1947 as a Lance Corporal Morse and E&M instructor in Royal Signals, and as a Sergeant in the RAEC. He was born on 17 October 1912. His father, a Russian émigré, changed his name to Serry, but on call-up in 1945 the Army insisted on Vic going by his birth certificate name which caused problems at roll call: when it reached er.. er.. Serer.. he just shouted -Sah!

Whilst in a reserved occupation at Calendars Cable Co, Erith for the majority of the war he suffered his baptism of fire during the blitz. He made light of it and would have one think his experiences all took place in The Black Prince pub in old Bexley. He organised assorted entertainment with his pals both in the factory at lunch times and in the pub in the evenings to make life more bearable. He said, 'The war, the noise of bombers, the whine of the falling bombs and rattle of shrapnel did not exist for us. It was bad form to be aware of it.' He organised a group to entertain the recruits at the Artillery Theatre, Woolwich. He eventually became so keen on theatricals (and fed up with his foreman at work) that he wanted to entertain service people world wide. He got himself an audition with ENSA in Drury Lane and was accepted and enrolled. 'I came back full of joy and told my foreman that I wanted to be released from my war work. To my surprise my application for release was granted and I prepared for my new career in ENSA - but no! A few days later I got my call up papers! I was a devout coward about armed combat; I tried every angle and got ENSA to appeal against my call up but it was quite rightly turned down. I was given orders to travel to Ireland for infantry training.'

He found, 'There is no way that it was possible to kill Germans, which was our objective, without being able to lay your kit on the bed in an exact and highly regulated form. Now and again we were shown how to use a rifle and once or twice told how to charge sandbags, scream, shout and stab them with a bayonet. The really important things were that your kit was correctly arranged, your boots were polished to blinding perfection, inspected by an enormously fierce sergeant, viciously criticised, then coated with a thin layer of dubbin so that they would not glitter and reveal your position to a hypothetical Hun. The dubbin had to be scraped off next day! The bullying by Sergeants and Corporals-was all a great big act. We soon began to like them and found that though we came from every possible class, division, occupation and district some part of our hominid nature turned us into a close male-tribe attachment despite our constant friendly scuffling and quarrelling. I was utterly astonished to find I liked it, was good at it, and at the age of 32 seemed able to run faster and further and do the drill better than most of my eighteen year old colleagues. I soon put on a stone of muscle and have been strong for my size ever since.'

Vic had an intelligence test, which he believed caused a kerfuffle. 'The psychologist sent for me and accused me of having cheated. He said accusingly, 'You knew all the answers before you came'. I said I must have done if I got them all right. He accused me of familiarity with the test and I had to do another one. I did it and then was asked what I was doing working as a wood machinist. I said I was earning a living in a reserved occupation. He shouted, 'In that sort of job?' I got the maximum score and soon after made unpaid Lance Corporal.' This was his first indication that he had a high IQ and he believed, 'Being made a Lance Corporal in Royal Signals changed my life. For the first time I was considered to have promise and given the opportunity to manage and control men.' He certainly used his latent recruit revelation and ability to good effect when he joined MENSA. He was posted to Royal Signals in Chester. 'Germany and its allies had rendered the unconditional surrender called for by Churchill and Roosevelt and someone had to march through the streets of Chester to celebrate. Soon I found myself marching past crowded pavements with a band in front. The people were shouting and weeping with gratitude at the heroes that had saved the Empire. I felt very proud and marched like a hero but managed to summon up the modesty to think that two weeks basic training and a few weeks learning Morse did not quite justify such deeply emotional gratitude.' He was then posted to Catterick Camp where he was transferred to the RAEC and promoted Sergeant. He continued his interests in entertainment by organising shows in his mess and in the NAAFI. His prowess led to his coming to the attention of **Brig R. T. O. Cary** who was, at the time, Commander of the Signals Training Centre. The Brigadier had for many years been interested in the welfare of troops and keen to keep those under his command entertained. In 1945 he saw his big chance in theatre. With the war ended there were many soldiers of all ranks keen on theatricals kicking their heels in a drab and miserable Catterick Camp waiting for demob.

Vic said, 'I was sent for by the Brigadier because of my reputation for impromptu entertainment and ordered to transform a disused gym in Loos Lines into a theatre,' (in fact the building was in use for dances, band concerts and the like). 'I went down to the building and found two Privates who were there to keep it going. One was **Harry Champion**, nephew of the **Harry Champion** a popular music hall comedian of the day. I started in a business like way by asking these two to tell me what their duties were and report on their daily routine. I was given a look to size me up - then one of them said, 'Well Sarge we usually have too many beers in the Naffy the night before and don't get up till ten. We then go to the Naffy to get something to eat as it's too late for breakfast, and read the papers. Then we come back here to look for the winners. We might sweep up a bit till dinner time - well we would do but the broom's broken. By the time we mend it it's dinner time so we nip off to get a bite.' I was trying to suppress my smiles without too much success and with a grin said they were about to notice a slight change to routine, such as getting off our lazy arses and working like troopers -the building was to be a theatre by the end of the week! I did not remain in charge for long as the Brigadier sent an Officer and the team grew with visits from the Brigadier every day. Within a week the building looked as entirely different as it could be. Due to the enthusiasm that went into the project the productivity was at a rate about double that which was normal for Catterick at the time.' Thus was the Signals Theatre building created. (The name was changed to The Cary theatre on 30 June 1949).

Vic appeared in the first Theatre Club production as one of two Broker's Men in 'Cinderella' which ran from 31 December 1945 to 11 January 1946. He continued to be a stalwart member of the Signals Theatre Club as did many other serving members of the RAEC and all Arms and civilians in the Catterick area. 'The Club had a bar with a no rank rule so one could drink and swap jokes with anyone from the Brigadier downward.' **Vic** was talented and could play pantomime, drama and comedy. He appeared in many parts and frequently played in productions along side the Brigadier himself. **R. T. O. Cary** particularly liked the lead in 'The Man Who Came to Dinner' with **Vic** cast as either Professor Metz or Dr Bradley.

Vic designed and cast a fine pair of masks, depicting Comedy and Drama, which were placed over the proscenium arch when the theatre interior was further improved in July 1946. His finest part was his last role in the Theatre Club. He was cast as Gribaud in 'The Duke in Darkness' by Patrick Hamilton. It performed to full houses from 14-23 April 1947. The words spoken by 'The Duke' **(Ronald Allen)** at the end of the play when Gribeau, his faithful servant who had gone mad during their captivity and had finally died, appear a fitting end to this Last Post. The lighting faded into a glorious sunset, music from the last movement of the Overture Romeo and Juliet by Tchaikovsky rose to a crescendo, the audience in tears: 'Gribeau, Gribeau, Gribeau, the rain on your face, the wind in the night outside and the stars in the wind; ride with me dear friend for we are free to ride.....'

Victor Serebriakoff as 'Gribaud' on the right, going mad: Ronald Allen 'The Duke' standing left

Daniels - WO2 Dennis Richard Daniels was born in Plymouth on 15 December 1927. His father was a Master at Arms serving in the Royal Navy. Danny, as he was popularly known in the Corps, followed in his father's footsteps and joined the Naval Training School at Plymouth. However, after more than a year he was discharged on medical grounds, with flat feet. He subsequently joined Boys Training Company, Royal Signals in October 1943 at the age of 15 years 10 months. During his time in Boys Company he successfully qualified as a Lineman and also passed the First Class and Special Certificates of Education. On leaving Boys Service in 1945 he initially served in York but was then posted to 4 Training Regiment in Catterick where he was employed as a Weapon Training Instructor on Drill and Duties courses. During this period he quickly reached the rank of Sergeant. He was an accomplished Boxer and represented the Regiment and Northern Command. In February 1949 he was posted to Egypt and also spent a short spell in Iraq, where he was employed as a Line Sergeant. On return to Catterick in 1952 he was posted to 2 Training Regiment where he was again employed in Weapon Training and attended the course at Hythe. During this time he regularly represented his Regiment and the Corps in Small Bore Shooting. In 1956 when he was a Staff Sergeant, he took his discharge from the Army and returned to Devon. Things didn't go well employment wise, therefore, in December 1959 he re-enlisted in the Corps in the rank of Signalman. **Danny** re-qualified as a Lineman Class 1 and was soon promoted to Sergeant and was instructing weapons on promotion courses including the Staff Sergeants course. He finished his normal service in the Corps as a Staff Sergeant after service in Singapore, BAOR and Aldershot. He applied and was accepted for the Long Service List. He subsequently served in Aldershot and latterly in BAOR, where he was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal and Bar to the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. He was finally discharged in 1982 and returned to Devon. Tragically in 1984, his wife **Glenys** died suddenly from an angina attack and **Danny** was left bringing up two young sons. His elder son was serving in the Corps. **Danny** was a Life Member of the Royal Signals Association and regularly attended the Re-unions at Catterick and Blandford. He was also a popular member of the 254 Old Boys Association. **Danny** died in hospital on 21 March. He leaves a step-mother and three sons, to whom we extend our sincere condolences.

Petheram - Lt Col M. A. Petheram. A close friend of **Lt Col Michael Petheram** has sent further news of his (**Michael's**) career, additional to that already published in the February edition of *The WIRE*.

In our conversations, **Michael** often spoke of three places in particular where he had served. His career, on being commissioned at the Indian School of Signals at Mhow, started with an historic appointment on the North West Frontier of India (Pakistan today), as Signal Officer to an Indian Field Regiment RIA at Nowshera. His men were Madrassis:so, in 1947 he had the task of escorting them into India, confronted on the journey from Nowshera by the horrors of slaughter and destruction which were engendered by the Partition.

In the 1960s, in Lubbecke BAOR, he had a two hatted job, one being SO2 Sigs HQ 2 Div, the other being a member of 2 Div Sig Regt - thus having two masters he was challenged as to how he would survive such an ordeal! Events proved thar he was more than up to it. This was to prove one of his happiest postings. His final soldiering job was at HQ AFCENT; there he was to remain for five interesting NATO years.

On retiring, he took an Retired Officer appointment at the Headquarters at Shrewsbury (now HQ 5 Div). His ever-present sense of humour was typified by his comment that his most important task involved converting the multitude of sceptics to the art of computing! That appointment led to the family settling in a 16th Century house near Wem. **Michael** had a strong Christian faith and took on duties as a Church Warden: and his love of music continued with his membership of the church choir and local choral society. His sense of humour, courteous manners and conscientiousness endeared him to all.

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

RSA - POOLE BRANCH

On 9 April we held a Spring Lunch at the Elstead Hotel in Bournemouth. Some 30 members and friends attended and the main event, before lunch, was the presentation of the 50 Year Badge to our President, **Brig** 'Paddy' **Evans CBE. Maj Gen Alan Yeoman CB**, Chairman of the Association, was our principal guest and despite failing to 'open the box' duly gave 'Paddy' his well earned award. **Gen Alan**, who lives locally, was accompanied by **Barbara** and everyone agreed that it was an excellent afternoon.

Brig 'Paddy' is very much a working President, never failing to attend our monthly meetings and other events. He marches with our contingent every Remembrance Sunday, lays our wreath at the local War Memorial and on our return from church as we approach the Broadstone Royal British Legion he drops out - not from exhaustion - but to take the salute. his charming wife **Pat** acts as the Branch's Honourary Treasurer and is always ready to help out at all our functions. We are lucky to have their services and all our members hope that they will continue to enjoy good health and that their infectious good humour will be with us for many more years.

Our official photographer, **John Hyde**, was present and caught the spirit of the happy occassion.

RSA - COTSWOLDS BRANCH

The Annual General Meeting was held at our monthly meeting in March when quite a good attendance gathered at the Victory Club Cheltenham. The Chairman, **Maj Arthur Cropp,** opened the meeting with a tribute to our late President - **Col Freddie Worth OBE**, who died on 28 February, 2000 at the age of 95 years. **Col Worth** was President from 1979 to his death and was a regular attendee. He will be sorely missed. His funeral in Tewkesbury Abbey on 3 March 2000, was attended by our Standard carried by **Mr Alan Wingate**, a Trumpeter **LCpl Bilby** from the Corps Band - who played the Last Post and Reveille, and several members of the Branch.

The Chairman, **Maj Arthur Cropp**, was re-elected and his wife **Marjorie** was elected Secretary and Treasurer. The Committee were re-elected en bloc. A discussion took place about the lack of new members joining the Branch and it was felt that the word 'Old' should be deleted from all reference to recruiting as the members felt that younger members to-be were not inclined to join an Association of 'old people'.

REUNION CANCELLATION

It is regretted that the tri-annual reunion for

JUNIOR LEADERS ROYAL SIGNALS DENBURY

will not now take place in the Newton Abbot area on

29 AND 30 SEPTEMBER

This is because of local difficulties regarding venues and we hope that we may revive it in 2001 when all will be notified.
Sam Ward regrets this decision and passes his regards on to all previous attendees

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

THE ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM IS PRESENTED WITH AN ARMY PIGEON SERVICE AWARD

by Col (Retd) Cliff Walters, Museum Director

Signalman William Streeter, who died in 1974, was one of a rare breed of the Corps who, during the Second World War, dedicated his service to the Army Pigeon Service (APS). So dedicated was he that, in December 1945, the Secretary Of State for War presented him with a Certificate of Appreciation.

Signaller William Streeter 711 Squad, I st Depot Battalion

William joined the Corps shortly after the start of the war and was selected for service with the Army Pigeon Service because of his expertise as a pigeon fancier. He trained as a member of No 711 Squad, 1 Depot Battalion but soon found, himself at Milborne St Andrew about six miles from Blandford.

His wife **Phyllis**, who was born in 1908, was also involved in pigeon breeding. She recalls, 'Whilst **William** was away I ran the family building business and bred pigeons for wartime service, in our pigeon loft at home in Stanmore. My boss, in this respect, was **Mr George Barratt** a Postmaster in London. When the pigeon chicks were ready to be deployed I received covert messages to take them to the Stationmaster at Mill Hill railway station. I do not know where they went from there but I know that the first lot went to the Royal Lofts at Sandringham. It was all very hush-hush.'

Most of **William's** service was spent at Milborne St Andrew where **Phyllis** would visit from time to time. The APS had taken over a number of the hen-houses at the Milborne Wood Farm of **Sir Ernest Debenham**. The whole operation was highly classified and very few local people knew of its existence. The current owner of the farm **Mr Richard Worrell** states, 'My father bought the farm in about 1950 and I recall stories that when the pigeons flew in from overseas there were Dispatch Riders ready to take them to London or to the railway station at Blandford. Unfortunately, the hen-house buildings were destroyed in 1997.'

Pigeons were used extensively during the war and **Phyllis** states, 'One of **William's** tasks was to train secret agents to handle pigeons so that they could get their important messages back to the Secret Services. Other pigeons were carried by RAF bomber crews and released if they were shot down. On one such occasion pigeon **White Vision** saved the crew of a crashed flying boat, off the Hebrides, by flying against a 25mph head wind in very heavy fog. As a result the search and rescue team was launched and the crew were saved. For his brave deeds the pigeon was awarded The Dicken Medal, the VC for animals. The Certificate of Appreciation was framed in wood by **Don Parsons** who worked with **William**. The frame is a beautiful carving of 'Jimmy' and a pigeon of the APS. It is now on display in the Museum.

Mrs Phyllis Streeter presenting the Certificate to Col (Retd) Cliff Walters

101 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS & SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

Sqn Comd **Maj Mark Baines**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Paul Brown**

EXERCISE LOG FLAKE 2000

It was 0700hrs on 12 February when we set off all keen and happy for a week skiing in Wertach. The HQ staff gave us our minibus that was covered in hire stickers and took the plain one. They didn't want to be embarrassed, but when the key turned we were the ones laughing as our minibus had the only stereo that worked. Cheers Rodney's! By 0730hrs the beers were cracked open and the holiday was in full swing. The first morning the novices went to the Felhorn and the beginners, **Maj Dave Nelson** (RLC), **Cpl Jenny** 'One Glass' **Notley** (AGC), **LCpl Paul** 'Baby Tech' **Rhodes, Sig Ruth** 'Gwar' **Kennedy, Sig Sam** 'Curly Sue' **Yardley, Sig Neil** 'Gladys' **Marsh, Sig Jon** 'Chopper' **Harris, Sig Mick** 'Does anyone need a medic?' **Miles** and myself **Sig Lee** 'Mavis' **Mason** who skied at the REME Ski Lodge. After several bumps and bruises most of us were starting to look like skiers except for **Sig Mick Miles,** who couldn't stay up for more than 30 seconds. A big thank you to our ski instructors **Gaz** and **Chris** from the REME ski team who took the time to help us and send us in the right direction, down the slope! The rest of the week followed a

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

demanding pattern, everybody woke up hung over, skied all day and then went back out to drink more beer. A few incidents did arise; we thought that one of the restaurants was going to come down after **Sig Neil Marsh** crashed head first into it. No Neil, sticking out your head won't get you closer to the pies! At the end of the week we could have had a ski team put together, **Sig Jon Harris** would have done downhill as he could not turn, **Cpl** 'Taff' **Lean** and **LCpl** 'Dar' **Merry** would be in the display team as they showed off their new skis. **SSgt (YofS) Pat Smith** won the human snowball competition and **Lt Thirsk**, OC Tp, kept us on the straight and narrow with her wise words. In all it was a great week and worth every penny. A big thank you to **Maj Jim** 'mad chadders' **Chadwick (REME), WO2 Steve Cull (REME)** - 101 Log Bde, and all the REME crew in Bavaria who made us very welcome and went out of their way to help us. Bring on next year!

The Squadron skiers chill out!

ADVENTURE TRAINING - RUMBLE IN THE VALLEYS

Once upon a time **Cpl** 'Timmy' **Bishop** in his quest for his third banana decided to organise some adventure training. 'Timmy' decided that this adventure must be something special, something to test the dynamic and courageous nature of the officers and soldiers of the glorious 261st, but where on earth could 'Timmy' take this fearless breed of warrior. It needed to be a place so perilous that even the name of this land would strike terror in the heart of man, a country so sparse and savage that even God has forsaken it! His choice was made 'Timmy', was going to WALES! Now 'Timmy' needed some intrepid explorers with hearts of iron, bold, valiant, resolute and willing to cough up £23.50 for their troubles. How would he find men and women of this calibre? Slowly but surely a few crazy daredevils put their names forward: **Lt** 'Mum' **Thisk, LCpl Wayne** 'Granddad' **Stewart, LCpl Tony** 'Wincy' **Willis, LCpl Dave** 'Er maps are jolly interesting you know. Do you want to read my book on knots?' **Howie, LCpl Gavin** 'Fatty' **Holloway, Sig Dale** 'Ginger Freak' **Richardson, Sig Samantha** 'Slappa' **Yardley, Sig Emma** 'just move your right leg up a bit that's it you're doing well no you're not going to fall come on you can do it, don't look down' **Redfearn,** and myself **Sig Jon** 'Chopper' **Harris**.

Monday: 'Timmy' had arranged everything and on the first morning we set out from Aldershot on our expedition deep into the bad-lands of Wales. We arrived at the fortified encampment of Capel Curig our only sanctuary in this wanton land. It was here we first met our native mountain guide (Ross Ashe Cregan) who resembled a slimmed down version of Father Christmas. He told us great tales of what we would do in the next week, what sights we would see and the experiences we would have. That night we went to sleep that dreaming of what treats lay in store.

Tuesday: We woke that morning full of energy and like the dynamic machine that we are we set off in search of adventure. We spent the day climbing up rocks and walking backwards down them. 'Timmy' soon grew restless with this and found that running down forwards and not stopping was far more entertaining. 'Fatty' found that he had been carrying the iron around with him much to the glee of everyone else. 'Mum' found a dirty great rock in her rucksack and I showed everyone new methods of attaching a carrabena to part of my anatomy. After that interlude we shot off to climb an old route called the chimney, which we were told used to be climbed at night after a session in the pub. In some places the rock became very narrow and certain female participants became wedged in by their own behinds and had to be hoisted up; oh how we chuckled. What a day we had ascending and descending, by the end of it we were chin-strapped and went to bed.

Wednesday: We started the day with a spot of gorge walking. Legend has it that the water in the hills is magic: if you are to jump into some the pools of water you swim very quickly, loose the ability to speak and shiver a lot. So we all (except Grandpa who gets cold easily) jumped in to see if the legend was really true. It was, 'Brrrrrrrr f@*k me it's freezing!' Come the afternoon we were off sea-level traversing braving the savage sea, surviving the relentless crashing of waves and endure the endless waiting for **Sig Emma Redfearn** to climb round the cliff face. With another day of adventure tamed we set off to visit the historic town of Bangor in all its splendour and socialise with the native inhabitants, see the sights and partake in the local customs of consuming alcohol and eating greasy takeaways. We felt this was our duty as ambassadors of Aldershot a sort of winning of hearts and minds campaign (a soldiers work is never done)!

Thursday: We started with a spot of free abseiling and 'Mum' showed us all how to do this upside down. Straight after that we had a shufty around one of the abandoned slate mines. It was soon time to face the zenith of our adventure in sunny Wales. Santa's thin look alike had made us a 200ft death slide into a freezing cold quarry lake. Who did we get to test the rope out first? Granddad seeing as he had managed to avoid getting wet all week everyone had a go at whizzing down the slide to the ice cold impact of the waters below. How could I go one better, how could I champion my comrades? I only had one option left to me, I had to go down naked. At first it was not an unpleasant feeling but then the kick in the goolies arrived. I thought to myself, 'What a fantastic week we've had and ow my man bits hurt'.

Hi de Ho says Sig 'Chopper' Harris!

Sig 'Chopper' Harris on the left and Cpl 'Timmy' Bishop centre with the crew about to get seriously wet!

EXERCISE SPRING VIPER I

Ex Spring Viper I was a small squadron shake out exercise from 13–17 March 2000 in preparation for Ex Spring Viper II, which is …….. logical. The Squadron has recently formed and is trying to establish the SOPs of the three Headquarters should we be deployed on Operations. The Exercise also gave the Brigade Commander the chance to bring out his staff (literally) play with his Lego, and work out anyway of trimming the complex down so that the Squadron could run more efficiently. On the morning of 13 March the Squadron crawled out to the training area, one mile from camp, to set up 'Billy Smarts' and then crawled back into camp for a good night's sleep. The following morning the Squadron then collected weapons and went to war….. well deployed back to the training area, so that we could check the tentage in preparation for the staff arriving the next day. Not happy that the tents were in the right place, or the fact that WOTAN wasn't working, the OC moved the HQs one at a time to the other side of the training area, making sure they didn't go down the mined main road. Once in location each HQ had to set up and prove that WOTAN still wasn't working before coming back and setting up in the same area from which they first deployed, as the staff were only hours away. Wednesday morning the staff arrived, all fresh faced, without their weapons, webbing and helmets, had a spot of lunch, loads of briefings, camped out for the night and then finally tabbed back to Barracks. This triggered Endex; the war was over, so we packed up in slow time and crawled back to camp for tea and medals (especially for your scribe - **Cpl Bishop**).

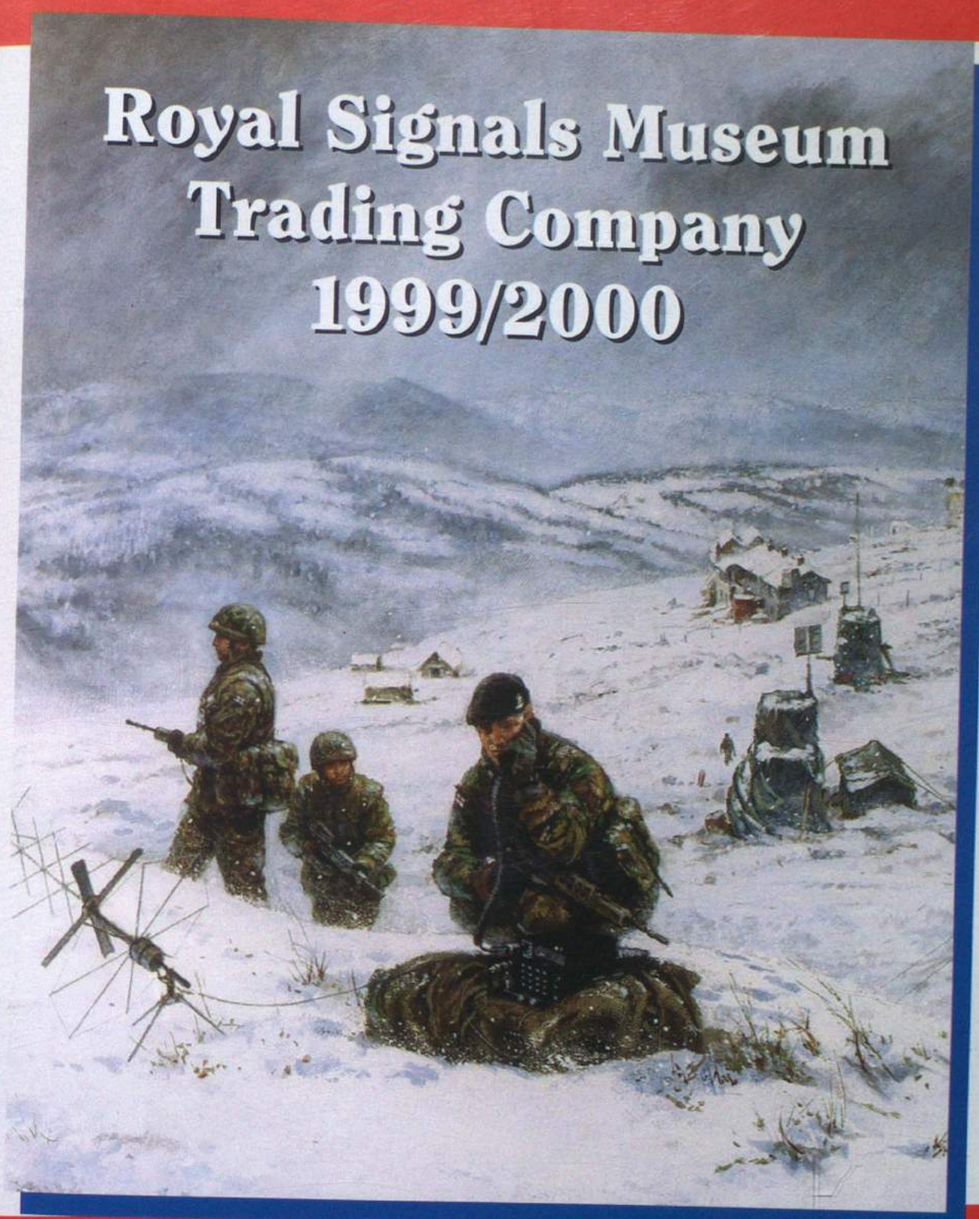
FINALLY

The Squadron continues to welcome new arrivals including **Cpl Reynolds, Thomas and Towers**, plus **LCpls Douglas, Cole, Marchant, Sutherland** and **Twissel**. The Squadron Lanyard Trophy team has been training hard in the snow on Dartmoor fuelled on a special diet of all in stew. Meanwhile, **Sig** 'Dimbers' **Dimberline** continues to amaze everyone with his displays of driving amphibious DAFs into ditches in order to avoid perfectly dry tracks!

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

Get your colour mail order catalogue now!
Full of new products and ideas

Royal Signals Museum
Trading Company
1999/2000



Telephone: 01258 482248
Orders taken by phone and most credit cards accepted

Produced by the Publishers, Regimental Headquarters Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8RH. (Telephone: Military System 737 2079 or STD 01258 48 2079)
Printed in Great Britain by Holbrooks Printers Ltd, Norway Road, Hilsea, Portsmouth, Hants PO3 5HX
For advertising rates apply to: Combined Service Publications Ltd, PO Box 4, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 7LR (Telephone 01252 515891)

THE Wire

August 2000

and the Journal

The Royal Corps of Signals

INTEGRATION AND TEST ENGINEERS

To develop test strategies and all aspects of field system installation, integration, verification and validation. Experience should include tetra-trunked radio systems, networks, routers, gateways etc.

This is an exciting opportunity to work on a totally unique project creating a dedicated mobile phone network for Britain's emergency services.

A major global player in the automotive, aerospace and information systems markets, TRW is currently engaged in a major project in partnership with BT and Motorola.

Called the Public Safety Radio Communications Project (PSRCP), it aims to provide the Police, Fire and Ambulance services with seamless voice and data communications across organisational and geographical boundaries.

TRW is responsible for providing system integration, verification, validation and test to large national voice/data networks to be installed throughout Great Britain. The task will involve assuring service users, starting with three Police Forces, that the required level of functionality has been provided and service level agreements have been met.

With Headquarters in Solihull there will be several Field teams travelling throughout the UK during the five-year roll out programme. A car will be provided for those who will be travelling or spending time away from home on a regular basis.

All positions offer highly competitive experience-related salary/benefits packages.

To be successful you are likely to be of degree calibre and have telecoms experience, a knowledge of telecoms networks and an understanding of telecoms wiring and diagrams, together with good interpersonal and communication skills.

For more information on the PSRCP visit:
http://www.quadrant.org.uk

Please forward full CV to Paul Cottam at TRW, York Road, Hall Green, Birmingham, B28 8LN.
Fax: 0121 607 3961.

Tel: 0121 607 3824
Email: paul.cottam@trw.com

The Royal Signals Magazine

August 2000 Vol. 54 No: 4

The Wire

(Incorporating the Journal of the Royal Signals Institution)

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 STD: 01258 482087

Subscription rates 1998 (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**

CONTENTS

	Page
Editors Notes	306
Movements	321
News from Headquarters	322
News from Training Units	326
News from the Balkans	335
News from Northern Ireland	337
News from Regiments	344
News from Squadrons	386
Sport	405
The Royal Signals Association	410
Reunions	416
Lost Comms	416
Correspondence	416
Donations	417
The Last Post	417
Late News	420

FRONT COVER

SSgt Willie Loch and **Lt Keiron Francis,** 31 Sig Regt (V), both of whom walked last year, had the honour of meeting Princess Ann at a function for Save the Children, in March as this is the charity supported by Photoplod.

Lt Francis and SSgt Loch meeting the Princess Royal
Could SSgt Loch bow any lower (not with his back!)

BACK COVER

256 Signal Squadron at Lungi airport in Sierra Leone

Moffats School

Boys & Girls 7 to 13

at **Kinlet Hall, Kinlet, Bewdley, Worcs** DY12 3AY

Small Classes • Stability • Expert help for Dyslexia/SpLD • Sports & Riding in our 110-acre grounds • Many Artistic & Cultural Activities • Hospitality & fun for those in at exeats / half-terms • Our own escorts to all UK airports • An Ethos of Discipline, Kindness & Tolerance

Tel. 01299 841230 - www.moffats.co.uk

Authors alone are responsible for the content of their articles. The opinions expressed in the articles of this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise, of the Royal Signals or the Ministry of Defence. This publication should be treated with discretion by the recipient.

© Crown Copyright

Disclaimer: No responsibility for the quality of goods or services advertised in this magazine can be accepted by the Publishers or their Agents. Advertisements are included 'in good faith'.

YOUR ONE DAY'S PAY- WHAT HAPPENED TO IT IN 1999

By Col R. M. Crombie – Regimental Colonel

Your One Days' Pay is the main source of income for Corps Funds. It is very encouraging that 95% of the Corps make this generous annual contribution. In addition, officers pay 0.75 of One Day's Pay, each year, into the Officer's Fund: this is mandatory under QRs (a fact that not many Officers realise) and is in support of the HQ Officer's Mess and other officer functions such as entertainment, silver and paintings. Retired Officers volunteer to pay an annual subscription of £25 (or more) and this also entitles them to receive a copy of *The WIRE*. SNCOs and WOs may subscribe a further 0.25 Day's Pay for their own specific fund.

PURPOSE OF CORPS FUNDS

A Trust Deed is registered with the Charity Commission to govern the use of Corps Funds. The main advantage of this is to avoid paying tax on subscriptions and investments. The main purpose of the Corps Funds are:

〈 The relief of poverty for all members of the Corps, serving or retired, their families and dependants. This is the main area of expenditure.

〈 To maintain and improve the physical efficiency and morale of the Corps at large eg: Funds for Sport and Adventure Training.

〈 The payment of donations to charitable organisations concerned with the welfare of Signallers and their dependants.

HOW IS THE ROYAL SIGNALS BENEVOLENT FUND STRUCTURED?

There are three main Funds:

〈 The Corps Fund.

〈 The Royal Signals Association Fund.

〈 The Officers Fund.

The chart shows the combined income and expenditure of all Funds for the Financial Year 1999.

INCOME

The total income for the year was £820k. The main sources of income were from the subscriptions of officers and soldiers (£494k). Additionally nearly all subscribers covenant their subscription by signing an appropriate document. This enables the Corps to claim the tax on their subscription 'At No Cost To The Individual (£117k)'. Income from our well invested savings amounted to £176k and donations accounted for the final £33k. All legacies and donations are allocated to the Association Fund, for reinvestment in order to meet the cost of future Benevolence.

EXPENDITURE

The main single source of expenditure was the RSA Benevolent Fund which granted £56k to the Army Benevolent Fund who give tremendous help to Signallers, and distributed £265k elsewhere. The main activities of the RSA Benevolent Fund are:

〈 It provides financial support for cases of need. About every three weeks a formal committee gathers at RHQ to consider benevolence requests. These are normally submitted by SSAFA, The Royal British Legion, Cos, Association Branches or the Army Benevolent Fund. It should be noted that cases from serving personnel are also considered.

〈 It supports the Annual Reunion of the RSA that is held each year at Blandford in Corps Week, which is the last week in June.

The Corps employs a number of personnel, such as the Corps Accountant, and incurs running costs all of which amount to £109k. The Royal Signals Institution costs were £24k which is all taken from The Officers' Fund. The expenditure includes Lectures, Corps Prizes and the Insurance and Maintenance of both Corps Silver and Corps Paintings. The Royal Signals Corps Band was subsidised by £12k. This was mainly to support the band in a professional way with sheet music, instruments, instrument repairs and uniforms. The Band of 34 Sig Regt (V) was subsidised by £11k.

Corps Sport was allocated £60k and that was distributed by The Games Club. *The WIRE* was subsidised by £39k.

Capital grants received £26k and this included the purchase of Corps paintings and silver by the Corps Heritage Committee. A grant of £30k was also made towards the cost of new motorcycles for The White Helmets.

The Funds allocated £33k to Corps entertainment for such occasions as Royal visits to units and also made provisions of £88k for the serving Corps including £26k for Adventure Training. Finally, £64k was invested to boost our income in future years.

SUMMARY

The One Day's Pay scheme is extremely well supported by the Corps. Undoubtedly, the main area of support is in benevolence and that amounted to £324k in 1999 which is a commendable effort for which the Corps as a whole are to be congratulated.

I hope that this explanation of expenditure is excellent news for subscribers and an encouragement to the few who, for whatever reason, do not subscribe.

AFTERNOTE FOR UNIT ADJUTANTS/2ICs

Your attention is drawn to SOinC(A)'s Liaison Notes of March 2000 (Page 24) and Annex C. This Annex may be copied and distributed to sub-units/notice-boards.

CORPS AND ASSOCIATION FUNDS 1999

Where did the money come from?

INCOME	£k	%
Soldiers Subscriptions	328	40
Soldiers Covenants	68	8
Officers Subscriptions	166	20
Officers Covenants	49	6
Investments	103 73	22
Donations	33	4
£820k		

NOTE: Association is shown in shaded areas

How was the money spent? (All figures are in thousands)

EXPENDITURE	£K	%
Association Welfare and Benevolence	265	32
Association Grants (Army Benevolent Fund etc.)	59	7
Salaries and Pensions	47 23	8
Running Expenses	20 19	5
Institution	24	3
Band	22	3
Sports	60	7
Wire Subsidy	39	5
Capital Grants	56	7
Entertainment	5 28	4
Other (Note 1)	88	11
Investment or Carried Forward	65	8
£820K		

NOTE 1:	£k
Adventure Training	26
Assistance to Units	2
Grants	3
Recruiting	33
HQ Officers' Mess	19
HQ Sergeants' Mess	5

THE MAN FROM MANNING AND CAREER MANAGEMENT DIVISION

(Maj S G Hutchinson MBE R SIGNALS)

With the majority of personnel changes now complete within the Division, the emphasis has moved towards forthcoming Promotion Boards together with Officers' and Soldiers' Road-shows. It is our intention to try and visit units once every 12 to 16 months and, whilst this is not always practical, we try to encourage officers and soldiers to attend briefings at other units whenever possible. We have also discovered that very few in the Corps know what Kentigern House actually looks like so to dispel any misconceived opinion we have attached a photograph to prove that we are in touch with the real world.

FOCUS ON COURSES WING

Courses Wing co-ordinate and load all career courses and exams ranging from the T1 Entrance Exam to the Sergeants' Course. They receive bids direct from units, process them and then consult with the School of Signals with respect to loading. Whilst their work is less glamorous than the cut and thrust of the postings desks their work is no less important as they are the vital interface between units and the School.

Kentigern House

COURSES WING PERSONALITIES

IC Courses Wing: Maj (Retd) Roy Adamson: whilst not only being the OIC of the wing is the resident expert and advisor on Soldiers' Terms of Service; what he does not know about Queens' Regulations is not worth knowing. A steely eyed Retired Officer, little gets passed **Roy** and his legendary eye for detail has left many an Adjutant having the unenvied task of re-showing an AF B6848.

AO1: Joseph Kearney - Joseph is the AO responsible for all Military courses such as the Det Commanders and Sergeants. Yet on the darker side **Joseph** is the co-ordinator of MCP (Manning Control Point) action, so if a brown envelope arrives at your door (of which there are very few these days) you know where it came from. **Joseph** is also the Divisions' fitness fanatic so when he's not at his desk he is probably putting yours truly through his paces in the gym.

AO2: Cathy Hendry – Cathy concentrates on loading all the Technical Courses. Unfortunately **Cathy** has been away for part of the year, however, it is good to have her back.

AO3: Marion Ferguson – Marion is another one of the resident Celtic supporters and when she's not on the terraces of Parkhead she is responsible for all the Operator Courses. A passionate motor racing fan **Marion** has a number of photographs on her partition of a certain racing driver, so if you are German and your surname is Schumacher then you'll probably get the MT course at Leconfield that you have been asking for.

HOW DO WE POST SOLDIERS?

With the series on Promotion Boards over we will now start to look at another vital aspect of our work, and one which is close to the hearts of many, postings.

Exactly where we can post soldiers is determined by a unit's Establishment (AFC 7005), together with HQ LAND and HQ R SIGNALS who set the manning priorities across the Corps. Once an establishment and subsequent Manning Line have been endorsed we will post soldiers to fill that liability. All the posts across the Corps feature on our main manning database, aptly named GOST, which identifies vacancies and Line Serial Numbers (LSNs). In order to fill vacant posts we first of all have to take into account the needs of the Service, closely followed by the needs of the individual. It is therefore imperative that soldiers submit Posting Preferences early or when called for.

Once the chain effect of moving the individual have been confirmed and the needs of the both the Service and the individual taken into account, then the relevant desk will issue a Posting Order. It is our intent to try and give soldiers at least four months notification of an impending posting, and where possible six months notice. Unfortunately this might not always be feasible or indeed practical but it is a target that we are expected to meet. Inevitably, postings involve a lengthy chain and a small break in that chain can sometimes impact on others both up and down the chain. Our next issue will incorporate an insight into Officers' Wing together with a few basic tips on Confidential Report.

MY ATTACHMENT TO THE ETHNIC MINORITIES RECRUITING TEAM
EASY LIFE NOT A CHANCE!!!!

By Sig Muhammad

This is a report on my attachment to the Ethnic Minorities Recruiting Team (EMRT). During the past six months the road to ethnic awareness and recruiting has been an undulating and at times frustrating one. Most days have been spent all over the country attending events, but there've also been the days in the office when we have to evaluate each job we attend and write a report summarising them so as you can imagine it's been quite hectic at times. The events we attend vary from religious festivals to Job Fairs, Career Evenings at school, work experience weeks to name but a few. On joining the team I was aware of the unsociable hours I'd be working but you don't realise how tiring it can be. If you can imagine early mornings, late nights and working weekends you may be put off but it's such a valuable learning experience like no other. You learn about other people's religious beliefs and culture, you also meet prestigious people which no other job in the Army can provide. My self confidence has improved dramatically, this is mainly because I've had to give talks to as many as 500 people which is obviously quite daunting at first. Also part of the job is informing senior ranks about ethnic minority issues such as food, dress and ways in which they can address their religion in the Army. The EMRT is very much in the public eye and constantly under scrutiny both by the media and general public. The public is ignorant of the Army as an organisation and the career opportunities available, and the team has worked extensively alongside a number of celebrities in raising the profile of the Army amongst the ethnic minority population. It's not just about attending events, I've also had photo shoots with **Prince Naseem**. and **Tamzin Outhwaite** (Melanie from Eastenders) and for various publications both civilian and military this has included on several occasions an interview. So 'Posh Spice' may be the most photographed person in the UK but I'm the most photographed woman in the Army! Without boring you and going into details about what I've done each month I'll just highlight some good and bad points about some of the events I've attended and the job overall.

When I first joined the team we were quite busy and PT wasn't an issue and it was all done in your own time which sometimes was hard. If you had an event in the North you'd probably end up leaving about 5.50am! You'd wouldn't get back until 5.30pm and 6.00pm and by this time you're exhausted due to such a demanding day and the last thing you want to do is go for a run. It was therefore very much making the most of your time and using it to do PT or sport when you can. These days it's different. We try to do PT as often as we can even if this means doing it first thing in the morning or in the afternoon so we can maintain a good level of fitness.

Sometimes you meet people who have strong beliefs about the Army and aren't shy in airing their views. On several occasions I've been the

Centre of a confrontation for example I attended a mosque with another Muslim who was male. We had religious fundamentalists telling us that we sacrificed our religion to join the Army and would we fight against other Muslims if it came to a war situation. We educated them on various topics regarding religion within the Army but they weren't going to give up easily and I felt uncomfortable being there which is wrong. Two people became three which within five minutes became a group of about 20 so I made a decision to leave. We attended an event to celebrate International Women's day and as soon as we arrived and had set up our stand we'd created hostility from other organisations so in the end it was advised that we move our stand. Whoever said being in the Army is easy!!!!!

It's always so rewarding when speaking to ethnic minorities and changing their negative opinions about the Army. I attended a Bangladeshi event held in Birmingham with people from the local community. I spoke to a number of people that day but one will always stick in my mind. It was a 21 year old woman who had always had a keen interest in the Army but like so many young people she didn't know what it had to offer career wise and after speaking to me wished she could join. Unfortunately she was in an arranged marriage and said her husband's family wouldn't let her so although she couldn't join herself I felt like I had made a difference and I'd like to think she'd encourage people she knows within her community of a career within the Army. It's also satisfying going into schools and working with 14 -16 year olds, as I can remember when I was at school I never had an opportunity to speak to anyone about the Army and at this age they are very impressionable and are keen to find out about the Army. Of course you have to be prepared for questions such as 'Have you shot anyone?' 'Do you get paid?' oh and this one's a favourite especially at boy's schools, 'Can you have a girlfriend if you're in the Army?' They obviously think we are all single with no social life!!!!

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT
EXERCISE ARGON MERCURY/OP PALLISER
SIERRA LEONE

CO **Lt Col Mike Lithgow MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Al Higgins**

Exercise Argon Mercury was intended to be a three week exercise in Ghana, the first time that Charlie Troop, 256 Sig Sqn, had deployed the JTFHQ facility overseas. However, the Exercise did not go exactly according to plan as you will find out when you continue reading.

It was 26 April, the Troop were ready to deploy to Ghana with the JTFHQ staff for the three week exercise. We advanced to the barracks of the Ghanaian Staff College, which, by our normal standards, is not as good as it sounds. Building the JTFHQ was a long, laborious task made worse by the hot Ghanaian sun beating down onto our white bodies. After a couple of days of preparation for the arrival of the staff officers, we received a tip-off that Sierra Leone was becoming increasingly unstable and that our assistance may be called upon. Given that we now found ourselves marking time in the heat, the Troop took it upon themselves to indulge in a little R&R. Spending time at the infamous Frankie's Bar was proving to be difficult however as the tear down of the HQ had already begun.

The Inmarsat Team was the first to leave, and we said our farewells knowing that they were heading towards their usual cushy lifestyle in four star hotels. This is always demoralising, as we instinctively know that a life under holed canvas normally awaits the rest of us. However, before we knew it we were standing on the pan at Lungi airfield awaiting further instructions and the arrival of the BFT (Big ? Tent). After a few days of blood, sweat and tears in the unbearable humidity of Sierra Leone, the HQ was ready for the arrival of the staff and the luxurious accommodation was erected. The excellent life support facilities that form part of the HQ meant that showers could finally be taken and plenty of toilet rolls were close at hand. Thanks from the Troop go out to all involved in setting up the life support; it was hard work but well appreciated by everyone. So, our 'jolly' to Ghana quickly became yet another Operation with thanks to the cursed JTFHQ (Every JTFHQ Exercise in the last twelve months has been redeployed elsewhere to support an Operation). One lesson to take away from this is never assume that an Exercise is an Exercise-unless you are not serving with the JTFHQ Sig Sqn! All that remains to be said is that **Cpl Allen** of Bravo Tp, enjoy the next four months with the BFT and all its trimmings-its all yours'!! By the way, does anyone know what happened to the welfare TV and Video?

Another Wait, Another Airport!
(L-R): Sig Burrell with LCpls Dodgson, Wilson and Vanden

OPERATION PALLISER - SPEARHEAD DEPLOYMENT

by Flt Lt Paul Pearce

Op Palliser began as an National Evacuation Operation, with the aim of extracting all willing British and other Entitled Personnel, from the troubled country of Sierra Leone. The Operation involved both the Spearhead Land Element (SLE) and the JTFHQ element of 256 Sig Sqn. For the Squadron, the Operation began on 5 May with the rapid deployment of **Sig Bill** 'I only got back from Kuwait six days ago' **Harris** to the British High Commission, Freetown. Events were heating up quickly, as was **Flt Lt Paul** 'I only got back from Florida four days ago' **Pearce's** family BBQ, when the whistle finally blew for the SLE on the evening of 6 May. A gruelling night at South Cerney followed, in which we had witnessed the sudden disappearance of **Sig Tom** 'Steely-eyed killer' **Beerling** with CO 1 Para, and noticed a remarkable spring in the step of **Sgt Gaz** 'Chairborne Warrior' **Shuck** as he strutted around with his airborne buddies from years gone by. After bidding farewell to the CNR crew, the last of the SLE team arrived in Dakar, Senegal, in the silent hours of 8 May. Once there we offered our support to the JTFHQ staff as they awaited the arrival of the full JTFHQ Signal Support currently re-deploying from Ex Argon Mercury in Ghana to Dakar. Once they had arrived and established the required IER, it freed up the SLE team to deploy forward to Lungi on 9 May, initially under the JTFHQ (Fwd) flag.

The climate in Sierra Leone, even during the night, is hot and wet. The humidity levels were up to 85% as the country approached the monsoon season. So, after a briefing by the 1 Para RSWO who seemed eager for his first kill, the naked 501 crew got to work under the watchful eye of Det Cmdr **Cpl Bri** 'Last of the Mohicans' **Wilson**. Comms were in by first light and it wasn't long before the first customers began to arrive. Our customers included a Captain from the Zambian Battalion who wanted to borrow some of our hardware because his had all been captured, a Field Surgical Team who wanted to do digital surgery over JOCS, and dozens of small children trying to sell us Biscuits Brown, Meat Paste and Boiled Sweets. **Lt John** 'Chairborne Medal Poacher' **Dagless** arrived in Lungi from an Exercise in Ascension Island on 11 May and reassumed command of the SLE. **Flt Lt Paul** 'Rapidly becoming the 'War-iest Man' in the RAF (According to 1 Para)' **Pearce** returned to Dakar to assume command of the rear party as the majority of the JTFHQ Signal Support Group pushed into Lungi with the staff officers. Once the BFT was erected on the airfield with 501 Lime ticking over smoothly, 501 Sienna (SLE team) moved to co-locate with 1 Para, the rest of the staff left Dakar and 501 Indigo was finally deactivated.

The crew of Indigo, now homeless and jobless, were considering a career selling copies of the Senegal Big Issue magazine when the RAF Troop Commander put his training into practice and sniffed out the nearest 5 Star Hotel. Luckily, **Sgt Dean** 'Where's the Beach' **Leach** had deployed fully equipped with all the kit essential for these situations; Armani 3-piece suit, Samsonite suitcase full of beachwear, straw donkey and Sombrero. On arrival at the Dakar Meridian it soon became apparent that we would have to adopt the 0545hrs Stand-to procedure being exercised in Lungi in order to beat the RAF aircrew, UKMAMs and Hercules groundcrew to the sun-loungers around the pool. The crew of Indigo, under the control of Det Cmdr **Cpl Stu Foster**, enjoyed four days R&R at the Dakar Meridian before deploying forward to the British High Commission, Freetown on 24 May in a UN Hind helicopter with no glass in the windows. **LCpl Phil** 'I Can't Believe This Hotel' **Dransfield** had to stop off at the Field Surgical Unit en-route to Freetown to have the smile removed from his face.

The end state, following the withdrawal of 1 Para BG and the arrival of 42 Cdo RM, is 501 Lime supporting the JTFHQ (Rear) at Lungi, 501 Sienna (SLE) supporting 42 Cdo on the beach near Lungi and 501 Indigo supporting JTFHQ (Main) at BHC Freetown. The Squadron is also providing an Inmarsat crew in Dakar. As this goes to press, the Squadron have almost completely withdrawn back to Barracks and 258 Sqn are in the process of deploying to support the Royal Anglians in theatre. Memories for me include walking in on **Cpl Bri Wilson** crouched on all fours in the SLE Crypto tent having his head shaved, coming face to face with **Sig** 'GI Jane' **Hampton** having just had her head shaved and offering assistance to a couple of young evacuees on board a Hercules as the ground engineer stuffed home a roast dinner. By the way, **Lt Lucy** 'I only arrived at the Regiment two weeks ago' **Pimm**, you still owe a crate for that lovely photo on page 2 of the May Bank Holiday's Sun newspaper.

OPERATION PALLISER
DEPLOYMENT OF THE JFHQ SIGNAL SQUADRON

On 26 April 2000, 256 Sig Sqn, under the command of **Maj Joe Cooper**, deployed to Ghana in support of the JTFHQ staff on Ex Argon Mercury. Charlie Tp had only built the medium scale JTFHQ once before, this was at Blandford on Ex First Run, and now it was being given the opportunity to deploy overseas. In the early stages of the Exercise, it became apparent that a redeployement to Sierra Leonne was inevitable as the troubled country had escalated further into instability.

The initial location for the redeployment was to the FMB in Dakar, Senegal, and personnel with equipment began to move on 8 May 2000. The Spearhead Land Element (SLE) of 256 Sig Sqn were already in position in Dakar providing secure voice and data services, and by the early hours of 9 May 2000 the JTFHQ Sig Sqn support was in place and fully established. VSC 501 Indigo provided the SATCOM trunk over which the essential comms services were maintained. Concurrent to the move to Dakar, the Inmarsat team of the JTFHQ had established itself at the British High Commission (BHC), Freetown, supporting the JTFC. With VSC501 Indigo established, the SLE team were free to push forward into Lungi Airfield under the JTFHQ (Fwd) flag. By first light on 10 May 2000, the SLE crew had established comms over VSC501 Sienna and were ready for their first customers. Initially the crew supported elements of the JFACC and 1 Para BG but were also providing close support to CO and 2IC 1 Para over Inmarsat. In the meantime the rest of the Squadron were already planning the next move from Dakar to Lungi.

VSC501 Lime was deployed to Lungi on 14 May 00. By this time the tented HQ and its associated life support had also been erected, as had the perimeter fence and the relevant defensive positions. The JTFHQ staff and Squadron personnel began deploying into theatre soon after the HQ at Lungi was completed, allowing VSC501 Indigo to slowly drawdown and finally deactivate on 19 May 2000. From that point the BHC became known as JTFHQ (Main) and Lungi airfield as JTFHQ (Rear).

With VSC501 Lime firmly in place, the SLE crew moved location within the airfield to offer full support to the 1 Para BG. With the steady state now achieved consolidation was on the cards and VSC501 Indigo was brought forward from Dakar to support JFHQ (Main) on 24 May 2000. The next key event to impact upon the Squadron's effort was the withdrawal of 1 Para BG as they were replaced in theatre by 42 Cdo Bde. Continuing their support of the Land Component Commander, the SLE crew moved VSC501 Sienna to the more comfortable surroundings of the Mahara Beach Hotel, a stone's throw from Lungi, in order to support the Royal Marine Commandos HQ. As this article goes to press the Squadron will have completed the drawdown of all manpower from Op Palliser, however, the Regiment will still have a Section plus deployed in support of Op Basilica from 258 Sig Sqn, continuing the provision of the ever crucial comms support required in theatre. All the best to you boys. Readers watch this space for the next instalment….

Elements of 256 Signal Squadron
outside the British High Commission

ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM
Trading Company

A Gift for any occasion

Blandford Camp, Blandford,
DORSET DT11 8RH
Tel; 01258 482 248 Fax; 01258 482 084

CORPS CAROL SERVICE

This year's Corps Carol Service will be held on Thursday, 21 December, at St Stephen with St John, Rochester Row, Westminster, starting at 1800hrs. All serving and former members of the Corps, plus their families are cordially invited to attend and to join us for sherry and mince pies in the church hall after the service.

COs/OCs of units in and around London are asked to encourage their personnel to attend.

THE ARMY TAUGHT YOU NEVER TO GIVE UP, SO DON'T

So there you are in civvy street doing the same old thing day in, day out. But...why?...If it's the Army you're missing, then how about joining the TA? It's a vital part of the British Army.

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 cap badge and become a member of either an Independent Unit as above, or a TA Specialist Unit. In either, you can maintain and develop 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 2 weekends and a 15 day annual camp. In return, you will earn Army rates of pay and an annual tax-free bonus of up to £1050.

For an information brochure call **0845 603 32 32** quoting ref **WI012**, or send the coupon to: Freepost, The TA, CV37 9BR.

SURNAME _____ MR/MS
BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE CIRCLE

FIRST NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

_____

POSTCODE _____

TEL (STD) _____

DATE OF BIRTH ____/____/____

The TA is committed to Equal Opportunities. **http://www.army.mod.uk**

TA TERRITORIAL ARMY

BE THE BEST

OC RSMDT **Lt Col Jack Amberton**
Team Captain **Capt Gordon Newell** (outgoing)
Team SNCO **SSgt Paul Boughey**

TEAM OVERVIEW – *by Capt G. P. Newell*

The Team's Millennium season is well underway, shows have been completed in Northern Ireland for the first time in at least two decades, as well as more typical venues in Scotland and Kent. The new motorcycles – 30 classic Triumph Tiger 750s built earlier this year by a Team sponsor, **L. F. Harris**, and four Team members – have been a valuable addition to the Team's performance, looking the part and proving reliable since they were unveiled at the first official engagement of the year, the SOinC(A)'s Opening Show on 14 April 2000. The show went very well – it didn't rain for the first time in three years – but more about that later in this article.

We look forward to the selection and training of new Team members in the coming months. Once again, two induction courses will take place, one in November 2000 and one in February 2001. The format of the course aims to be the same with a first period being cross-country motorcycling based followed by a period on the Triumphs. Last time both these courses were well attended by soldiers from across the Corps, all trades and all ages, and twelve new riders joined the Team – we hope to repeat that trend. Members of the Corps wishing to express any form of interest in the Team, who may wish to visit or attend a course should approach either their Unit Admin Office or contact the Team Clerk in Blandford on extension 2365.

Again there is a goodbye to a Team member in this issue of *The Wire* - the Team Captain (me!) moves on to pastures new outside the Army and will begin training as an actor at drama school in September 2000. I have spent the best part of two years with the Team and found it a tremendous challenge. The Team is effectively 'operational' all the time and needs to fulfil its recruiting and KAPE roles for both financial and Corp-sanctioned survival. This it does, and to the highest standard too; a standard which the rest of the Corps can be proud of. In my time I have seen young soldiers arrive in the Team, grow in confidence and character, and then return to successful Regimental careers. I have seen Team members promoted in the same way as any other unit, but I have also been privy to the negative ignorance about the Team that permeates many working units. Hopefully, with the hard work put in over the past few years this may well continue to change and Corps members will grow to realise that the White Helmets, the world's oldest motorcycle display team, is an organisation that they can be proud to be part of. For it not only represents them and the rest of our Corps, but the Army as a whole to over 2 million people annually – and that figure does not include TV, newspaper and radio coverage! No small task.

The reins are now firmly in the grasp of **SSgt Paul Boughey** as the nomination for the new Team Captain has not been finalised at the time of press. Rest assured, whoever takes over will continue to find new challenges uncommon to regular Regimental life, and I wish them all the luck in the world!

MY EXPERIENCES AS A TA SOLDIER WITH THE RSMDT
by LCpl 'Muz' Sutcliffe

I am **LCpl Sutcliffe** and am a TA soldier now on Full Time Regular Service (FTRS). I was previously serving at 2 Sig Sqn in Dundee. I applied to join the Team last winter and have served with them since February 2000, and although only having been in the Team for a short time I've learnt a lot. That's what I'm going to write about.

For those without a clue as to what the Team does other than performing at shows this may give a little insight into the four months leading up to the show season. This four month period is a critical time during which much has to be achieved. The Team Captain and other instructors have their work cut out for them – as two new intakes of first years (from the November and February courses) must be trained to be able to perform the tricks to a show standard by the Opening Show. This is when they will be presented with their coveted 'White Helmets'. Not only do the first years have to be trained but all the second year riders must move up a bracket and learn the tricks and rides that have been left by leaving Team members from the previous year. The show must also be put together in such a way as to ensure that all the tricks and rides run smoothly from start to finish giving the riders enough time in between to get ready for the next sequence. The training area required must be sufficiently large to allow all the riders to practice concurrently with plenty of safety space to fall off without being run over! This is why the team moves to RAF Sealand to carry out the bulk of the training.

The Training Camp 2000 was a success with the Team deploying on the 27 February. On arrival at the accommodation block **Sgt** 'Don Juan' **Brebner** decided we should also go into Chester to ensure the pubs were still working…….. they were!

The next day we moved across the road to set up our garages and mech bays…..... when I say move across the road I mean that RAF Sealand Camp is split down the middle by a dual carriage way! With the accommodation being one side and the airfield on the other it means that every morning after PT a coach journey was needed to get to and from work. For the first week the first years (including myself) were introduced to the tricks and basically placed into the positions which suited our size, build and ability. Although bike and ground met fairly regularly no one was seriously injured! While this was going on the second and third years were concentrating on getting the remaining bikes for the new fleet run in. This proved to be an interesting exercise, as the weather was miserable and the surface at the end of the runway looked as if it had been recreated to imitate the surface of the moon! Not really the best thing to ride over especially when each bike needs to do 500 miles before it can be used in any way. As the first week drew to a close bruises started appearing on bruises and getting out of bed was starting to be a problem... not through tiredness but due to my muscles failing to respond to my brain's commands! This was remedied however every morning thanks to **LCpls** 'Scouse' **O'Leary** and **Rick Hartley** our resident AIPTs. During Weeks Two and Three the standard of the tricks and rides continued to rise, as did the quality of the training area, due to less bikes being ditched. The only thing which stayed the same was the weather unless of course (as is always the case) it was the weekend! One weekend involved a move to Dale Barracks in Chester as the accommodation which we were occupying had been booked prior to our arrival. This, however, didn't present a problem as the taxi fare back from town at night was considerably cheaper! The last training weekend was when the first year riders and the rest of the Team came together and put all of the tricks and rides in the arena to form the show. This was when it came home (especially to the first years) that it is one thing to perform the tricks in the arena but another to know who is out before you, what should be going out next, where you should be, what bike you're on etc. However, after several run-throughs the show was together and running smoothly. At the end of every annual training camp a show is performed for RAF Sealand Camp to show our appreciation for the use of the camp and its facilities. There was a fairly good turnout considering the weather conditions (wet and windy!) and the show went smoothly with no hitches.

THE SOINC(A) OPENING SHOW - FRIDAY 14 APRIL 2000
by LCpl 'Trigger' Jackson

Being a new member of the Royal Signals White Helmets Motorcycle Display Team meant that the Opening Show is the proud day when we are presented with the coveted 'White Helmet' and get to hand in the shabby red helmets we've been donning for the last three months!

The Opening Show this year was to be performed in front of the SOinC, **Brig C. J. Burton OBE**, sponsors, families and other guests likewise. When the show was only days away pre-show nerves were starting to show and not only in the first years. Training sessions were being cut short due to inclement weather conditions and there was also a couple of crashes in the rides the day before the dress rehearsal. An injury to **Cpl Bob** 'Funky Monk' **Sizeland** unluckily meant he'd be sitting out of this years Opening Show. Also sitting out (literally) was **Cpl Chris** 'Michael' **Hunt** who was wheelchair bound after jumping from the 'Six Bike Fan' earlier in the week.

The day of the Opening Show finally arrived to the relief of most of the Team. The pre-show nerves were settled with a nice glass of port served by the Team Staff Sergeant - **SSgt Paul Boughey** and the Team Captain – **Capt Gordon Newell**. The Team Captain then led us on a warm up lap on the bikes around the camp before they were then parked just out of sight of the awaiting guests. A whole brand new fleet of Triumph Tiger 750's waiting to be riden into the arena for the first time of the year 2000 season! An hour later, after the final show-board brief and in dry, sunny conditions (for the first time in years) the millenium team of the 'White Helmets', with the first years still in red helmets, lined up beside their bikes and waited for the signal from Team Sergeant - **Sgt Don Brebner** to fire the bikes up.

The roar of 30 Triumph Tigers was soon to be heard by all. With the arena being set out earlier in the morning the Opening Ride went straight in whilst the trick bikes pulled up in their places behind. The first trick waiting to enter the arena was the 'Double Jimmy' with **Sig Matty** 'Manc' **Scott** riding and **LCpl Rick Hartley** stood firmly to attention waiting to clamber up on top. Once the first trick had been successfully performed around the arena and the second, the 'Four Tees' was halfway round the show seemed to be running smoothly and it would soon be time for the first years to be presented with their 'White Helmets'. The 'Three Bike Fan' did an unusual one and a half laps before dismounting the riders in front of the main stand and more importantly **Brig C. J. Burton OBE** who was to present the new riders with their new helmets. **Capt Newell** assisted the SOinC(A) and after the helmets were presented the presentation of the 'Lucas Trophy' was awarded to **Cpl Chris** 'Ivor' **Hunt** for best individual effort over the training season. It was then time for **Sgt Don Brebner** to hand over the role of Team SNCO to newly arrived **SSgt Paul Boughey**. Probably with a tear in his eye, it was time for **Don** to watch the rest of the show from the unusual position as a spectator instead of being in the arena as he's used to!

With all this over it was time for the bikes to be restarted and the second half of the show to begin, with the twelve new 'White Helmets' riders. The crowd waited in anticipation for the 'Fire Jump' with four new

The SOinC(A) presents the Lucas trophy to his old driver
Cpl Chris Hunt

Sig Woolnough – Opening Show 'Fire Jump'

riders going through for the first time in White Helmets. First to go was **LCpl Rick Hartley** followed by **Sig Paul** 'Stan' **Bowes** and **Sig Michael** 'Wooly' **Woolnough**, who went through looking good but totally out of control. **LCpl Chris** 'Trigger' **Jackson** unluckily (or luckily) didn't jump due to the clutch lever falling off his bike just before the fire was lit. The show was coming to an end with the famous 'Six Bike Fan', 'Angel' and last but not least the 'Closing Ride'. It was then left to **Capt Gordon Newell** to take the final salute at his last Opening Show before the bikes and riders left the arena to form up and await the SOinC(A)'s address. After congratulating and thanking us for the show it was off to the Semaphore Arms for the reception and to meet our sponsors and our families.

THE LEICESTERSHIRE SHOW - 30 APRIL - 1 MAY
by LCpl 'Trigger' Jackson

The second show of the season for the Millenium Team was the Leicestershire County Show. After leaving Blandford on the Saturday morning we headed for 30 Sig Regt at Bramcote, our accommodation for the next two days. On arrival it had been decided to do a quick run through of the rides, for peace of mind before packing up and preparing for the next day's show. Half the team then decided to go and large it around Coventry in a chauffeur driven limo whilst the rest stayed local in Nuneaton. After arriving at the show-ground, to say it was boggy would be an understatement. The truck had to be pulled out of the mud by a helpful passing tractor before we could even unload. Riding the bikes to the arena would be a task in itself due to the conditions underfoot. We had two shows each day to perform, a morning and afternoon show. With the Bank Holiday and good weather combining quite a crowd was gathering to watch the first show. Due to the bad ground conditions and horse riders tearing up the arena just before we went on, the final word around the show-board was 'take it easy' from **SSgt Paul Boughey**. Within seconds of the 'Opening Ride' going out **LCpl Matty** 'Fatboy' **Adams** was on the deck after a collision between **Cpl John** 'Shoptalk' **Strachan** and himself. There was only one person to blame wasn't there **John**! Luckily the only injury was to **LCpl Adams** who had suffered a cracked knee cap. Apart from this the rest of the show went by without any more incidents to the crowds delight. Performing their first 'Car Jumps' in front of a public audience at this show were **LCpl Duncan** 'Saggy' **Marsh** and **LCpl Kevin** 'Eh oh' **O'Leary**. With the hot weather the ground conditions were getting gradually better standing us in good stead for an excellent show later on in the afternoon. The second day started with the drive from Bramcote to the show-ground early in the morning to give us time to prepare the bikes and move the props to the arena. Again a good crowd had turned out probably due to the excellent weather. Once again the team performed an amazing show to the great satisfaction of the crowd. The only error came when **LCpl Ed** 'Rooster' **Lewis** stalled his bike on the final salute after the Closing Ride. After the final show the team packed the kit away and hit the road in the hope they would make it back in time for the 'Georgian Fayre' in Blandford - if not it was off to The Royal Balmoral Show in Ulster a week later!

The twelve new Team Members
(L-R): Sig Woolnough – 16 Sig Regt, Sig Scott – 21 Sig Regt (AS), LCpl Lewis – 11 Sig Regt, LCpl Jackson – 1 (UK) ADSR, Sig Gaston – 3 (UK) ADSR, Sig Potter – 14 Sig Regt (EW), LCpl Sutcliffe – 2 (V) Sig Sqn, Sig Bowes – 16 Air Asslt, Sig Lewis – 16 Air Asslt, LCpl Fitzpatrick – 15 Sig Regt, LCpl Hartley – 11 Sig Regt and in the wheelchair Cpl Hunt HQ R. Signals

NORMANDY AIRDROP 5 JUNE 2000

Sgt Nige Brewin, Royal School of Signals

At 0400hrs on 5 June I was awoken by my alarm clock. I sleepily turned it off and sat up rubbing my eyes, this was going to be my own, personal *Longest Day*. I got ready and by 0430hrs was on my way from Blandford to Blackbushe airfield near Camberly where I was to join men from the recently disbanded 10 (V) Parachute Bn and our air dispatchers from 47 Air Despatch Squadron, Royal Logistic Corps. By 0615hrs we had all arrived, in front of us was a DC3 Dakota, Fifi Kate, in wartime markings with D-Day invasion stripes, this was to be our jump platform for the airdrop.

The airdrop was unique in that all involved were jumping in WW2 British Airborne uniform, Battledress trousers, WW2 Denison smocks and wartime para helmets. We got changed into our uniforms and eventually found ourselves speeding up the runway, the aircraft making a lot of swerves on the runway until the moment came and we were in the air. An uneventful flight at 2000ft over The Channel led to us flying over Pegasus Bridge and then we landed at Caen airport. At Caen we parked up next to two RAF C130s and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight DC3. They did not know we were coming, we caused a lot of interest as we deplaned in WW2 uniform, the parachute Battalion men coming over to us to see what we were doing.

Sgt Brewin boarding 'Fifi Kate' for the air-drop

Sgt Brewin in front of DC3 'Fifi Kate' before the drop

Later on the rest of the jumpers who had sailed out a few days before arrived at the airfield and ground training and exit drills were practiced over and over again. We were going to be doing two airdrops, the first flight, which I was in, was going to be 26 men out the door in one pass. The Drop Zone was a field next to the Merville Battery, site of 9 Para Bn actions on 6 June 1944. The remaining veterans, their families, the locals and men of various units at 16 Air Asslt Bde were at the battery waiting for us, to say we felt honoured is an understatement!

One of the men jumping with us was a 76 year old Arnhem veteran who got captured and never made it to the bridge. He dressed up in his old uniform and, like us, was jumping a military round canopy, an amazing man, another honour. It was during a break in the ground training that I was approached by the load-master and informed that as I had raised the most sponsorship for the Dakota I was to he the first man out of the door. On events like this it is classed an extreme honour to be first out, I was overjoyed, a big smile on my face as we practised our exit drills, myself first.

Synchronising watches prior to jumping

At 1600hrs we were manifested onto the aircraft, by 1615hrs we were in the air, the jump door removed, passing over Pegasus Bridge and heading towards the DZ. At 1630hrs the load-master was happy everything was right and it began. 'Stand up,' we stood up. 'Hook up,' we hooked up. There I was, hooked up waiting at the side of the door, a camera crew on board filming me, the Normandy countryside passing below, then it came. 'First man, In the door!', I moved forward, my static line passed over to the dispatcher, left foot in the door, right arm over my reserve, left hand on the door frame. Red light on, green light on, 'Go!' and out I went, no hesitation, a blur of colour and noise, I surfed the slipstream as I shouted, '1000, 2000, 3000,' my canopy opened, I had a twist. I came out of the twist with no effort on my part and found I was lucky enough to be facing the aircraft, the sight of the Dakota banking to the left and still chucking out the last few paratroopers will stay in my memory for ever.

I had a bit of difficulty locating the smoke but eventually saw it, I was not going to land on the DZ, I knew that before I jumped, I steered into the wind to slow down, prepared for landing hoping I was not going to land in a hedgeline I had spotted. I looked down over my right shoulder, I was safe from the hedge but was landing close to a ditch, I landed on firm ground, did a backward Parachute Landing Fall and ended up in the ditch with my feet above my head in soft French mud. I was able to walk so it must have been a good landing! I started field packing my canopy as I watched the rest of the stick come down, the green round canopies slowly disappearing into the tall grass. A quick climb over a hedge and I was on the DZ. We reported into our RV, all men accounted for.

The Dakota did a quick circle and then departed back to the airfield to pick up the next stick, only thirteen men this time. Within 20 minutes it was back, it dropped five weapon containers in it's first pass, circled once and then dropped the last thirteen men, including the Arnhem veteran. One man landed on a nearby roof and broke his ankle. As the first man of the second stick landed a large group of WW2 re-enactors assaulted the Merville battery in front of the veterans. The Dakota circled again, this time trailing smoke and the dispatchers jumped out. Once all 41 of us were accounted for we cleared the RV where we were mobbed by the veterans, the regular parachute troops and the French public, wine was passed our way by the bottle and the transport to take us back to the airfield could not get to the Merville battery because there were so many

Luxury Retirement Houses & Flats

The most stylish and spacious properties for the discerning retired.

Aldeburgh, SUFFOLK
Fordingbridge, HAMPSHIRE
Prestbury, CHESHIRE
Royal Tunbridge Wells, KENT

PRICES FROM £200,000 – £360,000

Call freephone 0800 220 858

Please Quote Ref. PER 10

www.englishcourtyard.co.uk

8 Holland Street London W8 4LT

English Courtyard

www.jprecruit.com

CAREERS IN COMMUNICATIONS

My clients are world leaders in the design, manufacture and operation of advanced radio, data and telecoms equipment and networks. Opportunities exist in:-

* System Design
* Network Planning
* Project Management
* Test Engineering
* Installation / Commissioning
* Technical Support
* Training

Contact John Darby, quoting ref: 42 on 01727 818704 or email to johnd@jprecruit.com

JOHN PRODGER PLC
The Courtyard, Alban Park, Hatfield Road,
St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL4 0LA
TEL 01727 841101 FAX 01727 838272

JOHN PRODGER

NAAFI

Every penny Naafi makes is reinvested into its shops and clubs to improve the quality of facilities and services or returned in the form of a dividend.

Serving the Services and their families Worldwide.

people there blocking the roads. We eventually got our transport, we passed Pegasus Bridge at ground level this time but did not have time to visit the new museum. By the time we got to the airfield the Dakota was running its engines, another five minutes and it would have to go, not being allowed to land at Blackbushe at night. We threw our kit and canopies onto the aircraft and took off, passing over the remains of one of the Mullberry harbours on the way.

I left a wreath with the jumpers who stayed in France. It is dedicated to the men of the 6th Airborne Division, and is marked up as follows:

FROM SKY TO EARTH FOR LIBERTY YOU FELL
YOU FOUGHT, DIED, WON YOUR WINGS,
AGAIN FAREWELL

I hope to be on the airdrop again next year, I will let someone else be first man out and will try to miss the ditch!

EXERCISE MOORISH IDOL

By Capt 'Mac' McCrindle - HQ British Forces Cyprus

The relief felt by the eleven divers, finally arriving in Johannesburg after the eleven hour flight from London, was somewhat diminished by the prospect of another flight to take us to our final destination. A few hours later, we touched down in Durban on South Africa's Indian Ocean coast, famous for having hosted more shark attacks than any other beach in the world. We were met by the four advance party members, who had managed to fit in some diving as well as essential administration, squeezed into two mini-buses and headed south for the two hour trip to Margate (really!).

Next day began with a shakedown dive on Aliwal Shoal, a reef about three miles offshore, rated as one of the world's top ten dive sites. Large rigid-hulled inflatable boats are used to carry 12 fully equipped divers and we all helped to launch into the River Mkhomazi, Zulu for Place of the Cow Whales, the estuary was once used as a nursery. The inland rain, which had recently caused so much chaos in Mozambique, had a less significant effect on the Kwa-Zulu Natal province. The river estuary stained the blue-grey Indian Ocean with it's muddy brown water, leaving a line between river and sea water so sharply defined, it could have been drawn with a pen. The coxswain waited patiently on the shore side of the breaking surf, looking for the gap, which would allow our exit to the ocean. A shout of 'Hold on!' and we surged forward, quickly picking up speed as we weaved between the breakers (we later rescued the crew of an overturned boat here). A few exhilarating minutes later, we were planing over the 2-metre ocean swell towards Aliwal Shoal.

On site, buddy checks completed, we quickly dropped to the bottom by a site known as the Cathedral. This is a large natural amphitheatre in the reef, entered through a large archway and exiting to the reef top. Between July and October, the shoal is home to large numbers of Ragged-tooth sharks that come here to mate. For a shakedown dive, no sharks was just fine. The underwater visibility was around ten metres and the water was a warm 24° degrees Celsius. A current of about 1-2 knots flowed northwards along the reef, a pleasant change from the Mediterranean and we sheltered from it in the lee of the rocks as we explored. The reef had less coral than I expected but there were numerous, colourful sponges and a plethora of fish life, many of which were enjoying being thrust vertically upwards in a water jet from a small cave. All too soon the dive was complete and we headed back to Umkomaas, accompanied by bottlenose dolphins racing in the bow-wave. The second dive of the day was on the wreck of the Nebo, a freighter which had sunk on her maiden voyage in 1884. The current was too strong to make it a relaxing dive but it was certainly enjoyable.

The next two days were spent diving on Protea Banks, a reef five miles offshore from Shelly Beach. It was Easter weekend and the launch through the surf was just as exhilarating as yesterday. 20 high speed minutes later we were on site. Due to the surface current, we had to hit the water and drop immediately to five metres to meet up with our buddies, an interesting exercise, especially for new divers. The reeftop was generally 33 metres and fish life here was prolific, it was easy to see why the fishermen on the surface were also so prolific. This was shark–sighting country. The depth meant only a short time on the bottom before drifting with a 2-3 knot current, making a gradual ascent. All of us saw sharks during the four dives we carried out here. They ranged from curious hammerheads through silkies, sand sharks, blacktips and tigers to the reputedly aggressive bull shark, known in South Africa as the Zambezi (it is one of the few sharks which can adapt to fresh water and has been found many miles up the Zambezi).

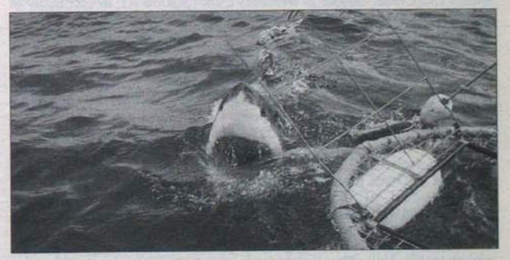
Back on Aliwal Shoal for a further two days, exploring the reef, seeing large ribbon-tailed rays, two metre Potato Bass, crayfish, morays and the wreck of the Produce, a 2,000 ton bulk tanker which sank in 1974 and at 30 metres it's rusted framework has formed an established reef. We were due to fly across to Capetown in the south-west, but took full advantage of our compulsory surface interval before flying, to visit the Natal Sharks Board, a body which studies and protect sharks. The interesting audio-visual presentation was followed by an open-air dissection of a shark, which had been caught in shark nets off Durban. The nets are checked daily, live sharks are tagged and released, dead ones are recovered for examination. Stomachs have been found to contain items ranging from a human skull to a car number-plate.

A 2-hour flight took us to a hypothermic Capetown. Clearly six days on the hot and humid East Coast had softened us and the shock of arriving in a place bearing remarkable similarity to north-west Scotland had a quietening effect on the group. The grey mist, rain and chilly temperature did not bode well, as we drove south over the mountain pass. We were heading to the highlight of the expedition, two days cage-diving with Great White sharks, now a protected species in South Africa.

Not only does South Africa have winter in July, the water off the Cape province gets as warm as 14-20° Celsius during winter due to the Aghulas current from the Indian Ocean. In summer it can be as cold as 8° Celsius due to the upwelling Benguela current from Antarctica, weird or what! Cape Aghulas is the southernmost point of Africa, the meeting place of the Indian and Atlantic Oceans. Next morning was brighter and we split into two groups of eight and sailed off for Dyer Island about five miles south of Gaansbaai. Dyer is home to thousand upon thousand of cormorants, terns, gannets, gulls and jackass penguins. Their waste led to the islands being worked for guano for many years before the island was made a bird sanctuary. Separated from it by a narrow strip of water is Geyser Island, home to thousands of not very fresh-smelling Cape Fur seals, and it is their young as well as the warmer water which attracts the Great Whites. The young seals are born around October, just after the Southern Right whales come to calf in False Bay by the Cape of Good Hope. Far more seal pups are drowned by becoming separated from their mothers in rough sea conditions than are taken by Great Whites (or so they say!).

The Great White is known as the Tommy shark locally, a reminder of the day in 1852 when HM Steamer *Birkenhead*, a British frigate turned troop carrier, hit a rock 3km off Danger Point. There were only four lifeboats and the embarked troops disobeyed the skippers order of 'Every man for himself" to let the women and children have the boats. It is from this wreck that the phrase 'Women and children first' originates. Of the 638 on board, 445 died, many falling prey to the Great White which feasted on the Tommies. The wreck lies in 30 metres and the gold payroll it carried has yet to be recovered.

Chum was ladled into the water, a mash of sardines and water, which lays a scent trail down-current to attract shark. Within an hour, something came close to the wooden decoy seal pup and fish lure, floating just off the boat. It circled the boat and the excitement mounted. It returned to cruise past just below the surface, rolling over to look at us with an expressionless black eye as it's dorsal fin and tail fin cut the surface – Jaws had arrived!



The cage was put in the water as we kitted up, some more eagerly than others. The cage holds two divers and is supported at surface level by four floats. Wetsuit, mask and two weightbelts and I was ready to go. Stepping over the side onto to top of the cage as four and a half metres of Great White circled concentrates the mind, I distinctly remember thinking I must not fall in the water at this point. The cage tilted as I put my weight onto it and my rational side was urgently asking me what I thought I was doing. I ignored it and jumped into the small gap that was the cage entrance.

The next diver followed and we were handed our demand valves, extended from an air cylinder on the boat. We dropped into the cage which has a large gap at face level to aid viewing. The water was a chilly 14° Celsius and visibility was about six metres. A huge shape emerged from the gloomy water and the cold was forgotten as the Great White cruised slowly past the cage. I saw the splash above as the roped bait was thrown onto the surface to lure him closer. The rope was pulled towards the boat and the shark followed it in a few times as the skipper teased it. Finally he pulled it right over the top of the cage. The shark followed it, rolling onto its side within a foot of us. It's eyelid closed from the bottom up as it took the bait, almost gently, in it's huge mouth. I ran my hand along it's belly as it passed by, just before being thrown off my feet as it's tail slammed the cage against the side of the boat. It was unintentional, but most things getting in the way of a creature of such size and power will come off worst. I'm glad the cage was well constructed.

Everyone had similar experiences, though no-one will dine on their story as much as **Clare**, the girl in our party who was slapped on the chest by a Great White tail-fin while leaning over the side of the boat. After two tremendous days we headed north to Capetown for a day sightseeing. The weather had cleared and warmed enough to ascend Table Mountain and enjoy a panoramic view of the town and surrounding area, including Robbens Island where Nelson Mandela had been imprisoned.

The aim of this adventurous expedition had been to have some close encounters – we did.

THE SPECIAL OPERATIONS EXECUTIVE – 1940 – 1946

by Colonel (Retd) C. J. Walters, Director Royal Signals Museum

Such recent activities as the making of a film by Americans claiming that they were the first to crack the ENIGMA codes, the TV series 'STATION X' and the loss of the Bletchley Park ENIGMA German cipher machine have all gone towards popularising clandestine wartime activities. This article deals solely with the Special Operations Executive. It does not relate any of the activities of its 5,000 or so agents many of whom were courageous beyond belief and many of whom have been written about and films made. Rather it gives the background to the establishing and organisation of the Executive which is not so widely known. Much of this was highly classified until the mid-1970s and little was known about any of the secret services. Since then, information has become increasingly available at least about their wartime activities.

The Special Operations Executive (SOE) was set up by **Winston Churchill** on 22 July 1940 as a tough, anti-Nazi, British fighting organisation. It was formed in deadly secrecy and placed controversially by **Churchill** under the Ministry of Economic Warfare which he regarded as his 'Ministry of ungentlemanly conduct.' The Minister was initially **Hugh Dalton** and later **Lord Selborne**. Its charter was drafted by **Neville Chamberlain**, shortly before his death, with the purpose, 'To co-ordinate all action by way of subversion and sabotage against the enemy overseas.' **Churchill** instructed **Dalton**, 'Now set Europe ablaze.'

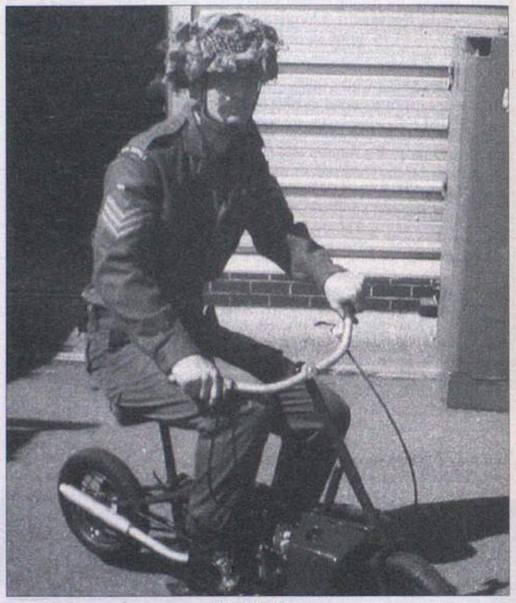
The SOE was formed by bringing together three War Office organisations that already existed; SECTION D – Undercover operations; SECTION MI R – Operations by troops in uniform; and SECTION EH – Propaganda. As such it was separate from all other clandestine departments such as the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS or later MI6), the Special Air Service, the Long Range Desert Group and The Government Codes and Cipher School at Bletchley Park (Station X). In fact many of these organisations found themselves 'in opposition' for scarce resources. Initially, SOE was set up at 2 Caxton Street, London but it soon outgrew these premises and moved to 64 Baker Street, Marylebone.

It was a secret service that did not answer to Parliament or to the Lords. Because of the deadly secrecy it had a number of cover descriptions; MO1 (SP) at the War Office; NID (Q) at the Admiralty; AI 10 at the Air Ministry; and the Inter-Services Research Bureau in general terms. The head of SOE was code-named 'CD'. Initially this was **Sir Frank Nelson** but in April 1942 he was superseded by his deputy **Sir Charles Hambro** – originally a merchant banker. The third and final head was **Brig Colin Gubbins DSO** late Royal Artillery – he was later knighted.

SOE started off as a small organisation which, by its heydays of Summer 1944, had grown to about 10,000 men and 3,200 women. Of these about 5,000 were agents in the field overseas. It was organised into a Council and several Branches each of which dealt with support or operational matters. The Council comprised 16 members of whom five were uniformed including a Signals representative. Support Branches included Signals, Intelligence and Security, and Finance. The Operations Branches included Sections for each of the relevant countries such as France (F Section), Germany (X Section) and Holland (N Section). Each of the country sections had its own specialist school many of which were in country mansions. For example, F Section was in Wanborough Manor near Guildford.

The method of operation of SOE was to work closely with the forces of resistance. To achieve this, agents (they were not spies or terrorists) were specially selected and trained. Training took place at one of many specialist schools for various disciplines such as fitness, weapon, training communications, explosives and so on. Locations included Thames Park (Oxford) for communications, Altrincham (Cheshire) for parachute training, Arisaig (Inverness) for survival training and Beaulieu Manor (New Forest) for culmination training. The Country Sections were the heart of SOE operations. Each was staffed by officers who knew the country and the language well. Their tasks included the briefing and operational control of all their agents. The Executive had the capability to research, invent and manufacture devices that would be of use to its agents; this it did for a very wide range of items. This included a miniature motor cycle that could be folded up and dropped by parachute – the Welbike.

SOE specialists are credited with inventing plastic explosives, the limpet mine and the clam 'adhesive' mine. Also, the agents were not happy with the range of military radios that were available to them so SOE specialists designed and manufactured a range of radios that could be disguised by fitting them into suit cases; hence they became known as Suit



The Welbike

Case Sets. There was no mass production.

The SOE operated on all Continents and at some stage in most countries. They were specially active in Abyssinia, Malaya, Burma, Siam and throughout mainland Europe. They were active in Germany and Japan but had little success because of their inability to encourage sufficient resistance fighters. The SOE's main purpose was to defeat Naziism at all costs and in so doing it often co-operated with communist organisations, such as in Burma, Malaya or Yugoslavia, because this was the most fruitful means of achieving its aims. Once America had joined the war there was close liaison with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the American counterpart, on the co-ordination of policy and operations. No one has ever been found to have infiltrated into any SOE Headquarters although inevitably many mistakes were made in the field. However, there were close encounters such as **Kim Philby** who was an instructor in one of the schools in 1941 – but he moved on. Likewise with **Guy Burgess** who was originally in D Section but was sacked by **Gubbins** on security grounds – he later joined the Foreign Office! The exploits of both of these became well known. On the other hand there were many members of SOE who would later achieve fame such as **Sir Fitzroy Maclean** and **Brig Orde Wingate**. Many SOE members became politicians.

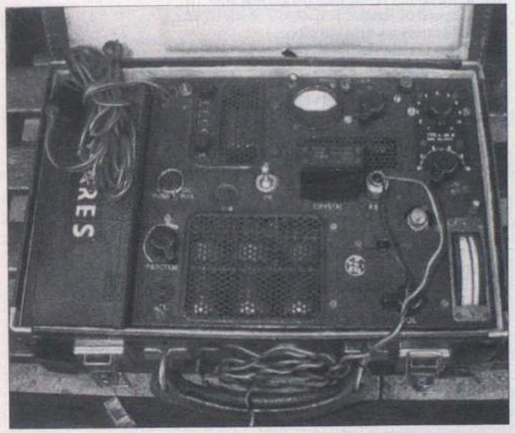
In its early days the communications for the SOE were provided by the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) which later became MI6. However, it was not long before the SOE realised they were getting too low a priority for their requirement. The SOE Signals Directorate was initially headed by **Col G. D. Ozanne** and later by **Col F. W. Nicholls** of the Royal Corps of Signals. The latter was a veteran of the Great War who had been appointed MBE as far back as 1921 to do with his action with the Y Service; so he knew the needs of clandestine fighters. The Head of Signals concentrated on the provision of main-line communications. His Deputy, **Col George Pollock**, controlled the wireless stations, training schools and agents' communications in general. The Signals Directorate was set up in Norgeby House but on 1 January 1944 it moved to occupy the complete block of flats in Montagu Mansions just off Baker Street.

In May 1942 the SOE commenced to set up its own comprehensive communications network. Home radio stations were set up at Grendon

Underwood, and later at Pondon, on the Oxfordshire /Buckinghamshire border where they had a transmit capability up to 25kwatts. From there, world-wide communications were established to sub-stations which included New York, Cairo, Algiers, Bari, Meerut, Kandy, Brisbane, Kumming, Bicester and Dunbar. A comprehensive communications network was essential as agents in the field were not permitted to communicate with each other for security reasons. Females were employed on a wide range of SOE tasks including cipher operators, radio operators, telephonists and linguists. Specialist Operators, who were employed on high speed morse circuits, were trained at the Special Operators Training Battalion, Trowbridge, Wiltshire. Most of the women were enlisted as members of the Womens Transport Service (First Aid Nursing Yeomanry) or FANY.

Commencing in 1942 SOE specialists designed and manufactured a range of effective radios for agents in the field. Many of these were based on experience gained from Polish technicians who prior to the war were expert in this field. Even so early sets were heavy and too unreliable. For instance the A Mark II radio was in action by October 1942. It comprised three metal boxes each 264 x 96 x 67 mm. The boxes fitted neatly into a suit case with a total weight of about 10kgs. This gave an output of about 5 watts over the range 3-9 MHz but was not easy for a female agent to carry at speed over the long distances that were covered in the field. A subsequent design, the A Mark III, weighed only 4kgs including all accessories and in its suitcase was 216 x 191 x 82 mm. With its 5 watts output and 3.5 to 16 MHz frequency band it had a range of about 500 miles and was the smallest SOE set.

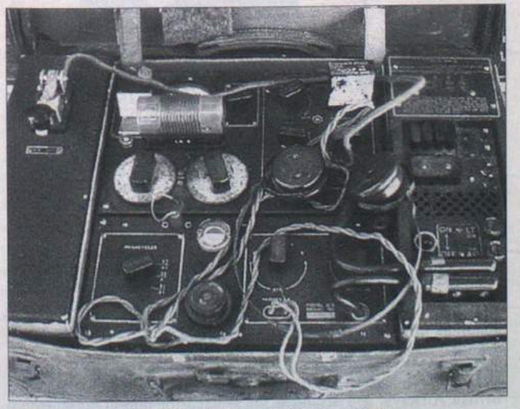
Many agents also needed to make contact with aircraft. For this purpose



The SOE designed the A Mark III suitcase set

SOE designed the S-Phone. This was a small four or five valve transceiver with a power output of 0.1 or 0.2 watts. It could be strapped to the agent's body and contact could be made with an aircraft at 10,000 feet at a range of 40 miles, or 500 feet at six miles. Its total weight including battery and ancillaries was 7kgs. This was ideal for clandestine purposes. A later, and more powerful suit-case set was the B-2. It was 30 watts output in the frequency range 3-16 MHz and weighed 14kg. It could work off mains or battery (at the throw of a switch). This was important as the Gestapo were apt at tracking radio stations by switching off power supply to blocks of buildings to see if radio transmissions ceased.

Marconi and Philco built many of these sets at their factory in



The SOE designed B-2 suitcase set

Stonebridge Park. About 7,000 were built at a rate of 400 per month in 1944. It was essential that the SOE could pass radio traffic in secrecy and for this purpose there was a special section dealing with codes headed by **Leo Marks** the son of a famous Charing Cross Road book seller. Codes were taught to agents at Beaulieu Manor (now the site of the Montagu Motor Museum). Many codes were used at various times and many mistakes were made. Initially, for example, the Playfair Code was used, which had been invented by **Sir Charles Wheatsone** of telegraph invention fame, and had been used in the First World War. This involved writing a known poem in the form of a 5 x 5 matrix (I and J were always the same), omitting letters already used and filling the remainder in alphabetically. Thus the line, 'Who killed Cock Robin' becomes:

W H O K I J
L E D C R
B N A F G
M P Q S T
U V X Y Z

The message to be sent is then divided into bigrams; say MA IN RO AD. Each of the bigrams is now encoded by taking opposite corners of the rectangle it forms in the matrix; thus MA becomes QB. If both letters of the bigram are in the same line, the next letter to the right of each is used. If both are in the same column the next letter below is used. OA becomes DQ. This simple message becomes QB HG DJ QA. To further confuse the enemy this could be encoded again (called double encryption). It was found that this code gave only very limited, short term, security and was not used after 1942. Variations of this system were tried but by far the most common code to be used was the One Time Pad (OTP) which was simple to operate and effective. This is a book filled with blocks of randomly generated numbers or letters from which the message can be encoded. Identical books are held by the agent and the home station and each page of the book is used only once and then destroyed. This system is totally secure.

The SOE were very innovative in assisting their agents. For example, it was essential that agents' transmission from occupied countries were as short as possible so that they could not be found by German Direction Finding (DF) equipment. To assist in this SOE produced a 'silk handkerchief' about 50 x 50cms which was printed with about 500 commonly used phrases eg. 'There will be an airdrop at…..' Each phrase had a four letter code that was then encoded.

No single organisation or action can be seen as paramount in determining the successful outcome of the war; it was as a result of a wide range of activities There is no doubt however that the efforts of the SOE were a significant element of this success. These actions remained completely highly classified until the mid-1970s since when information has become increasingly available. Many of the brave clandestine actions of men and women of many nationalities have become well known, far more have not. What happened to the secret services after the war was secret at the time. **Lord Selborne** pointed out to **Clement Attlee**, the new Prime Minister, that the SOE had built up a world-wide communications network that in the post-war world order would be an excellent intelligence asset. **Attlee** replied that he had no intention of presiding over such a British Cominterm and the SOE formally closed down on 15 January 1946. No doubt a few of the hands went to MI6.

Bibliography:

SOE by M. R. D. Foot.
Secret Warfare by Pierre Lorain.
SOE by J. G. Beevor (Methuen 1981).
Ultra Goes to War by Ronald Lewin.
Between Silk and Cyanide (Harper Collins) by Leo Marks

The Royal Signals Museum has a comprehensive display of equipment that was designed by SOE and used by agents in the field. There is also considerable archive and library material available for research purposes including the personal accounts of Royal Signals personnel who were directly involved. We would be delighted to hear from anyone who has personal experiences in this field or who has any documents or artefacts which they believe would enhance our collection.

Battlefield Tours

for

Regimental Associations, TA's & Serving Units

Regimental Battle Honour Tours 4 days **£149**
Ypres, Somme, Arras, Cambrai 3 days **£99**
Normandy & Arnhem 4 days **£149**
Tailor-made & Self Drive Itineraries

Galina International Battlefield Tours
40 Bridge Street Row Chester CH1 1NN
Tel: 01244 340777

Official Tour Operators to the Normandy Veterans Association

ESSEX MAN JOINS THE SAFETY ELITE

Steven White, a Warrant Officer with Sp Sqn JSSU (AN), has received the prestigious British Safety Council Diploma in Safety Management at an awards ceremony at Gibson Hall, London. **Mr White** was among 12 safety professionals who were presented with their awards. They passed a 450 question exam in order to gain their Diploma.

In a message to delegates **Lord Whitty**, Minister with responsibility for health and safety at work said, 'I welcome the commitment that you have shown to improving health and safety management. Integrating these into the overall management agenda is undoubtedly the key to improving health and safety standards in the workplace. It also makes excellent business sense. I hope that others will follow your good example.' Many company directors and managers are unaware of how big the savings from good safety management can be. The Baker Group in Northamptonshire has seen its insurance premiums drop from £400,000 to £150,000 in just three years and Norwich City Council's City Works department is saving £60,000 a year because of their good safety records.

Sir Neville Purvis, Director General of the British Safety Council says, 'Good safety is good business and can save firms hundreds of thousands of pounds. In achieving the Diploma in Safety Management, **Mr White** has, shown a commitment to improving health and safety in the workplace. Proper training for people at all levels of a company is vital, as accidents and illnesses at work cost this country up to £18 billion every year.'

Diploma delegates study safety law, communications, advanced safety management, occupational health and hygiene and total loss control (risk management).

Sir Nevill Purvis (R), presents a diploma in Safety Management to Steven White

THE BLANDFORD TOWER RUN 7 OCTOBER 2000

On Sunday the 18 May 1986 the first Blandford Tower Run was held to mark the 20th anniversary of the construction of the School of Signals at Blandford Camp, including its now famous landmark the UHF radio tower. The original course started some 13 miles from Blandford Camp, and followed a cross country course back to the camp finishing below the tower. That year the race was won by a **Mr B. D. Heywood** in a time of 1hr 26mins, with **LCpl Nick Clay** finishing second overall and first Royal Signals runner. Over the years and as a result of the new building development within the camp the course has been changed a number of times. The present course now in its third year, starts and finishes at the Athletics Stadium in camp, and is run over the undulating countryside surrounding Blandford. The event is an accurately measured 13.1 miles (Half Marathon), and incorporates the Royal Signals team and individual Corps Half Marathon Championships.

This year's run, is to be held on Saturday the 7 October 2000. In addition to the main event there will be a Children's 1 mile Fun Run. An extensive number of prizes will be awarded in the following categories:

First Male and Female Team (3 to count) in the open event
First overall 3 Male and Female individuals in the open event.
First M40, M45, M50, F35, F40 and F45 in the open event.
First Male and Female Junior (under 20 on the day of the race) in the open event.
First Royal Signals Male (4 to count) and Female (3 to count)
Teams First overall 3 Royal Signals Male and Female individuals.
First Male and Female Royal Signals Juniors (under 20 on day of the race)
First overall 3 Male and Female Royal Signals individuals.

In addition there will be over £100 in spot prizes, and a free T Shirt to all runners that finish the race. The course records for Male and Female currently stand at 1:14:07 set by **WO2 Dave Rollins** in 1998 and 1:27:37 set by **Debbie Austin** also in 1998. There is a cash prize of £50 (Male) and £30 (Female) to anyone who can set a new course record.

Not only does this event provide an exciting and challenging run for athletes of all standards, it also raises money for civilian and military charities and is therefore aimed at everyone. This is an excellent opportunity to meet old friends within the Corps. Gladiators and fun runners alike can set their own challenges and goals. So put it in your diary now and I hope that we will see you on the day, here in Blandford achieving those aims. For further details or entry forms for the event please contact: **WO1 (YofS) Stewart Little**, BDMT, Blandford Camp, Dorset, DT11 8RH. Blandford Military Extension 5470.

MORSE CODE

At the click of a mouse
the world comes down your phone line.
At the speed of light
whole libraries traverse the globe.
But it was not always like that.

The earphones crackled,
electrical static, discordant voices,
distant foreign music.
Fading, distorting, swamping to earth,
like a wounded thing unable to prise itself onwards.
Listen intently with narrowing eyes,
and blacked out the mind
to catch the signal.

In the isolation of the wireless room,
crouched over message pad with toying pencil
the operator probes the frequencies
with illuminated dials and bakelite knobs.
He is confined in an audio world,
peopled by faceless signallers
speaking the language of Morse.

Searching for a sequence
of dahs and dits submerged
in an electrical cacophony.
Somewhere a pattern,
somewhere a skilled wrist
tapping out a message
about things of great moment
and urgency.
A pulsing insistence on a thin wave length
intercepted by a Morse tuned ear
from the morass of extraneous sound
on its way to deep space
and whoever else out there may be listening.

Peter Tomlinson (ex 15 Signals Regiment - Cyprus 1959-60)
Jubilee Cottage, Knowbury,
Nr. Ludlow, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 3LE

WORLD SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANIMALS

A British soldier has been reunited with 'Osker', a puppy that he rescued in war-torn Kosovo. **LCpl Steven Smith**, 23, from the Corps was reunited with 'Osker', a yellow labrador-cross type of puppy that he rescued whilst serving in Kosovo. Osker has spent the last six months in quarantine at Knightwood Quarantine Kennels in Wiltshire, since being rescued and brought to the UK from Kosovo by the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA).

LCpl Smith took pity on the young stray when he found him wandering half starved in the ruined streets of Pristina. Nicknamed Osker, the pup soon became the unofficial mascot of the British soldiers based near Pristina airport. On his return to the UK last September, **LCpl Smith** contacted WSPA to see if the charity could help bring his new friend home as well. WSPA had been working in Kosovo helping to treat hundreds of dogs that had been injured and abandoned during the conflict.

WSPA Field Officer, **Brian Faulkner,** overcame bureaucratic obstacles to bring Osker back from Pristina, with the help of a free flight from British Airways, and arranged for a place for him at Knightwood Quarantine Kennels, with the help of readers of Dogs Today Magazine who donated enough money to pay the fees. **LCpl Smith** said, I am so grateful to all the efforts made by WSPA to bring Osker back. I just didn't think it could ever happen; I have been so looking forward to this moment! I just can't wait until I can put him on his lead and take him up to the fields and let him run free."

WSPA has been active helping animals in Kosovo since last year when it delivered £40,000 of emergency veterinary supplies to help treat animals suffering from bullet wounds and landmine explosions. Last August WSPA set up Kosovo's first ever dog shelter in Priziren. The shelter has since successfully rehomed more than 250 dogs.

THE DINING OUT OF BRIGADIER A. P. VEREY THE ARMY & NAVY CLUB FRIDAY 14 APRIL 2000

Six aspects of the life of **Tony Verey** may find brief expression in verse; note that the rhyming of beer with Brigadier, or Verey with beery has been eschewed as being too facile.

Education:
Than Ascot, there's little that's drearieur
And the cuisine at Eton's inferieur –
It's enough to impel
One toward Neuchatel
And l'Ecole de Commerce Superieur.

Inspiration:
What is it, we note about Verey?
(Pregnant pause, after posing that query).
It seems that he's blessed
With unnatural zest –
Just to look at him, makes me feel weary.

Battle of the Bulge:
To keep fighting fit is the goal
And to suffer, is good for the soul;
Take the masochist's way
Run for miles every day,
For one's tum must be kept in control.

Promotion:
Through the ranks he rose, older and bolder,
To be the Top Territorial Soldier –
He earned them, not half,
Those red tabs, saying 'Staff'
With the crown and three pips on his shoulder.

Recreation:
Down at Bisley, T. Verey's a nut,
But, ere shooting, there's grass to be cut;
No wonder he's tired
When the first shot is fired –
He's not slept, for maintaining the Hut.

Employment:
To work for the brewer, Brakespear,
Was a natural choice of career;
His job spec. is great –
Though it's called real Estate
He is really just there for the beer.

SONIC COMMUNICATIONS

SKILLED ELECTRONICS TECHNICIANS LEAVING THE FORCES – PLEASE COME AND TALK TO US!

We have immediate vacancies for hands-on bench technicians familiar with handportable and mobile radio accessories, video, microwave, telemetry, black boxes, prototype projects, and vehicle fits that can provide a high level of job satisfaction.

Please send brief letter with C.V. to:-

David J. Bryan – Managing Director
SONIC COMMUNICATIONS (INT) LTD
Birmingham International Park
Starley Way
Bickenhill
Birmingham
B37 7HB
ENGLAND

GENESIS CONSULTANCY
Providing Recruitment Solutions

TECHNICIANS, OPERATORS AND TELEMECHS REQUIRED

Genesis Consultancy specialise in placing ex-Corps members of all ranks and trades with the telecomms industry nationwide.

A wide variety of opportunities currently exist for Class 2 and Class 1 Techs, Operators and Telemechs as well as Foreman of Signals and Yeoman of Signals of all ranks who have decided to leave the Corps.

In addition to immediate requirements, we have medium and long-term requirements from our clients and can assist in all matters concerning these opportunities throughout the period running up to the date of discharge.

If you have decided to leave the Corps call us today or forward a detailed C.V.

Genesis Consultancy Ltd.
12-50 Kingsgate Road, Kingston, Surrey KT2 5AA
Tel: 020 8547 4141 Fax: 020 8547 4181
e-mail: admin@genesisconsultancy.co.uk
www.genesisconsultancy.co.uk

Leaving the Forces Shortly?

real com

Your Future In Communications

We specialise in placing ex-service personnel within the Telecommunication and Broadcast industry. We are interested in all trades with experience of Satellite and Trunk Systems maintenance & operations.

The company is directed by ex-Royal Signals staff currently working within the industry. We provide permanent positions with telecommunications companies in the UK or abroad.

Interested?

Please contact Ed Massey or Brian O'Connor.

Tel: 01962 841 838

Fax: 01962 841 839

PO Box 288

Winchester

SO22 4WW

Email: enquiries@realcom-recruitment.co.uk

WANTED

JOHN STEVENS
is researching the history of pre-Larkspur radio equipment and is seeking a copy of:

The History of British Army Signals in the Second World War

by
Major General R. F. H. Nalder

Published by the Royal Signals Institution in 1953
Printed by Gale & Polden

If you can help, please contact him at
15 Bray Road, Stoke D'Abernon, Cobham, SURREY, KT11 3HZ

AFCEA UK SOUTHERN SYMPOSIUM

'WARFARE IN THE INFORMATION JUNGLE'

HMS *Collingwood* 15 November 2000, Portsmouth
Open to AFCEA members at £30
and non-members at £60.

Dinner on 14th November will be an extra cost.

Top level Military, Government and International speakers.

Enquiries to: **D. Howshall**
BAE Defence Systems.
Tel: 01202-404339
Fax: 01202 404999
E-mail: derec.howshall@baesystems.com

ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM
Trading Company

A Gift for any occasion

Blandford Camp, Blandford,
DORSET DT11 8RH
Tel; 01258 482 248 Fax; 01258 482 084

WANTED!

The Royal School of Signals is mounting a pictorial history of

'Royal Signals Young Officer Training'

CAN YOU HELP?

Did you attend one of the following courses at the School of Signals (now the RSS) and do you have a decent photograph of your course with names? (If you can remember it!)

Communications Qualifying Course Numbers:
64 (circa 1967), 65,72 and 80
Communications Qualifying Course Numbers:
7 (circa 1976), 11 and 14
Royal Signals Troop Commanders Course Numbers:
11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,22,23,24,25,26,27,28 & 33

If you can help, the RSS would be very grateful if you could send an original/copy for addition to the display.

Please send photographs to:
YO Course Photos, Command Training Wing,
RSS, Blandford Camp, DT11 8AG.

(Originals can be returned to you, once a colour copy has been made. Should you wish this to happen, please state it in a covering letter)

RETIRED OFFICER POST

A vacancy exists now in Glasgow for an RO2 to run C Wing within the R SIGNALS/INT CORPS MCM Div

The post holder will be responsible to the SO1 (Soldiers) for the detailed manning of all:
Radio Systems Operators
Technical Supply Specialists
Special Operators
Linguist Operators
Regimental Duty Posts

Duties will include: career management; postings; promotions and transfers; and manpower planning. Applicants must have a deep understanding of the career and management implications implicit in their actions.

Interested?
Contact **Lt Col Hudson** on Glasgow Mil Ext: 3246

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS
JUNE 2000

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
A/Lt Col S. P. Wallis	SANGCOM
Maj J. Aspinall MBE	DISC Support Unit
Maj J. M. Gale	Headquarters DCSA
Maj G. Pickersgill	Headquarters ARRC
Maj R. J. Sanders	Recruiting Plans and Resources
Maj I. W. R. Seraph	238 Signal Squadron
Maj P. Stephenson	242 Signal Squadron
Maj N. S. Stevens	Headquarters DCSA
Maj C. R. Sutherland	264 (SAS) Signal Squadron
Capt J. R. Anderson	RHQ Royal Signals
Capt P. A. Anderson	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Capt G. L. Benson	JCU Northern Ireland
Capt S. Brant	30 Signal Regiment
Capt B. H. Bryan	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt S. L. Davies	ACOS J2 PJHQ (UK)
Capt P. H. Grainger	RHQ AFNORTH CIS Sp Gp
Capt P. A. Horton BEM	16 Signal Regiment
Capt T. J. Keats	71 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Capt R. A. Lane	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Capt A. Middleton	JSSU Oakley
Capt N. P. M. Pritchett	7 Sig Regt (Corps Main HQ)
Capt C. Thomson-Smith	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (207)
Capt J. Williams	38 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Lt J. S. Jones	Royal School of Signals

OFFICERS
JULY 2000

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col K. K. W. Parsons	SHAPE
Lt Col T. J. P. Watts	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Maj P. R. Barron	HQ 1 Signal Brigade
Maj P. Deans	30 Signal Regiment
Maj Macrostie MBE	DPA
Maj N. J. Makepeace	1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Maj G. Pickersgill	HQ ARRC
Maj A, B, Stocker	2 Signal Regiment
A/Maj J. A. Standen	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Capt J. R. Collyer	HQ MND (SW) & Sig Regt
Capt J. Dart	HQ LAND
Capt M. R. Edwards	JCU (FI)
Capt G. J. Oliver	16 Signal Regiment
Capt P. Griffiths	225 Signal Squadron
Capt A. K. Herbert	16 Signal Regiment
Capt J. A. Honeyman	HQ DSSS
Capt A. S. F. Hutton	JSSU Digby
Capt B. G. W. Johnson	21 Signal Regiment (Air Support)
Capt L. Keily	JCUFI
Capt P. H. Lowe	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt I. McNelly	243 Signal Squadron
Capt T. M. P. Mountford	399 SU (Army Element)
Capt A. J. Parfitt	3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (203)
Capt R. C. Quinsey	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Capt K. E. Roach	COMMCENS, 251 Sig Sqn
Capt A. Scott	ATR Bassingbourn
Capt B. J. Spiers	JSSU Digby
Capt W. D. J. Wilson	280 (UK) Signal Squadron
Lt E. J. Bruce	ATR Bassingbourn
Lt M. J. Crinnion	Army Apprentices College
Lt T. E. Grey	15 Signal Regiment
Lt F. A. W. Stewart	15 Signal Regiment
Lt C. J. Woodbridge	JSSU (AN)

The above photograph taken at the Quartermasters' Convention Dinner in April 2000, shows **Lt Col (Retd) Peter McNaughton OBE** and **Maj Maurice Stanley** the TA Quartermaster of 40 (Ulster) Signal Regiment (V). **Peter McNaughton** was posted to Clonaver Park on returning from the Middle East in January 1951 and during his tour, of nearly four years, with the Squadron it's title changed from 35 (U) AA (M) Signal Squadron TA to 51 (U) AA (M) Signal Squadron TA then to 11 Signal Liaison Squadron TA..... all this in the days before 40 Signal Regiment was born. The last time that these two QMs met was in 1955 when **Peter McNaughton** was the Staff Sergeant PSI of 35 (U) AA (M) Signal Squadron and **Maurice Stanley** was the seven year old son of **Harry Stanley** the Squadron's MT Sergeant TA. The same **Harry Stanley** is now 87 years old and still attending the Old Comrades Weekend in Blandford and is an ardent member of the Belfast Branch of the Association.

On Sunday 25 June Fulwood Barracks held an 'Open Day', for the public, and over a thousand visitors flocked to see the Army on show, at the Preston based Army Headquarters.

Lancashire Army Cadet Force went along with their recruiting caravan and the above photograph shows a group of Royal Signals badged cadets, from the Blackburn Detachment, using radio equipment that had been put on show by 93 Signal Squadron Blackburn (Volunteers).

The Cadets are (L-R): **Cdt Chris Randall, Cdt Owen McBamee** and **Cdt Oliver Oldham**.

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

Reference my Notes on Articles for *The WIRE* published in the April 2000 Edition, we received 26% of the entries for the June issue LATE. This was an improvement on the 30% to 50% LATE that we have experienced over the last nine issues. Despite the improvement we lost 39 Bde Sqn's entry through a glitch in our system although we had promised to include the article. It appears, slightly dated, in this issue with our apologies.

The new DTP equipment is now with us and we must capitalise on it to achieve a cost saving. Late entries remain anathema to us! Despite that comment we do accept that there are occasions when accepting a late submission is beneficial to our readers – eg: Sierra Leone and similar operations- or appropriate-eg: when a significant function/activity worthy of inclusion is close to our cut-off date. In the former case we will cope, and in the latter-give us a ring and indicate what we should expect (eg: two pages of text with 12 point title and 8 point text and four photos). This will enable us to plan around the late entry. Those that do not fit the above parameters in our view will be returned to the sender to be recast for the following issue if appropriate.

Photos., we still prefer originals. Any Digitals must be at a minimum of 400dpi. They are unlikely to be any good if they fit on a floppy. We are considering increasing the font size by one point- it is not only the old and bold, including myself, that find it difficult to read, and hopefully improve the presentation of the pictures. Additionally we are examining the need to increase the cost of *The WIRE* to reflect increasing costs particularly in postage. Any recommendations will be subject to the agreement of the Corps Committee.

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

SUPREME HEADQUARTERS ALLIED POWERS EUROPE

March saw a first for the Gurkha Signals with two pipers, **Sgt Mangalsing Tamang** and **Cpl Dhabahadur Sahi**, visiting to play at the Saint David's Day Guest Night – a local opportunity for the British staff to host international guests. Needless to say, it took **Col Terry Canham** (well known for his desire to set up Gurkha Restaurants wherever he goes) about a nano-second to volunteer to host the pair!

After a formal photo session with **Maj Gen Ashley Truluck** (another 'bhatoholic'), **Sgt Mangal** and **Cpl Dhal** were given a guided tour of Mons and the battlefield of Ypres. They were especially impressed by the Menin Gate, which, amongst thousands of others, lists the names of those Gurkha soldiers whose bodies were never recovered from the battlefields of the First World War.

Needless to say **Sgt Mangal** and **Cpl Dhal** played superbly at the dinner and did both the Corps and the Queen's Gurkha Signals proud.

Maj Gen Ashley Truluck and Lt Col Terry Canham greet Sgt Mangal and Cpl Dhal at the SHAPE main entrance

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS ROYAL SIGNALS

SOLDIER AND OFFICER RECRUITING AND LIAISON STAFF BIRTWISTLE PENNANT OF MERIT FOR RECRUITING

The Birtwistle Pennant for Recruiting was presented to the Corps by **Maj Gen A. C. Birtwistle CB, CBE, DL,** on relinquishing his appointment as Signal Officer in Chief (Army) in 1983. The pennant is awarded annually to the Regular unit of the Corps that is deemed to have made the most outstanding contribution to Royal Signals recruiting. Commendations are also awarded to those units whose contribution is regarded worthy of recognition. Units are required to submit a report annually to the Regimental Colonel on their recruiting activities over the past year. The report, which is to cover the period up to 31 March each year, must be at RHQ R SIGNALS by no later than 15 April for adjudication. The SOinC(A) presents the Pennant and Commendations to the Commanding Officers of the winning units at his annual conference. The annual reports from units are the primary means of monitoring the Corps recruiting effort and, if done diligently, negate the need for other returns. It is for this reason that TA units are also required to provide reports. The unit submission proforma is at Appendix 21 to Annex A to SOinC(A) PD 203. At his conference on 18 May 2000, the SOinC(A) presented the Birtwistle Pennant for Recruiting to **Lt Col Cameron-Mowat**, the CO of 2 Sig Regt, for his Regiment's outstanding all round contribution to Corps recruiting for year 1999/00. The SOinC(A) also presented Commendations to the COs of 16 Sig Regt and 30 Sig Regt.

ROLE OF HONOUR 1993-99

1993/94 Winner - 216 (Para) Sig Sqn
1994/95 Winner - 2 Sig Regt
Commendations: AAC Harrogate and 1(UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
1995/96 Winner - 249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L))
Commendations: AAC Harrogate and 7 Sig Regt
1996/97 Winner - 24 (Airmobile) Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
Commendations: 2 Sig Regt, 11 Sig Regt and 259 Sig Sqn
1997/98 Winner - 1 (Mech) Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (215)
Commendations: 11 Sig Regt, 16 Sig Regt, 39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
1998/99 Winner - 5 (AB) Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (216 Para)
Commendations: 2 Sig Regt, 11 Sig Regt and 21 Sig Regt (AS)
1999/00 Winner - 2 Sig Regt
Commendations: 16 Sig Regt and 30 Sig Regt

Any queries should be directed to **Maj (Retd) Keith Russell** at SORLS, Blandford Camp, Dorset, DT11 8RH
Tel: Blandford Military: 94371 2130, Civilian: 01258 482130.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS and IT VACANCIES

InfoStaff Ltd are a leading player in the contract staffing of Telecommunications and Information Technology positions UK and Overseas. From our offices in Warrington, Dublin and Aberdeen we have vacancies for short and long term contract assignments and permanent vacancies.

Our specialist technology areas are

- Networking
- Telecommunications
- Radio Systems
- Information Technology
- Satellite Systems
- Software Engineering

Your skills will be in system design, commissioning, installation, and support. Candidates should have left or considering leaving the Corps in the next few months.

Please reply with CV to Fax 01224 428500,
E-mail: cvs@infostaff.co.uk.
Infostaff Ltd, Offshore House, Wellheads Way, Dyce, Aberdeen AB21 7GD.
Tel: 01224 428400.

InfoStaff LIMITED

HEADQUARTERS 1st SIGNAL BRIGADE

FAREWELL TO LT COL 'GUS' GURR

Lt Col (Retd) R H Gurr finally left the Corps on 2 June 2000. 'Lt Col Gus' has been a stalwart of the Corps reaching the rank of Lieutenant Colonel as a Traffic Officer and then retiring to work as the SO2 Org/Estb of initially Communication Branch BAOR prior to moving to his current job within 1st Signal Brigade. He intends to retire and live in the Vienne region of France.

It is always a chilling moment when the Brigadier passes you and says the immortal Words, *'Ben can you drop into the office When you have a moment?'* The task was set and the words spoken, *'Gus is leaving and after forty years service. I want a farewell party for him of the highest standards.'* Next came the difficult bit as 'Uncle Gus' or 'Grumpy' as he is fondly known, decided that he would be awkward. The first problem was that he wanted to fade away quietly. This was resolved by reminding him of duty and standards. With his imminent move to his new life in France, the collection of his new cars, and the furniture move, a date was difficult to set. Again a problem to solve, but with one phone call to his wife **Pat** and like all good men he did as he was told. Those that know 'Gus' will also know that he has that Blairite feel for total control. When asking where is the venue and is there a programme, he was told, 'Just put on a suit and transport will collect you at eight.' This sent him on an intelligence-gathering mission equal to the hunt for the ENIGMA crypto machine in the Second World War.

At this point the plot thickened. **Maj Garth Pickersgill** that well known English Rugby supporter felt that 'Uncle Gus' was a traitor for moving to France. It was then the French theme evolved, so that 'Gus' and **Pat** could be the star guests at their own Revolution Party. The Commander, **Brig McDowall** announced that he wanted to be Napoleon. The plot thickened when he declared that we had to find a guillotine to sort out the traitor. The Staff at this time were becoming worried about the change in tradition and having to dress up, even in these more modern liberal times. This was soon resolved when **Cpl Tracy Mills** announced that she might be going as a Can-Can dancer? The night arrived and give credit where credit is due the following is a list of the alter egos: **Brig** Napoleon **McDowell, Maj** Buy a postcard **Davis, Maj** Papillion **Pickersgill, Ben** the Chef **Britton, Maj** Parapluie **O Hara, Capt** Sun King **Townsend, Stuart** The Pimp **Boyne**. With true style young **Tracy** lied and along with the other girls arrived as the three Musketeers. **Linda** the Commander's PA looked like Piaf. **Cpl Rob Lavers** looked dashing in his Hussar uniform. Finally the Staff Assistant, **WO1 Martin Healy** wore a Prussian uniform (novel for him) just to be different and the Chief Clerk's, **Sgt Steve Bennett,** appearance as René complete with natural padding, was a good likeness.

Brig McDowell presenting Lt Col 'Gus' Gurr with a ship's decanter and glasses

Lt Col 'Gus' Gurr walking to the guillotine

The photographs show the assembled revolutionary mob. The farewell presentation by **Brig McDowall** of a ship's decanter engraved with Jimmy and the coup de grace as the blade falls. As a large number of the Corps past and present are friends of 'Gus' and **Pat**, may we wish them a fond farewell from all the Corps for their new life in France.

THE ALTERNATIVE DINNER NIGHT

Wine tasting with cheese and biscuits will never be viewed with quite the same excitement, after our evening with excellent food and a multitude of wines. DCOS, **Maj Jonathan** 'Lush' **Turner** organised the evening with the view that most of us drink wine whilst enjoying a good meal, hence the theme developed. The evening started with an apéritif of the delicate Piper Heidsieck Rosé Champagne and a cheap but very cheerful Charles Kohler Blanc de Noir. The smoked salmon complimented delightfully the 1998 Chablis Rodet and 1999 Fairview Chardonnay. The banter at this point was now in full flow and it was obvious that our taste buds showed an inclination to a particular type of grape or not, as may be the case. I could not tell you the type of grape but who cares the Chablis was great. For the buffs in our midst, Leo Van Voosen from a local Dutch Wine Merchant educated us on the background of each wine. The dinner continued sampling the red wine with our fillet steak but by this stage **Maj Mike** 'Chin Chin' **Dooley** was starting to get his green and red crosses mixed up, making it difficult to have a sensible discussion as to which was considered to be the best of them By this stage he had already broken the first rule, by giving his opinion. Oak caskets really do make a difference! **COS, Maj** 'Need a beer' **Davis** as far as I know did not do any minesweeping. A very fine Muscat de St Jean- de- Minervois accompanied the dessert, followed by a couple of Graham's ports. The evening was equally enjoyed by those of the Ops Wine Tasting Society and those of the 'give us a crate club'. Many thanks to DCOS for organising an evening that Grommit would have been proud off.

THE 1 SIGNAL BRIGADE OPEN GOLF

Having been away for most of May, I arrived back at work, to find myself amid a foray of discussions as to which team was going to win the forthcoming golf competition. civilian and military alike were caught up in the hullaboo of strategy, types of balls, sizes of clubs etc. The teams were chosen as fairly as possible with an experienced golfer, coupled with a beginner. Although, I had never fathomed the fascination for the sport, upon discovering that I was teamed with the Commander, I thought this might just be a good time to acquaint myself with the rules. The evening prior to the competition saw a row of novice golfers on the HLS at JHQ practising, all keen to win the next day. Balls were flying in every direction and I had to admit, it was fun. We boarded the minibuses, golf bags in arms, ready for action. We were first to the tee, at this point I wished I had had a quick practise on the driving range, too late now.

I discover that the Comd, **Brig McDowall** is a bit of a bandit and already we have achieved two under par on the first hole. The pundits tell me this is known as an eagle. As we moved to the next hole, **Capt Boggy Boyne** trying to impress **Cpl Mills** with his driving power narrowly missed the Commander. Could have been embarrassing! **Cpl Mills** seemed to be having a lot of problems in the long grass, managing to bounce the ball off a bag, tree, then **Capt Boyne** and still it remained in the rough. As my confidence grew, unfortunately my putting finesse deteriorated. Clearly, it was dependant on many factors such as the surface of the green, the type of putter, the control of the put, I just hoped that I could hold the game together. Why are Sandwiches used for getting out of bunkers?

Elsewhere, the talent was not a great deal better. **Maj** 'Mad Dog' **Dooley** achieved a Birdie but he was at hole 17, when the ball landed in hole 16! COS, **Maj Elton Davis** Mastered the art of achieving communications on the golf course, by putting one handed, with the other hand on the mobile telephone. We continued to hole 11 where we were to compete for the longest and shortest of drives, the pressure got to us and nothing was won. As the skies grew darker, the day came to a close for us, as we headed off to hole 19. Prizes and presentations followed: We said farewell to **WO2 FofS** 'Rupert the Bear' **Lewendon** who goes on promotion to 16 Sig Regt. **WO1 Martin** 'Ginja Ninja' **Healy** showed his pin point accuracy by winning nearest to the pin. The Shortest and Longest drives were won by **Sgt** 'Chiefy' **Bennett** and **FofS** 'Tez' **Brown** respectively. To my complete astonishment the Commander and myself (**Capt Gillian Smart**) won the overall competition and were presented with a splendid trophy, hand crafted by **Maj** 'Chippy' **Britton.**

GOOD NEWS TRAVELS FAST!
***Publish it in The Wire** – The Editor is always pleased to receive interesting articles*

HEADQUARTERS
2 (NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS) SIGNAL BRIGADE

FUTURE BRIGADE CONCEPT

In concert with contributing to the Corps After Next (CAN) study, the Brigade is conducting its own internal study into how it might evolve further over the next 10-15 years. 'Future Brigade' will give consideration to the ways in which the Brigade might embrace technological advances and deal with the demands, which could be placed upon it around the spectrum of operations. This initiative has spawned many key actions, which will determine tangible changes in structures, equipment and how these are used. They will draw particularly on the Brigade's HF and IT expertise and capability. The synergy between the ACISG and TA units will inevitably be strengthened as a result of 'Future Brigade' and greater emphasis on specialist capability within the CVHQ R SIGNALS.

OPERATION PALLISER

On Thursday 11 May 2000, **WO2 (YofS) Jim James** was just settling down to a hard day at the office when the COS gave him the good news…a short notice task had just come up for a YofS to replace one Warrant Officer (RS) currently deployed on Op Palliser. MCM having checked their database for slightly plump Yeomen, who could do with losing a few pounds in the Sierra Leone jungles, **WO2 (YofS) Jim James** was declared the winner!

Normal work was dropped immediately and was followed by a mad rush to get the necessary injections and malaria tablets (Oh yes, **YofS James** got his!) In between all this, the Yeoman received a one hour tutorial on Frequency Software – RAPTOR. It would ordinarily have taken a bit longer, but hey, the Yeoman was about to go on Operations! Within 24 hours, **Jim James** was airborne and on his way to Senegal - courtesy of the RAF. He then spent a couple of days at JTFHQ Rear in Dakar, trying to come to terms with the 'purple-speak' now seemingly common currency amongst those fine chaps from Northwood. The HQ then moved lock, stock and two smoking barrels (another ND from the 501 Det perhaps?) to Lungi Airport, which had been secured by 1 Para a couple of days previously. The airport became a hive of activity receiving additional UN troops brought in to support the Sierra Leone Government. This was good news, because the quicker they came in, the earlier the British could return home.

After two weeks, **YofS James** managed to get a visit to the swimming pool at the British High Commission in Freetown. He was also present at the evening briefing, when the Force Commander, **Brig Richards**, thanked the outgoing CO 1 Para for his efforts and welcomed CO 42 CDO to his new role. This relief in place marked the beginning of the draw-down of the HQ at Lungi, which meant the Yeoman could finally return home to his loved ones; home, indeed, for tea and (hopefully) medals!

EXERCISE HORSESHOE FORGE 13-14 MAY 2000

Ex Horseshoe Forge was a MAPPEX held in preparation for the Brigade FTX due in September of this year. The Exercise was held at Corsham in the Services Cotswold Centre and involved all the Regimental Command Teams as well as the Brigade Staff. The whole Brigade is primed and ready to deploy on the Brigade FTX, Ex Horse Shoe 1 in the North of England and Scotland during September 2000.

The SO1 Comms (V), Lt Col Alan Whittle leads the Command Teams through the Recovery Phase of the Exercise

The Command Team of 39 Sig Regt (V) pose for the camera
Maj Butch Maycock demonstrates a trick shot close to his ECH

EXERCISE ROYAL HORSESHOE 25 MAY-6 JUNE 2000

Ex Royal Horseshoe was led by **Maj Paul Kelly** and formed part of the Brigade Millennium Project. It found four of the Brigade Staff in Canada on military training with the Canadian Forces. Prior to the exercise the team conducted a Staff Ride of the Gettysburg battlefield en-route to Canada. The Exercise was based in New Brunswick at the Combat Training Centre and kindly supported by the 2nd Bn Royal Canadian Regiment

The Exercise consisted of four days of navigation training in the Fundy Bay area during which **Maj Iain Brownlee** had to be surgically removed from his GPS. After many miles of trails and one very surprised racoon, the team returned to Gagetown with rather sensitive feet. The Signal Pl of 2 RCR then instructed the team on the Canadian equivalent to BOWMAN, the TICCCs system. This was followed by an introduction to the latest Canadian armoured vehicle, the Light Armoured Vehicle 3 which is currently being equipped with TICCCs. The Gagetown mosquitoes declined our invitation to a group photograph concentrating instead on biting **WO2 Alan Duncan**. Finally the team was given instruction on the C7 and C9 personal and Fire Team support weapons and let loose on the range. **SSgt** 'Dek' **Painter** displayed a certain satisfaction at firing a year's allocation for a TA Regiment in one afternoon. The Exercise ended with a 'Canadian Happy Hour' in the respective messes of 2 RCR. Ex Royal Horseshoe was a great success and our thanks once more to the Canadian Forces for their support.

Briefing on TICCCs

Change of address?

DON'T FORGET TO LET US KNOW.

The 2 Sig Bde team reach 1992 feet at Point Wolfe
(L-R): Maj Iain Brownlee, Maj Paul Kelly and SSgt Dek Painter

Firing the C9 'Mini-Mee'

BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS TEAMBUILDING IN THE FOREST OF DEAN

As a 'welcome' to the Brigade the new Comd **Brig N. C. Jackson MBE** led a Team Building exercise in the Forest of Dean. The day was perfect for a hard tab for all the military and civilian members of the HQ – but in brilliant sunshine! Good – no complaints so far. Transport took us down the motorway and across the old Severn Bridge (still sunshine, one complaint – 'It's a bit hot today!' there's no pleasing some).

The route had been recced by **WO2 (YofS) Jim James, WO2 (SQMS) Al Duncan** AGC and **SSgt** 'Dek' **Painter**. **Al** wore his slick 'desert boots' expecting a gentle walk, however, within five steps of getting out of the car we knew **Al** was going to be our entertainment for the day. It was decided to give the boys and girls an undulating and varied walk – bit of an understatement, what we meant was, nine and a half miles of walking through mud, streams, bogs, on disused rail tracks, over gates, through gardens and the obligatory up and down hills. Well we did say varied! We had warned everyone that the route was a little damp and a good pair of boots would be advisable it had not rained for two weeks and the route chosen was less damp. **WO2 (SQMS) Al Duncan** was determined to conquer the hazards, again with his 'Bambi on ice' slick deserts. He who put on chest high fishing boots will remain nameless suffice to say he had many requests to 'borrow' them for the night.

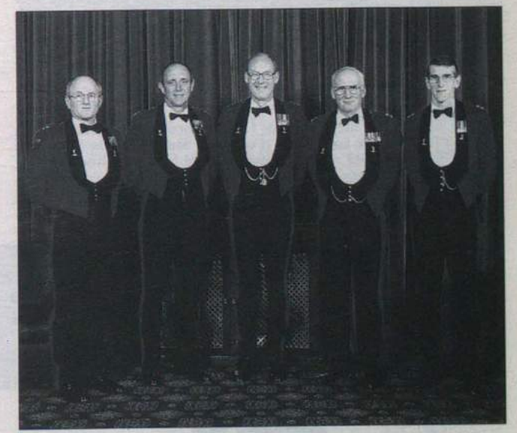
The sun still shone and complaint number two '…. not another hill!' Only seven miles to go and the sense of humour is kicking in. At exactly the half way point there was a place of liquid refreshment and delicious gastronomical delights on offer - especially for the registry team. After a light lunch the second half of the navigation task began with the Comd's driver, **Cpl Mark Collins** running off to do a spot of training for his Junior Comd Course. Despite all the war stories of 'parachute silk, a thumb nail compass, ten pieces of gold and a packet of extra strong mints' he decided to stick to the route and meet us at the end. The remainder of the walk remained uneventful with the exception that everyone enjoyed the company, the banter, the fresh air and still the sun was shining. It was another successful day out from the hustle and bustle of this very busy HQ and a chance for us all the see one another out of uniform – now there's a thought to finish on!

ARMY CIS GROUP UPDATE

The ACISG has now taken control of the ISIS network with the arrival of the ISIS team from G6 LAND. This has resulted in a re-organisation of HQ ACISG with four distinct branches responsible for day to day tasking and Operations through the Operations Office, Project Management, Installation and Support and Service Management all working directly for the Commanding Officer. The formal hand-over of the ISIS network and its associated Memorandum Of Understanding was signed by ACOS G6 Land and Commander 2 (NC) Signal Brigade on 5 May 2000 at Wilton. During this extremely turbulent time there have been a number of personnel changes. **Maj Bob Holt** and **Maj Tony McMahon** have both started their second careers in Civilian Street and **Capt Tim Bamber** leaves us for a 12-month holiday as a member of the MATT Sierra Leone. On the arrivals front **Maj Tim Langford** has taken the baton as the newly appointed Operations Officer with **Capt Andy Fletcher** replacing Capt Tim Bamber within the cauldron of the Operations Office. **Capt Phil Cutforth MBE** became the first Technical Adjutant of HQ ACISG on his arrival in June.

ANNUAL QUARTERMASTERS' CONVENTION

The Annual Quartermasters' Convention and Dinner was held on Friday 14 April 2000. There were over 80 Quartermasters Past and Present attending. The programme for the day included guest speakers from the All Arms Quartermasters' School Deepcut, HQ LAND and HQ ARRC. It also gave everyone the opportunity to watch the opening display by the White Helmets, which was both thrilling and impressive. The dinner in the evening was presided over by **Lt Col Mike Stevenson** and our guests included **The Master** and the **Signal Officer in Chief (Army)** who kindly agreed to give the after dinner speech. We said our fond farewells to **Majs Bob Yeomans** and **John Harby** who will be retiring within the next twelve months and delighted in wishing **Pat Lafferty** a 'Happy 77th Birthday'. Amongst other things, the event was an opportunity for the six serving Lieutenant Colonel Quartermasters to meet. On the day this was not possible due to **Lt Col John Walker's** absence on duty. The remainder - with a combined 176 years of service between them are shown below.



Lt Col P. W. J. Whitehead, Lt Col W. N. White MBE, Lt Col M. A. Stevenson MBE, Lt Col M. V. Ledwards, Lt Col D. J. Lumb

AVOID DISSAPPOINTMENT
ARTICLES MUST REACH THIS OFFICE BY
AUGUST 15
TO APPEAR IN THE OCTOBER ISSUE

XI

HEADQUARTERS
11 SIGNAL BRIGADE

EXERCISE ARCADE FALCON

I write these notes whilst sitting in the Hook of Holland following another masterful movement plan concocted by HQ LAND. Thanks LAND, for organising a move over the holiday season and carefully coordinating the deployment with EURO 2000! Fellow passengers on the ferry were very impressed that the Army had been deployed to contain the football violence. However, advance elements are in the concentration area in Moenchengladbach and eagerly awaiting our arrival. The deployment has had its moments, memorable, have been **Maj Peter** 'DIY' **Williams**, seen first works parading his vehicle. He noticed that the side lights were not working and looked masterful with both sidelights hanging from their sockets, spare bulbs in hundreds and fuses held in his teeth, when **Cpl Emmett** explained that in the WOLF the ignition has to be turned on for the lights to work! **SSgt** 'Mac' **McNeill** and **Cpl** 'Days to do' **Beacall** nearly did not make the ferry crossing as their tyre blew on the generator en – route, necessitating REME recovery. A full report on the exercise will follow in the next *WIRE* notes.

THOSE THAT ARE DOING A LOT

The commercialisation team continues to remain busy and are keeping the project on schedule despite the best efforts of 'dodgy' power in theatre. The Ops Team were also busy on deployment to Germany for yet another planning meeting. With our SO2 Log, **Maj** 'Rab' **Young,** as driver (how is that for being pressed for staff) they departed for the airport. Unfortunately the Safari LandRover was not up to the challenge and on the way to the airport, after catastrophic power failure and in a plume of white smoke, the Land Rover breathed its last breath and expired on the hard shoulder. This somewhat disappointing end was followed by the comment from **Capt Dick Gamble** 'I assume that you first works paraded this vehicle Rab' – SO2 Log not amused! The result being that the Ops Team had to be lifted to the airport in a police car, leaving SO2 Log Sp, to await recovery. For once calls to the AA were not answered with their normal alacrity as unfortunately, the number used was that of **WO1 (YofS) Graham Pardew's** mobile number – messages of where are you are not much use when you receive them in Germany. This possibly goes to show something that we all knew anyway – YofS are the fifth Emergency Service. The Headquarters travel agency flourishes under **Cpl Phil Beacall AGC** who can now tell you how to get from anywhere to anywhere at any time so long as you do not mind three changes, two stopovers and have an unlimited budget. There is no truth in the rumour that he has already arranged his own flight out of the Headquarters, Club class to his new unit, which of course is located on an airfield. Rumour has it he has volunteered to join us on Ex Able Condor (UK) 2001.

PROJECT CORMORANT

Life at the hub of the HQ, i.e the G2/G3 Branch continues as ever at a frantic pace. The Bde FofS, **WO2 (FofS) Pete Stowell** and the COS, **Maj Steve** 'Bore da Cariad' **Johns** appear to spend half their lives attending progress meetings on Project Cormorant which in layman terms is TWACN. The Brigade is the lead for the introduction of the system with 2 Sig Regt being responsible for its introduction into service, and both 2 and 30 Sig Regts being equipped with the first tranche of the system. This is the first SMART procurement project being run by the MoD, with the invitation to tender being released in August, and the first tranche operational by the end of 2001; pretty rapid procurement by anyone's standard. Currently, there are two contractors in the running for the contract, COGENT and RTM. From what we have seen of the proposed system thus far, whichever company eventually wins the contract, the Corps will be equipped with a state of the art area communications system that is rapidly deployable and able to support the JTFHQ and other formation HQs.

THOSE THAT ARE NOT DOING A LOT

The principle work-shy (clearly not a career soldier writing this article!) is the Comd, **Brig** 'Jonathan' **Cook** who has spent the Exercise planning phase on trek in Nepal. It is still unclear why the Gurkha Major, **Navindrabahadur Gurung** was so essential to the planning of the Exercise, particularly when he was not attending it. Suffice to say, that the Comd seemed to be more concerned with tribal carpets than trunk nodes. However, having made a number of generous donations to villages on his travels he has returned fresh and ready to tackle Germany, Bosnia and Kosovo, and all at the same time! Who said '.... and don't forget his sailing course in Kiel next month?'

While talking of people who can read crystal balls, be in two places at the same time and move at the speed of light our COS, **Maj Steve Johns** has at last completed his marathon running a respectable time in the Hereford Marathon. Also conspicuous by his absence has been **Capt Al Garrett** who has actually taken time off to get married. In my day you had to be at least 25 to get married and to be entitled to a married quarter and full pay packet (marriage allowance to you youngsters). We wish both **Holly** and **Alan** a happy and fruitful life.

COURT AND SOCIAL

It is with regret that we announce the resignation of **Maj Steve Bellerby** our SO2 Log(V). Steve has been on leave of absence for the last year following a number of years as a member of the permanent staff. His new business has taken off and expanded as we hoped it would, but has resulted in time becoming a premium. We wish him even more success for the future. Another temporary member of the permanent staff who has left us is **Maj Peter Williams** who after an 18 month period of doing most things, leaves to assume to assume The post of RO2, SO2 CIS 143 Bde. He remains on the strength of the Headquarters having reverted to being a 'proper TA officer'.

VISITORS

The Headquarter received only visitors at the working level in this reporting period. However, talking of visits, we are glad to say we have at last managed to get some of our civilian staff out to visit units. Our EO Fin **Davina** 'Where are we now?' **Carter** and AO Fin **Tina** 'How should I know' **Smith** visited 2 and 30 Sig Regt and got lost on both occasions! Well to be fair they were out of Shropshire and we all know that Shropshire is the centre of the known world.

NEWS OF TRAINING

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT WIN THE DRAGON BOAT CHALLENGE - 2000

By Sgt Prembahadur Ale - The Royal School of Signals

The of May 2000 was a historic day for both QG Signals and Royal Signals. For the first time in history, a team of Signallers from the Blandford Camp participated in the prestigious Dragon Boat Challenge Race 2000 on the River Thames in Abingdon, Oxfordshire. This is an annual event in which teams from major boating and rowing clubs take part to raise much needed money for charities. 11 Sig Regt's team consisting of 21 Gurkha trainees, was one of the 40 teams that competed in the race this year. The team, without any prior training improved their skills with every race and qualified for the semi-final as one the four fastest teams. To everyone's surprise, they won their semi-final and lined up with five other teams for the final. Thousands of spectators lined the River Thames to watch the gruelling final race. After a thrilling 250 metres race, our team emerged as winners finishing the race in a time of 1 minute 18 seconds. The President of the International Rotary Club then presented the team with a fabulous trophy and a medal to each individual. The Team hopes to win a second trophy for raising the most money through sponsorships. They have raised in excess of £2100 to be shared between the Gurkha Welfare Trust, the Sobell and Helen House Hospices. Thanks go to **Capt** (QGO) **Krishna Gurung** whose idea was behind the fundraising events.

The winning team with Capt (QGO) Krishna, the CO and the MTO of 11 Signal Regiment posing for a photograph after the races

REGIMENTAL SHOOTING TEAM
EXERCISE FIRST SHOOT - CORPSAAM 2000

The Regimental Shooting Team achieved great success during pre-training and the Royal Corps of Signals Skill At Arms Meeting (CORPSAAM) throughout the following periods. Exercise First Shoot from 2-7 April 2000 and CORPSAAM 2000, held from 7-14 April 2000 at Ash/Pirbright Range complexes. All members were selected to represent the Regiment that consisted of the following composition: 2 x 5 man teams and x 2 individuals. Despite the atrocious weather (snow, hail, rain and strong winds) the teams did particularly well, achieving exceptional scores throughout the competition. This coupled with determination and personal marksmanship gave the team a great sense of personal achievement.

11 Signal Regiment Shooting Team
Back Row (L-R): Maj Brown, Sgt D. Copley, Sig C. Rollo, Sgt A. Kennedy, LCpl J. Brown, Sgt G. Padfield, Capt B. Bryan, Lt Col R. T. Hoole
Front Row (L-R): Capt Yam Rana, Sig D. Harris, Sig C. Clarke, Sig D. Dickson, Sig Steele

The two experienced shots, **Capt Yam Rana** and **Sgt** 'What's that all about?' **D. Copley**, did a creditable job at teaching those persons within the team who have little or no shooting experience for a successful CORPSAAM. The presentation consisted of prizes and medals being awarded equally between 30 Sig Regt and 11 Sig Regt by the Master of Signals. The 11 Sig Regt 'A' Team ended up achieving second place in the Rifle Team Matches and the Major Unit Championship. All scores were only a couple adrift from 30 Sig Regt. Also a very well done to **Sgt D. Copley** who achieved Royal Signals Champion at Arms, **Sig** 'It forces me to become a criminal' **D. R. Dixon** and **Sig** 'Where's my golf ball?' **C. Clark** who both required three medals to hold the bars that were awarded on personal merit.

Other achievements are as follows: Top Pistol shot - **Lt Col R. T. Hoole,** Champion Rifle shot - **Capt Yam Rana,** Best B Class shot runner up - **Sig D. R. Dickson,** Pistol Team Match Winners, FIBUA Team Match Winners, Association Team Match Winners, Runners up Combat Snap Team Match, Runners up Roberts Team Match, Runners up Whitehead Team Match,

The following two members of the Regiment **Capt Yam Rana** and **Sgt D. Copley,** were selected to represent the Corps in the Inter Corps Methuen Team Match held on Friday 14 April, both producing creditable results for the Corps. Also the following three members of the Regiment: **Sgt** 'Please give me a medal' **G. Padfield, Sig D. R. Dickson** and **Sig D. T. Harris** were awarded their Regimental Colours - Shooting, for 11 Sig Regt. If all team members can maintain the consistency and form shown throughout the above periods, then things are looking bright for the Royal Signals in the forthcoming Army Pistol Championship held on 3 June 2000, also the prestigious Queen's Medal Competition and other central Matches held at Bisley from 2-4 July 2000.

In conclusion, the CO, OIC - **Capt B. H. Bryan** and the 2IC - **Sgt D. Copley** congratulate all team members on their achievements and thank all OC Squadrons/Troops/Dept for their support in releasing individuals and assisting the Regimental Shooting Team when required. Praise is also given to all team members for their participation and the success of the Regimental Shooting Team. This benefited not only the members but also the Regimental Trophy Cabinet.

11 SIGNAL REGIMENTAL SHOOTING TEAM RESULTS
CORPSAAM 2000

Match 2 (Roupell Cup)	Individual Winner	**Capt Yam Rana** (Battleaxe Tp)
Match 17 (FIBUA)	Best Young Soldier	**Sig D. T. Harris** (Wspr Tp)
	Team Winners	11 Sig Regt 'A' Team
Match 3 (Henry Whitehead)	Team Runners Up	11 Sig Regt 'A' Team
Match 4 (Association)	Individual Winner	**Sgt D. Copley** (RTW)
	Team Winners	11 Sig Regt 'A' Team
Match 7 (Roberts)	Team Runners Up	11 Sig Regt 'A' Team
LSW Match	Individual Winner	**Sgt D. Copley** (RTW)
Best Young Soldier		**Sig D. T. Harris** (Wspr Tp)
	Team Runners Up	11 Sig Regt 'A' Team
Match 34 (Combat Snap)	Team Runners Up	11 Sig Regt 'A' Team
Pistol Championship	5th Place	**LCpl JA Brown** (Trials Spt Tp)
	Runner up	**Sgt D. Copley** (RTW)
	Individual Winner	**Lt Col RT Hoole** (HQ RSS)
Pistol Tiles	Team Winners	11 Sig Regt 'A' Team
Pistol Team		11 Sig Regt 'B' Team
	Team Runners Up	11 Sig Regt 'A' Team
Champion Rifle Shot	Winner	**Capt Yam Rana** (Battleaxe Tp)
Best British Firer	Winner	**Sgt D. Copley** (RTW)
Champion Team Rifle	Team Runners Up	11 Sig Regt 'A' Team

Major Unit Championship	Team Runners Up	11 Sig Regt 'A' Team
Inter Corps Rifle Team	Team Runners Up	**Capt Yarn Rana** (Battleaxe Tp) **Sgt D. Copley** (RTW)
Champion at Arms (Rifle, LSW and Pistol)	Winner	**Sgt D. Copley** (RTW)

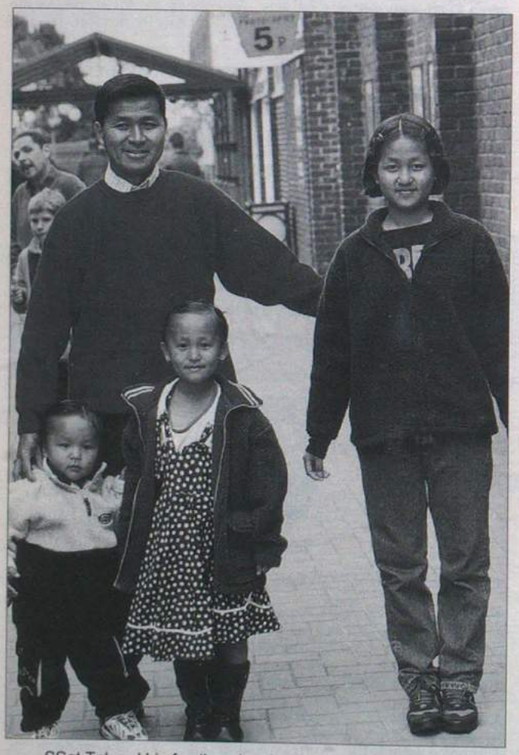
A total of 16 teams competed. 11 Sig Regt 'A' and 'B' Teams gaining overall placings of second and sixth respectively.

THE CORPS MILLENNIUM PARTY - 19 MAY 2000
'JIMMY'S' GRAND DAY OUT

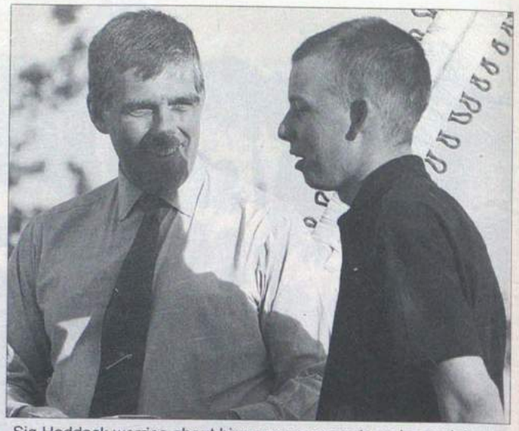
Someone, somewhere, sometime had an idea for a 'Grand Day Out'. Wouldn't it be a good idea for the Corps to celebrate the Millennium with a great big Morrision Cup followed by a great big all ranks party! Someone, somewhere, sometime agreed - 'Make it so', and so it was that 11 Signal Regiment were tasked with not only the Morrison Cup but also the Corps Millennium Party. It has to be said that for once plenty of lead-time was given for the event and so **Maj Tomkins** (Ms Co-ordinator) assembled her team of **Capt Dave Kenyon** (Mr Entertainments), **WO1 Mark Elliot** and **WO1 Keith Fisher** (Mr and Mrs Logistics) and the planning began. The budget from the Corps was £30,000 and **Maj Tomkins** immediately set about spending it in a manner that only the fairer sex could achieve. Suffice to say that when you are planning on an estimate of between 2000 - 4000 people 30K disappears frighteningly quickly. Approval for the plan, including a free funfair, open air rock concert, fireworks, huge Disco Marquee and street entertainers was given and with a 'green light for go', contracts were signed and bookings made.

Over the next few months, as the party approached, many wolves gathered around the sleigh including power requirements, extra toilets, First Aid cover, insurance, bunting, work parties, security (not a dirty word), to name but a few. None the less, **WO1s Fisher** and **Elliot** shot down each and every one of them. With seven days to go marquees started to go up and complaints started to roll in as first one and then another car park around the centre of camp was put out of bounds. Despite this, preparation went smoothly and the arrival of the Fairground rides really sparked interest around the camp and with those members of the Corps attending the Morrison Cup. As the final piece of bunting was stretched across the centre of camp the sun broke through the clouds, heralding a beautiful clear evening - at last a Corps event with good weather! The party opened for families at 1730hrs, to allow the younger members of the Corps' family to enjoy the funfair without having to compete with eager older, bigger party goers. It was packed!

The official opening was at 1930hrs when the CO, **Lt Col Roddy Nicholson** and RSM, **WO1 Harry Kemp** were launched on the Vertical Ejection Seat Bungee by **Sig Haddock** who won the Charity Draw and the opportunity to press the button, receive £100 and end his career early!



SSgt Tol and his family enjoy the Corps Millennium Party



Sig Haddock worries about his career prospects as he explains to the CO, Lt Col Roddy Nicholson, why he is about to 'launch him into space'

Not to be out done, the 11 Sig Regt pair were quickly followed by the COS R Signals, **Col John Ewbank** and the Corps RSM, **WO1 Geoff Hodgson**.

RSM, WO1Harry Kemp and the CO, Lt Col Roddy Nicholson, about to be launched on the vertical bungee by Sig Haddock 'Another fine mess you've got me into.....'

It has to be said that it will take a lot of money to get any of them to repeat the experience! The evening remained clear and the event progressed smoothly. The bands who were performing live on an open-air stage were Spectrum, Strictly Taboo and OASISN'T. All of them gave top class entertainment and with the Spectre Video Road-Show pumping out the dance tracks music, the festival was certain to be successful. All of the normal bars and entertainment venues in camp had joined in with the party atmosphere. Humph Bahada's had a Kareoke and Barbecue and the Semaphore Arms, as well as providing two outdoor marquee bars, laid on a 'soft play area' with a bucking bronco, bungee run and pole jousting. In addition they had provided funding for the street entertainers and a big thank you must go to **Donna** and her staff who helped make the evening such a success (as well as donating £365 from their profit to charity).

As the evening turned to night, everyone was treated to a spectacular firework and pyrotechnic display from the Mercury Falling Firework Company and the disco really turned up the volume to see the party to its conclusion. The next morning brought reality as those members of the Regiment nominated as the clearing up party paraded under **WO1s Fisher** and **Elliot** and got to grips with half-eaten burgers, empty cans and the rubbish generated when so many people have such a good time. By lunchtime, however, the tidy up was complete with only the large fairground rides still on site. It was estimated that between 3000 and 3500 people attended the party, which was held in a fantastic atmosphere and was completely free from trouble. In particular they all agreed that 'Jimmy' really had enjoyed a Grand Day Out!

HARROGATE CUP HOCKEY

13 April saw the finals of the Harrogate Cup Hockey competition that had been run over the previous three days, with each Squadron

nominating two teams each there was no shortage of enthusiasm and stick wielding from the participants. Beaufighter and Iron Tps made up the two teams from 2 (Catterick) Sqn and the Squadron Sergeant Major, **WO2 (SSM) Fisher** trained both teams the week before the competition. The SSM's unique training methods and his advice, which went along the lines of, 'Don't be rabbits chasing the ball,' and 'Play as a team,' could be heard from afar. It must, however, be said that this advice mainly fell on deaf ears as both teams showed their keenness and enthusiasm by chasing the ball 'like rabbits'. Among the rabbits, was the under 23's Combined Services goal keeper, **Sig 'Marsden' Marsden**, who was to become the most valuable asset to the Beaufighter Tp team when in the final against Lighting Tp, 3 Sqn. A draw at full time meant going to penalty flicks to decide the winners. **Sig Marsden** showed why he was selected for the Combined Services Team saving all but one of the flicks, giving Beaufighter Tp the Harrogate Hockey Cup.

Sig 'Marsden' Marsden receiving his winners medal from the CO

SPORTS FOR ALL

In addition to the routine of trade training, the Regiment has continued to reap the rewards in sporting achievements, some reports of which can be read below. In summary the Regiment won the Race the Sun event, won the Ladies event of the Lanyard Trophy, won both the Mens and Womens team event in the Morrison Cup. A team of Gurkhas won a Dragon Boat competition in Abingdon beating 60 other teams in the process. The Regimental Shooting Team won numerous categories at the Divisional meeting and a number of individuals qualified for Bisley. The modern triathlon team performed with distinction at the National Championships and the womens triathlon team won convincingly at the Divisional Championships. Both the mens and womens swimming squads have just conquered all at the Divisional Championships and now look for more honours at the UK and Army level championships. The Second XI soccer team have won their league and the mountain bike squad are making their presence felt in the Combined Services Mountainbike Series. To top it all the Mens and Womens Regimental Tug of War teams are out pulling the best the RA can muster. If that is not enough, two trekking expeditions have recently returned from Nepal and the French Pyrennes. In May the Commanding Officer, **Lt Col R. G. Nicholson**, accepted the award of the Birtwistle Pennant for Sport on behalf of the Regiment, during the SOinC's conference. This reflects the sporting achievements and the Unit's contribution to the fostering of sport over the previous year.

THE RE-OPENING OF THE JUNIOR RANKS CLUB – 'FINNIGAN'S BAR'

11 April 2000 saw the opening of 'Finnigans' Irish Bar. This was the refurbishment of the old Junior Ranks Club (the Semaphore Arms) at a cost in excess of £187K. The rebuild surprisingly only took five weeks and the new facilities were officially opened by the Commander Royal School of Signals, Col Hadfield and the Chief Executive of NAAFI, **Mr Jeffery Dart**. The ceremony was watched in awe, by over 100 Phase 2 students and 35 NAAFI managers from the Southern Area. The theme for 'Finnigans' is that of an old fashioned Irish style bar utilising vast amounts of heavy wood panelling and refurbished wooden doors, giving an up to date authentic feel to what has traditionally been simply the 'NAAFI bar'. Mixing the old world with the modern, the pool table and other bar games remain but are set next to a high-tech £20k Audio/Video system. To complement the new bar, 'Dakotas' American Diner was also unveiled; this provides a Fast Food outlet, serving a wide selection of cholesterol packed but tasty snacks. This facility, solely for the use of the Phase 2 soldiers, is now the most up to date of all the NAAFI complexes in the south of England. After the short opening ceremony the evening got underway with a buffet supper and, more importantly for some, a couple of free beers, courtesy of NAAFI. At 2000hrs the doors were opened to the rest of the trainees, and despite the presence of the RSM and four of his SSMs (well, there was free beer) the evening was an outstanding success, enjoyed by a capacity crowd of enthusiastic, well behaved young soldiers. (See note about presence of RSM/SSMs).

Col Hadfield and Mr Dart cutting the ribbon

LANYARD TROPHY - *by Sig Donna Chivers*

Training started in early January; initially we spent two evenings a week tabbing around camp getting ' boot friendly'. There were about 15 interested people in January but this soon dropped to a hard core of ten keen (or mentally deranged) people. The team trained hard for 4 months. By the end of it we all knew the Blandford country side like the back of our hands. It wasn't always all work and no play though; a few training sessions ended in a couple of quiet drinks in a local hostelry. On one occasion we had to make a swift exit as the CO was due at the pub! We also managed a few weekends in Dartmoor going over the route itself. The weather, however, was hardly ever on our side; if it wasn't raining and blowing a bitter wind, then it was snowing. Time flew by and before we knew it the team had been selected. The final team consisted of: **Capt Sophie Davies, SSgt Tina Edwards, Capt Teri Downes, 2 Lt Kate Milner, 2Lt Liz Williams, Sgt Donna Scaife, Sgt Yvonne Jones, LCpl Sarah Jordan, Sig Donna Chivers** and **Sig Amy Rhodes**. **Sgt Lisa Whitting** and **Sgt Dani Thwaite** were our ever smiley and enthusiastic Admin Team. Unfortunately two keen members of the squad were unable to make the team. **Sig Sally Hubble** was in Nepal on Exercise and **Sig Esther Woods** had injured her shoulder during training. After a restless and very short night, we got up at 0200hrs on the morning of the competition. After an hour and a half in the minibus we arrived at the Start Point ready for the 0500hrs mass start. True to form on Dartmoor, it was cold, wet, windy and misty. Did we really have to get out of the minibus?

With 28 teams starting the competition the first couple of hours were really quite sociable. However it soon became apparent that our main rivals would be 30 Sig Regt. It was very exciting up to Checkpoint (CP) 4 as one minute we were ahead and the next them. Unfortunately **Sgt Yvonne Jones** left us at CP4 after a mammoth effort. By then the mist had come down and we were relying on our compasses and our knowledge of the area. Fortunately we did not get lost (unlike some male teams) we started to gradually catch up with 30 Sig Regt. At the CPs they were ahead of us by 10, 7, 5 and then 3 minutes. Sadly **2Lt Kate Milner** left us at CP5 as she had been worrying us for an hour or so with a very bad chest infection. Down to our minimum of eight we knew we all had to finish and at CP 14 we decided to make our move and gambled on a swiftly cross country hill climb that put us just ahead of 30 Sig Regt who had taken the slightly longer road route. We then took the pace up, convinced that 30 Sig Regt would fight us every last minute of the route. At this stage we were exhausted – **Capt Davies** had been throwing up around the route. **LCpl Sarah Jordan's** knee was popping in and out and **Sig Amy Rhodes** was struggling heroically along with awful blisters. Despite all of this, we decided as a team that we wanted to win and found the energy to beast ourselves to the finish – we even managed a sprint to the finish line! We finished in a time of 14 hours and 9 min – 32 minutes ahead of 30 Sig Regt.

On top of the delight in winning the Female Competition and taking the Trophy home for the second year running, we had also beaten eight Regular men's teams and all the TA teams. All in all we did extremely well to just complete the route never mind come where we did. Some members of the team said it would be their last Lanyard while others said they would be back next year and, yes, I'm one of the latter group!!

MORRISON CUP 2000 - *by Capt (MAA) B. J. A. Dupree APTC*

The Millennium Morrison Cup took place, at its now accepted home of Blandford, over the period 18/19 May 2000. The weather gods decided to play their hand and brought the usual mixed weather, rain one minute followed by bright sunshine. Thankfully the final afternoon session warranted the smattering of Panama's and Ray bans, with glorious sunshine ensuring the meeting finished on a high. The team entries increased from last year, although operational commitments took their toll in the last week. This years' competition was the first joint UK and Germany, with 1 (UK) ADSR and 16 Sig Regt making the long journey from Germany. The Minor Units competition contained ATR Bassingbourn, newcomers to the competition, who would later make a big impact. The Blandford track has six lanes and with eight female team entries it meant that heats would be required. This was overcome by holding the events that take a long time to compete, such as 5000m, pole vault, hammer and the hurdle events, on the first day.

The standard was high from the first event and only one point separated the top teams at the end of day one. Day Two arrived with the customary dark clouds and many felt that the Morrison Cup weather curse would strike again. Fortunately the weather improved and the high standard of athletics within the Royal Signals was evident with some excellent performances from established athletes throughout the Corps, and promising youngsters competing from 11 Sig Regt. These talented young soldiers, arriving weekly from Bassingbourn and Arborfield, made up the bulk of the 11 Sig Regt teams.

The strength in depth began to make an impact on the competition and 11 Sig Regt began to pull away in the Major Units and Ladies event. ATR Bassingbourn were looking strong and making a concerted effort to win the Minor Units event on their first appearance. The competition was concluded with some very exciting relays which highlighted the very qualities that we strive to improve through sport, that of team work, selfless commitment, fitness, courage and determination. On completion of the relays the results were decided and 11 Sig Regt won the Major Units and ATR Bassingbourn won the Minor Units in their first appearance in the Morrison Cup. The ladies competition was won by 11 Sig Regt by a margin, but the fight for runners up spot was very close. Only 2.5 points separated the next four teams, emphasising the maxim that every point counts and that all team members, whether first or eighth are important. The second spot was eventually won by 15 Sig Regt, which made their trip across the water all the more worthwhile.

The Tug of War finals were held prior to the prize giving ceremony in front of the hundreds of spectators in the stadium. Proceedings were kicked off with a fierce ladies final between 11 Sig Regt and 14 Sig Regt (EW). The final was a best of three pulls, with the first eventually won by 14 Sig Regt (EW). The second end was a titanic struggle that saw the lead changing hands many times, 11 Sig Regt eventually won and drew level. The final and deciding end was just as exciting with 14 Sig Regt (EW) triumphant. The men's final was a contest between 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt and 11 Sig Regt. The first two pulls went the way of the ladies final and the scene was set for a very exciting third and final deciding end. A very vocal crowd cheered on, and the experience and teamwork of 1(UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt saw them win a tense last end. The prizes were presented by the SOinC(A), **Brig C. J. Burton OBE**, who stated that he was delighted that, even in these busy times, we can still find time to have some fun with sport. He congratulated all present, whatever their result, on their excellent efforts over the past two days.

MORRISON CUP 2000 TEAM RESULTS

MAJOR UNITS

First	-	11 Sig Regt	196.5 points
Second	-	2 Sig Regt	152 points
Third	-	1 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt	146 points

MINOR UNITS

First	-	ATR Bassingbourn	65 points
Second	-	249 Sig Sqn	50 points
Third	-	16 Air Asslt Bde (216)	48 points

WOMENS UNITS

First	-	11 Sig Regt	110 points
Second	-	15 Sig Regt	73 points
Third	-	21 Sig Regt (AS)	72 points

The victorious athletics squads at the Morrison Cup

3 SQUADRON DRAGON BOAT RACE

On Sunday 14 May 2000 a team from Lightning Troop, 3 (Harrogate) Sqn competed in the Dragon boat race in aid of the Poole Heart Appeal. Thirteen teams took part in the race including members from the Royal Marines, Poole Police and the Dorset Fire and Rescue Service. After an enjoyable evening prior to the race, our illustrious leader, **LCpl** 'Chelsea' **Reynolds**, and 17 weary crew members turned up to a fog filled lake. To begin with, it was doubtful that the event was even going to take place, due to the fact that you could not see 10ft in front of you, but after two hours of waiting we managed to start the heats.

Initially when we got into the boat, we thought we were going to capsize, as we found it difficult to synchronise our rowing. **Sigs Rizza** and **McKenzie**, who tried in vain to drown our helmsman, didn't help the situation! We managed to make it through the heats and qualify for the semi-finals. Now we decided it was time to dig in and, amazingly, narrowly won the semi-final thereby qualifying for the final. Our adhock team now faced the Royal Marines, who had been training for months and had won the event last year; also in the finals was a strong, underdog team from the Alderney community centre. With a chance of winning upon us, we decided to go tactical and lighten the load so we reduced our team by four people. The Royal Marines had a great start with our team closely following behind, unfortunately our inexperience took its toll. We were tiring fast and started to lose our rhythm, falling back into third place, our finishing position. At the end of the day, however, we were all happy that we had accomplished so much. We had entered a team event and achieved what we thought would be impossible, by making it all the way to challenge the Royal Marines in the final. It was a great weekend and a rewarding experience. All that remained was for us to collect our trophy and to throw **LCpl Reynolds** into the lake for managing to stay dry all day! Overall a good day and we are already looking forward to next year, when we will be aiming to beat the Royal Marines.

3 Squadron Dragon Boat Team complete with
LCpl 'Hawaii Five O' Vernon
Sig Moore (Team Captain), LCpl Reynolds (Crew Manager),
Sig Dipendra (Drummer), LCpl Vernon,
Sigs Macpherson, Rizza, Whittaker, Mckenzie, Jones 504, Huber, Graham, O'Connor, Gabbidon, Morley, Turner, Hunter, Smith 204 and Spotswood

RACE THE SUN 2000

Personnel from 11 Sig Regt and Royal School of Signals along with nine other teams entered this year's Race the Sun event, which was hosted by 2 Sig Regt and conducted in and around the York area. The idea behind Race the Sun is that competitors start the race as the sun rises and then aim to finish the course before it sets. This year's event consisted of 15 legs; teams were allowed a maximum of 25 competitors and five admin staff. The race started at 0500hrs in the morning and finished at about 1830hrs with the prize giving at 1900hrs. The race is a relay style event, which requires all competitors to complete their designated legs to ensure the team completes the race. The team who finished all the legs in the fastest time is judged to be the winning team. Work and trade training commitments prevented the team from meeting until the day we deployed to York. On 24 May from an original cast of 30 competitors, 18 team members turned up at the Regimental Training Wing. A hectic 30 minutes was then spent under the control of **Cpl** 'Digger' **Rigg** cramming bikes and canoes into our very own 'tardis' transit van. All was well until the late arrival of **Cpl Mark Whittaker** and his bike, another quick miracle was performed and in slipped the bike and then the team was 19. We then received a phone call from **Cpl Chris Brown** who agreed to compete for us providing that we picked him up from the Chunky Chicken services at Junction 28 on the M1, the team was now up to 20.

During the journey to York **WO2** 'Taff' **Thomas** and **WO1 Stu Little** used their knowledge and ability to write on the back of a fag packet and restructured the team, in order to try and give us a fighting chance. After some gentle persuasion and lots of bullying, along with free Chunky Chickens all round, everyone agreed with their newly assigned legs. Once the team was sorted, it departed for Imphal Barracks and the evening meal, whilst the OC, **Capt John Williams** attended the Team Captains' brief. As the brief took far too long for the rest of the team and it was way past their bedtime, the competitors under the care of the Admin Team's **Sgt** 'I can read a map' **Camm** and **Cpl** 'I've just come over from Oz' **Youl,** left for Strensall Barracks and got their heads down. Some time around 2230hrs the OC, **WO2** 'Spike' **Haynes** and **SSgt** 'Bill' **Butler** arrived at Admin HQ, kicked everyone out of bed and gave them the good news. As soon as the brief was over everyone changed rooms and the mountain bikers went back to sleep with their bikes (funny chaps). The Admin team then worked late through the evening to prepare vehicles, maps and ensuring all the equipment was checked and in the correct vehicles. An early start at 0300hrs ensured the first team members were in Imphal Barracks for breakfast at 0400hrs and the start of Race the Sun at 0500hrs.

Leg 1: Run and Canoe (0.5km run/6km paddle) this leg was completed by **Cpl Tony Brown** and **Sig** 'I'll do better next year' **Grounds**. It soon became apparent that not only did all the other teams have faster sleeker canoes than ours, but also **Cpl Brown's** canoe was dragging on the river bottom. By the end of the first event the team was placed ninth and firmly at the rear and some 20 minutes behind 30 Sig Regt who were looking for their third consecutive win.

Leg 2: River run (12km) was a cross-country run upstream alongside the River Ouse to Linton-on-Ouse. **Cpl Mark Whittaker** who had an inspired race and got the team back in the race in third position. This now left us 17mins behind 30 Sig Regt and 9mins behind 249 Sig Sqn with 2 Sig Regt just 30 seconds behind us.

Leg 3: Biathlon (25km cycle/5km run) a road cycle to the lay-by at Stockhill Green, followed by a run on well-defined tracks to Kilburn village. **Sig Fitz Fitton** and **SSgt Mick Openshaw** who cycled in pairs but without drafting, reduced the other competitors lead significantly. After completing this leg 30 Sig Regt where now 10min ahead, 249 Sig Sqn just 1min ahead, however a clear gap of some 9min had developed between us and 2 Sig Regt as they fell further behind.

Leg 4: Hill Run (4.5km) was a short sprint up Sutton Bank, which although very steep, was an easy task for that Welshman **WO2** 'Taff' **Thomas,** who proved that living in Wales chasing sheep up mountains does have its advantages. He raced passed the runner in second place and managed to close the gap on the lead competitor. Now leaving us just 7min 30sec behind 30 Sig Regt and just over 2min ahead of 249 Sig Sqn and 9min 30secs ahead of 2 Sig Regt.

Leg 5: Forced March (12.5km) was a military style march with a 35lb bergen on roads and well-defined tracks from South Bank to the edge of Rievaulx Moor. **Sgt** 'Steve the Steam Train' **Newman** put the bit between his teeth and set out to destroy the opposition, he raced passed 249 Sig Sqn and 30 Sig Regt and giving us a lead of over 4min, but more importantly he gave us a lead of over 20min on 2 Sig Regt. This was the first time the team had taken the lead. However, things were not well as the race officials declared his bergen to be half a pound under weight. A tense few minutes passed until the arrival of the next competitor, the race officials weighed the burgen and everyone breathed a sigh of relief, the scales were out.

Leg 6: Moor Run (9.5km) was a gentle run along tracks across Rievaulx Moor. The teams veteran **SSgt** 'Chippy' **Chapman** who showed there was still life in the old dog and **SSgt Mick Openshaw**, retained our first place with a lead of just over 2min ahead of 30 Sig Regt, 2 Sig Regt had managed to reduce their time to 15min.

Leg 7: Road Run (21km) Just in time for this event, the sky cleared which allowed the sun to beat down on the competitors, with raising temperatures the second phase of the competition commenced with a mass start. We knew our lead was in good hands as our second veteran **WO1 Stu Little** set off, having consumed more 'Science in Sport (SiS) Go Gel' than anyone else (even though it tasted like a cows bottom). After an extremely hard and competitive race, we slipped back down to second place almost 2min behind 30 Sig Regt and being closed upon by 34 Sig Regt (V) who were now only 2.5min behind us. Things were warming up.

Leg 8: Mountain Bike (18km) was taken on by **WO2 (John) Evans** and **LCpl** 'Sandy' **Segundo**. 2 Sig Regt somehow managed to arrange for the heavens to open just in time for this event. From all around the pit area came squeals of delight as mountain bikers expressed themselves with the thought of splashing in puddles and having mud thrown in their faces. To be fair this was an extremely hard leg over some very rough tracks, which finished through Cropton Forest with a very steep final, decent to the Inn at Levisham Moor. This leg had certainly taken its toll as 30 Sig Regt now moved into a commanding lead of over 11min, 2 Sig Regt were still nowhere to be seen as they had now slipped back to some 24min behind us.

Leg 9: Fell Run (9km) saw **Cpl Chris Brown** complete the run across Levisham Moor and pull back almost 4.5 min from **WO1 (RSM) Al Higgns** of 30 Sig Regt. Also moving back into the frame were 34 Sig Regt (V) just 5min behind and 2 Sig Regt who had managed to pull back a whole minute on this leg.

Leg 10: Orienteering (5km) had **Sgt Mark** 'Young Pup' **Ebanks** and **Capt John** 'Tea, Toast & Medals' **Williams** set out on the orienteering course. After a bit of crafty map reading and having the common sense not to leap small valleys or fight though woods, the OC exited the forest, with a big smile on his face. He handed over first place and a lead of over 16min ahead of 30 Sig Regt and 24min ahead of 2 Sig Regt, to some very shocked team members. A captain's innings some might say (wrong sport though).

Leg 11: Forest Run (9km) was taken on by **LCpl Jay Dine** and for his second outing **Sig Fitz Fitton** who stormed through the Dalby Forest and dropped down to Thornton-le-Dale. **Sig Fitton** not only managed to retain the lead he also gained another min over 30 Sig Regt.

Leg 12: Cycle Orientation (28-30km) was a simple ride around North Yorkshire. **Cpl Mark** 'The Explorer' **Whittaker** who was already warmed up from the river run had, the task of selecting a route which would take him via four of the six checkpoints, marked on his map. As we already had a comfortable lead and he likes the whirring noise you get when you fit a lolly-pop stick in your spokes, he decided to arrive in ninth place. Which although we still retained first place, our lead had been cut to 4min 25 sec just ahead of second place 30 Sig Regt and 7min 10sec ahead of third place 2 Sig Regt (who says that local knowledge doesn't count). It's not over till that obviously large (pc) lady sings. .

Leg 13: Swim (900m) Yet another mass start and a hail storm that only Moses had ever witnessed before, got the swimming leg underway. Fortunately for us we had **Cpl Lance Barr** who had eaten his fill of Aqua gum, promised the OC that he could swim and drink like a fish, although he skipped the part about having no sense of direction. The swim took them across the Great Lake in the grounds of Castle Howard. After proving that he could swim faster around the outside of the lake rather than the shorter more direct route he emerged with a lead of over 9min ahead of 2 Sig Regt and over 10min ahead of 30 Sig Regt.

Leg 14: Run/Bike/Run (9km-run/20km cycle/6km run) not content with his earlier leg **WO2** 'Taff' **Thomas** and **Cpl Chris Brown** set off on this new and extremely challenging leg. All competitors ran from Castle Howard to Sheriff Hutton then cycle along roads to Monks Cross before dismounting and completing the leg with a run back through York to Imphal Barracks. As the change over crew got ready to receive what everyone expected to be **Cpl Brown, WO2 Thomas** threw a spanner in the works and turned up first, after few moments of madness both riders where sent on their way. However, 2 Sig Regt produced their trump card **LCpl Benny Bennett** who managed to reduce the lead to just over 5min. This leg proved a daunting and challenging for 30 Sig Regt as the gap between us increased to just over 23min.

Leg 15: Stretcher Race (3m) The final massed start of the competition was completed by **SSgt** 'Chippy' **Chapman, Sgt Steve Newman, Sgt Crawford, Cpl Chris Brown, Cpl** 'Birdy' **Bird** and **Sig** 'Where's the custard?' **Crumble** who carried a 40lb weighted stretcher around Imphal barracks. Plenty of elbow and tactics ensure that we finished in second place just behind 30 Sig Regt but ahead of 2 Sig Regt.

After all the running times were added up and all the mass starts taken into consideration this year's Race the Sun was close competition. In the end the 11 Sig Regt and RSS team just manage to sneak in and win by a clear 6 minutes at the expense of a 30 Sig Regt treble. Although this was not a great margin, when you consider the total distance involved was approximately 193km and the team had never met until the day before the event, it was a sweet victory. Though the dedication and fitness of individual athletes ensured our final position, it would not have been possible without the superb efforts of the Admin Team and our thanks must go to them. Also our thanks must go to the other nine teams who gave us a good run for our money, and to 2 Sig Regt who organised the event (they must have fancied their chances this year). After the competition, it was time for beer, medals and then a sample of the hospitality that York nightlife had to offer.

HANDOVER OF RSM

The beginning of April saw the hand over of **WO1 (RSM) S. Stonier** to **WO1 (RSM) L. D. Kemp**. A busy week consisted of visiting the various departments and meeting some of the 2,000 plus soldiers stationed here. A far cry from the new RSM's previous job with 20 OCdts in the University of London Officers Training Corps. The week went very well and on the last day **WO1 (RSM) Stonier** was transported out of RHQ to the Officers Mess in a 'golf buggy'. However, she did have the last laugh explaining to the new RSM, as she departed 'Oh, by the way, at the Millennium Party you will be sat next to the CO as he is launched into space on the Reverse Bungee ride…….enjoy!' Good luck for the future to, now, **Capt Stonier**.

WO1 (RSM) Kemp accepts the Regimental Pace Stick
from the outgoing WO1 (RSM) Stonier

EXERCISE ANNAPURNA DRAGON 2000 - *by Sig Hubble*

Twelve soldiers from 11 Sig Regt, Blandford, spent 15 days on an adventurous training exercise in Nepal during April and May 2000. The trip was organised and led by **Capt Kyra McAnulty**, comprising of six men and six 'women with altitude.' We had all been carefully selected from a huge number of applicants. Selection was based on our performance in trade training, rigorous testing and a special quality that would add something to the group, the ability to pay!

After a few days acclimatisation and some haggling with the traders in Kathmandu, **Mike** 'You are weak, I am strong' **Holman**, our qualified JSMEL (W) instructor and **Sgt Steve 'Beckham' White** soon established a rapport with the locals with their friendly approach. It wasn't long before **Sgt White** was offered goods for free……..of course this had nothing to do with his Val Kilmer impression! **SSgt** 'Sven' **Crawford** was quick to notice the trekking kit that could be bought at very good

prices in the Kathmandu shops. He turned up with good deals on a doss bag, rucksack, and Gore-tex jacket; the herd of eager trekkers quickly followed him to the shops!

Stop off at Bamboo Tea House - Sgt Vicki Hawtree looking like Compo on the extreme left

The Hot Springs – Sig Andy Rathbone, Sally, Sgt 'Steve' White and Sig Coupe in the front. George the soluble soldier on the side

The team spent eight days trekking up to Annapurna base camp and back. The first couple of days were quite tough whilst our bodies adjusted to the different climate and diet, but we were quickly in awe of the scenes around us, in particular the Nepalese people and their way of life. **Sig Helen** 'Exorcist' **Coupe** battled on through an uncomfortable time, which had everyone worried. However, our local guide, **Gyan**, helped us with good advice and a watchful eye, which led to her quick recovery. Many western trekkers in Nepal pay porters to carry their kit, but being soldiers, **Capt** 'Mac' **McAnulty** saw it as a more appropriate challenge, and as part of the expedition aim, to carry our own. We ate and stayed overnight in the teahouses along the way, where they can produce tonnes of delicious food from the tiniest dimly lit kitchens. **Sgt Victoria Michelle Hawtree** was keen to muck in and help peel the spuds one evening, very domesticated of her! We became quite friendly with our guides and several evenings were spent sharing songs together. **Sig** 'Diva' headed the entertainment by learning the local songs and donning the local attire.

Back in Pokhara, after our trek, **Sigs Clay** and **Lohse** participated in

Annapurna Base Camp – Sally and Capt 'Mac' McAnulty (Women with Altitude), and the twins Sgt White and Mr Mike Holden.

some traditional Nepalese dancing with some local dancers. After their performance, they were joined on stage by, **Sig** 'Sherpa' **Hubble, Sgt Vicki Hawtree** and **Sgt Steve White**, who were only too keen to join in the cultural dance. The adventurous training continued with two days rafting and kayaking on the Trisuli River, during which we all went overboard, but nobody drowned! In Kathmandu, **Sig Andy Rathbone** couldn't resist the lure of modern communications. In a city of much poverty, there were plenty of Internet cafes where he was able to send e-mails to his friend's mobile phone back in the UK (sad, really).

The gang get ready to raft the Trisuli River

Everyone involved in the expedition enjoyed the experience. It was unfortunate that we all had the 'runs' at some time, and **Sig Jill Griffin** spent most of her journey home looking a worrying whiter shade of pale. Nepal and the trek were a totally worthwhile experience; we all took something from the trip and none of us will forget it in a hurry. For those who had travelled in the past, it was refreshing to find 11 other people with a similar passion, who shared the adventure and made it very special. Most of all it has inspired us to travel more and experience other cultures in the future.

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT BASSINGBOURN

Sqn Comd **Maj J. Norris**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Slaney**

1 Trg Sqn have had a hectic few months diligently trying to train all the young blood arriving to infiltrate the Corps and also endeavouring to take part in as many competitions and challenges as possible. We have managed to field some exceptional teams, even with the odds against us (a Squadron of only 40 permanent staff). Some events were as follows:

BASSINGBOURN WINS THE ARMY MINOR UNITS CHALLENGE CUP.

Huge congratulations go to ATR Bassingbourn who romped home in style 2-0, to become the new Minor Units Army Cup Football champions. The final was played in the Army stadium at Aldershot on Wednesday 19 April against 9 Sqn RE. A number of Royal Signals personnel were part of the winning squad, these were **Cpl Daz Kidd, Cpl Paul Smith, Cpl Pete Mason** and **Cpl Tez Blakeley** (who was posted before the final). The Regiment's route to the final had been far from smooth and included a nail biting 4-3 victory against JCUNI in the Quarter finals after extra time. In the Semi-finals the team completed a convincing 3-0 victory over the current holders 14 Topo RE who were this years BA(G) champions.

The game itself was a physical affair but eventually ATR Bassingbourn's skill told and 15 minutes before half time **Bdr Bluck** steered in a header from the far post; he added to his tally on the hour with a superb solo effort that put the cup safely in the hands of ATR Bassingbourn. The victory was the result of a considerable amount of effort from the Team Coach - **WO2 (CSM) Phil Moan** RE, the Team Manager - **Maj Rick Licence MBE** R SIGNALS, the players and the rest of the Regiment who supported the team throughout. The trophy was presented to a jubilant team by **Maj Gen S. W. St J Lytle**, Chairman of the Army Sports Board. The Team then went on to celebrate in style in Aldershot that evening.

REGIMENTAL RUGBY COMPETITION

The hottest day of the new millenium was the setting for annual Rugby 7s competition at ATR Bassingbourn. Six squadron teams in all were competing for the title of ATR Bassingbourn Rugby 7s Champions. Including in this line up was the Royal Signals very own 1 Trg Sqn. Fully Trained and fully fit(?) 1 Trg Sqn decided to field a team of brawn up front (**Capt** 'Lurch' **Clixby** and **Lt** 'Lt' **Jackson**) and speed in the backs (**Sgt** 'Still quick at 35' **Turner** and **Cpl** 'Football' **Kidd**), a strategy decided by our cunning sidelined coach **Capt Carl** 'Talk a good game' **Jeeves**. They took to the field full of confidence only to be pushed close by Wray Coy. The reason for this poor performance was blamed on the teams insistence on playing 15 style rugby; running directly at the opposition, then forming a six-man ruck with one man left to defend the line. After the initial wake up call 1 Sqn then went on to play champagne rugby beating Delta Coy 27 – 0 before being knocked off their mantle losing to a strong HQ Coy. They quickly bounced back with wins over C Coy (21 – 17) and a tired 28 Sqn (14 – 0) to place them second overall in the days events and pushing them into a respectable second place overall for the CO's Competition.

LANYARD TROPHY

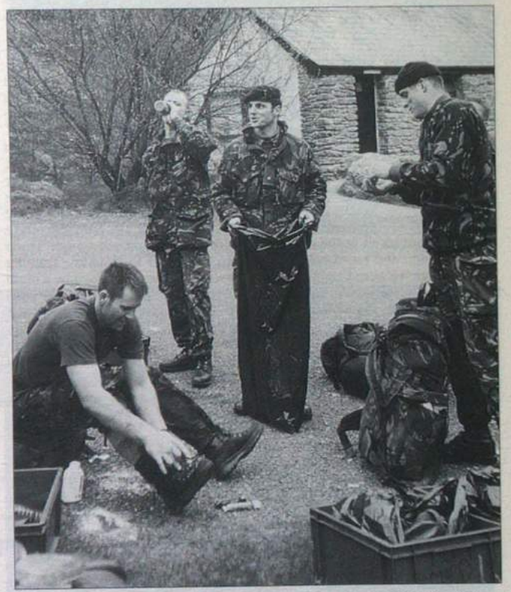
On Thursday 4 May 2000, The Year 2000 Lanyard Trophy took place on Dartmoor. ATR Bassingbourn entered a team hoping to improve on last year's performance where only three members of the team finished. Due to the hectic lifestyle of the Permanent Staff at Bassingbourn it was tricky to find time to train and Hertfordshire isn't exactly renowned for its massive hills on which to get into shape. Because of these factors the team wasn't as well prepared as they could hope to be, but spirits were very high as the team left Bassingbourn on 3 May!

ATR Bassingbourn Lanyard Trophy Team
Standing (L-R): Capt Alex Clixby, Capt Craig Thomson-Smith (IC), Cpl Lythe, Sgt Parke, Cpl Hanslow, Sgt Purdon
Kneeling (L-R): Cpl Wilson, Sgt Turner
Missing Cpl Baynham
(The photo was taken literally as they crossed the line, but Cpl Baynham had seen some sheep earlier and run off!!)

Once we arrived at Dartmoor we began to realise what the event was going to be like. The large hills and harsh weather conditions seemed a lot different to the sunny climes of Bassingbourn that we had left behind. We sorted out our accommodation and headed into the local village to get a carbohydrate intake at the local pub. Our plan was going well, until **WO2 (SSM) Tony** 'No you can't have a beer' **Slaney** announced he was coming with us. His claims that beer was a no-no before any sporting event was partially listened to, but a few of the team members were seen hiding in the corner supping some ale!

Breakfast was at 0230hrs on the day of the event so we tried to get some sleep that night. I don't think anyone slept well and there were a few tired faces when we arrived at the start line. The race soon got under way and the boys from Bassingbourn were content with staying in the middle of the field. The first five checkpoints were a killer, over some very harsh terrain with very poor visibility. The course got a bit easier from there on and the morale boosting manned checkpoints were enough to make anyone keep going. These were manned by our excellent support team of **Maj John** 'Have just one more banana' **Norris, SSM Tony Slaney and Sgt Paula** 'Don't get me wet, Sir' **Matheson**.

The team eventually finished in Tenth place, in a time of 14 hours and 25 minutes – a good time when you consider the lack of training, recce's and acclimatisation that most of the other teams had had. Only one member of the team failed to complete the course, due to a groin injury. The team were **Capt Craig** 'I am not lost!' **Thompson-Smith, Capt Alex** 'Crazy Legs' **Clixby, Sgt Roy** 'Where's the bar' **Turner, Sgt Sam Parke, Sgt Craig** 'Ginger Whinger' **Purdon, Cpl Gav** 'Let me tell you a story' **Wilson, Cpl Daz Lythe** and **Cpl** 'Taff' **Baynham**.



Whilst the Squadron enter the Lanyard Trophy the OC, Maj John Norris, thought it was a school sports day and turned up ready for the parents' sack race

BRAVO TROOP HELLOS AND GOODBYES

Tp Comd **Capt Karl Jeeves**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Paula Matheson**

Times they are a changing in Bravo Tp as a number of figures leave the Troop, notably our last lot of recruits who left in a blaze of glory on their pass out parade on 28 April. **Capt Karl Jeeves** is also moving on to Sqn 2IC after six enjoyable months with Bravo Tp and **Cpl Dave Percival** is returning to the world of infanteering, as he returns back to his battalion in Chepstow after a long stint with the Royal Signals. I haven't quite managed to recruit him into the Corps but I don't think we were too far off. **Cpl Dave Percival** will be sorely missed by the Squadron who have benefited from his infantry skills and highly professional attitude and the Troop lament the passing of 'Asbestos Mouth' who struck terror into the hearts of anyone who doesn't like hot food! Bravo Tp would like to welcome **Lt Gunny Gunson** who arrives to command the Troop and to **Cpl Ron Grandon** RE and **Cpl Steve Halpin** RE who are evidence of the Troops continuing commitment to a multi-cap badged training team.

ORGANISING A FUND RAISING EVENT?
WHY NOT PUBLICISE IT IN THE WIRE?
WRITE AND LET US KNOW WHAT HAPPENS

263 (HARROGATE) SIGNAL SQUADRON
ARMY APPRENTICES COLLEGE

Sqn Comd **Maj Steven France**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Adam Yafai**

RAWSON TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt George Alexander**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Helen Jasper** REME

By this stage of training the Troop is in its senior term. Essentially they have completed the CMS(R) and have education and a couple of exercises left. More importantly they pass off in only ten weeks. A few of the ATs 'volunteered' to give the following accounts of their activities:

LEADERSHIP WEEK - *by AT Peter Moughton*

The College's eyes were all on Rawson Troop, as we were the first Troop of the new senior term to embark on leadership week. The beginning of the week consisted of a stretcher race combined with two command tasks on route. This was our first experience of this kind of PT and it was hard physically and mentally. It also helped form the teams that we would work with for the rest of the week. The next test of our teamwork and leadership came in the form of a very wet afternoon at Gibraltar Barracks. After some instruction in knots and lashings we were given six oil drums and four Bailey Chess's (they looked like planks but the engineers got very upset when we called them planks). Once the rafts were complete we raced to the opposite side of the lake, picked up our Troop Commander, and raced back. From here it was off to Bramley Training Area where we were taught simple improvised shelters followed by a night navigation exercise. Our next challenge was a full day of command tasks with everyone given the chance to lead a task. Fortunately **AT Worthington** had led his task before he fell off a pole and did his dead fly act. The final event was a timed run through camp involving the assault course, the tunnels, a stretcher and more command tasks. In all it was a hard week but we learnt a lot about ourselves.

2 Section, Rawson Troop
Looking to the Padre and God for divine inspiration

EXERCISE SARAH SANDS - *by AT Niel Radcliff*

Ex Sarah Sands was our first exercise of the senior term; it consisted of a day's refresher training followed by a short tab onto the exercise area. Once established in a harbour area we started to observe our target, each Section spent nine hours in the observation post. The only disturbance during this time was a patrol of Officer Cadets from RMAS. Once we told them where they were they moved quickly on. We then spent the next nine hours conducting recce patrols and rehearsals. During this stage we looked at different ways that we could attack the position. Once we had finished this we received orders to attack the enemy location. Our preparations were disturbed slightly when we came under chemical attack and were forced to move to a new location. However, uncomfortable as NBC suits are they are more effective at keeping insects at bay than the insect repellent is. The exercise was concluded with a section attack. **Cpl Bob** 'Psycho Bob' **Ayres** (2 Para) led the attack, which had the enemy completely confused. After a short tab off the area it was back to the college for tea and medals.

CHARITY

John Longshaw is a young spastic quadriplegic boy whose plight was brought to our attention by **Sgt Mark** 'Robbo' **Roberts**, our last Troop Sergeant. Within almost no time at all he organised a number of charity events with the aim of raising enough money to send **John** to a special rehabilitation school. For the event the Troop was split into teams of eight. Each individual had to row 5.2km then cycle 5.2km. To make supervision easier this was all completed in the gym. Once the team had completed their stint they would have done the equivalent of rowing across the Channel and cycling back. Although all the money-raising events are not finished we are on line to smash of target of £3500. Well-done everybody.

PENNY TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Adam Shakespeare**
Tp Sgt **Sgt** 'Digger' **Gardner** RGBW

MY LIFE AT WEEK 5 - *by AT Blagg*

To begin with I was very apprehensive. The first day was very nerve racking, stepping off the train and seeing all the faces that were to become, in a way, a new family. As the first week unfolded it seemed to drag; a lot of the Troop were beginning to feel homesick and were a bit shocked at the new living style of eight-man rooms, 0600hrs reveille and specified lights out. As the weeks began to pass, we were bombarded with masses of information and attempting very different things, such as drill. The new lifestyle is very testing, while at the same time interesting and enjoyable. The first exercise is almost upon us, now we can put our new-found knowledge into practice. A lot of people have begun to settle in properly now, the other ATs seem to be bonding together and the team is slowly being formed. Personally I would not swap my new lifestyle for anything, my new family feel the same way.

MY LIFE AS A BACKTERMER - *by AT Maskell*

I was back-termed for my fitness following an injury. When I was told, it felt like a big kick in the teeth but I was determined not to give up. At first I found it hard to accept, I missed my friends in my old Troop and had to mix with strangers again. As the first few weeks went by I had a lot more confidence in myself, I knew most of the subjects being taught and improved. I have now made some good friends and enjoy my new Troop. I still feel that having to do the whole junior term again is a bit harsh, however, I am looking forward to passing off the square with my new Troop and I wouldn't miss it for the world.

BRADLEY TROOP, READING HALF MARATHON
by AT S. J. Ball and AT LCpl G. Collins

I felt nervous and exited at the prospect of my first half marathon. The journey to Reading was scary, all you could see were the cones marking out the 13 mile course and boy did it look long. We were determined to stay together during the marathon but as the crowd of thousands ran by it became hopeless, before I knew it I was running on my own. The marathon wasn't hard at first but the longer I ran the harder and longer the miles became. I just wanted to give up but the crowds of people kept me going. There were many water and vaseline stops, what the hell were the vaseline stops for? The 12 mile sign came and I was so glad, just a mile to go. This was the longest and hardest mile that I had ever done. I was relieved to see the finish line. Food was the only thing on my mind and the proud moment of wearing the Yellow Pages sponsored half marathon medal. All I wanted to do was have a hot shower and go to bed.

EXERCISE SPRING SPLASH (TIGER) 2000: 21 - 30 APRIL

This was a Sub-Aqua Diving Adventurous Training Expedition to Estartit, Spain. Estartit is a well-known diving resort on the Costa Brava featuring the 'Illes Medes', a group of unpopulated offshore islands designated as a marine reserve. Dive sites range from five metre plateau's to 30 metre plus drop offs and a wide variety of locations in between. Fishlife is plentiful and varied with several large species, visibility is 8-10 metres and water temperatures are reasonable. Following the new training programme for the BSAC Club Diver Course 13 senior term ATs and five members of staff were ready to go diving in the week following the end of term. The breakdown of the team was; 4 Royal Engineers, 4 Royal Signals, 9 REME and 1 Para! Easier said than done, just a minor thing of the Pass Off Parade to complete first. Somehow we all made it!

Thursday evening we assembled and loaded the minibuses for the long haul to Spain. We caught the midnight Dover-Calais ferry and then srayed off the toll roads for a slow journey south, we didn't need to be in Spain until Saturday morning! Whilst the non-drivers squirmed and burrowed their way into ever more contorted sleeping positions around the seats and luggage the drivers 'stagged on' for 2 - 3 hour stints of driving, navigating and sleeping in rotation. Saturday we at last reached Estartit, checked in with our dive charter company and the apartments. The afternoon was spent resting, admin and briefings. Also the novel experience for the majority of being issued with their CILOR money and going shopping for food to live on. No Mum, no Army Cookhouse not even a 24hr compo pack - Help what do we do? Does it really cost that much! How much do we need?!

The first outing of the week saw the majority with green faces, hanging over the side of the dive boat and 'Feeding the Fish' as they were getting

their 'Sea Legs'! Fortunately the weather improved during the week and all got used to being at sea. Underwater there were the initial problems of buoyancy to be corrected; some were practising their underwater leopard crawling skills! One day's diving is very much like the rest but with two outings a day we were all kept busy, as the week progressed the diving skills improved and more challenging dives undertaken. Confidence grew and so did the encounters with the fish-life and the tales, 'It was this big!!' Octopi and Sea Cucumbers for some reason seemed to be of most interest. The final days diving featured a cave swim through to the Dolphin Statue, rock arches and a relatively demanding 'open water' navigation dive. Good experience was gained by all and at last we were all getting used to the fish-life demanding food from us and not being so panicked when they were constantly in your face.

All that was left to do was get home following the last night party. All that 'Block Job' training paid off. All apartments cleaned, bags packed and pigs ready to fly by 1000hrs. Well nearly!! As usual the minibuses seemed even more cramped on the way home but everyone managed to squeeze into a space somewhere and settled into the long haul home. The aim of the trip was met in full with 12 out of the 13 ATs gaining their BSAC Sports Diver qualification.

EXERCISE MAPLE SNOW TIGER
25 FEBRUARY - 06 MARCH 2000

This expedition was like nothing I had done before, I had not had the money or confidence to try anything like this before now. I was not sure what to expect from the expedition. Would it be a purely military style exercise or like a holiday with some mates? It turned out to be a mixture of both, because we were up each morning by 0630hrs but then up later in the evening playing pool and watching TV with mates.

I was not sure what to expect with the plane journey to Canada. We arrived at Heathrow and after some shopping flew to Chicago then to Calgary. When we arrived in Calgary we were all a little excited even after the 21 hour journey. We walked out the doors and were amazed at the cold temperature and how everything looked so different.

The first day skiing was probably one of the best days. It was also one of the most exhausting and tiring days because everyone was looking forward to learning how to ski but everyone was still tired. Skiing can be very exhausting if you don't get the hang of it straight away. The next few days were a lot of fun, everyone made a fool of themselves and we impressed each other in different ways by showing new skills, new sides to personalities and demonstrated that the Signals and the Engineers actually can get on!

Once we had learned to ski we were allowed off in small groups. This meant that new skills such as our trust and judgement were really tested. The ski touring was another skill that we learned. At first it was very hard work using the different skis and going up hill but trying to ski down was even more of a challenge.

On the journey home everyone seemed really depressed as we all felt the same as our parents do after a holiday having to return to the same old routine. Luckily we all returned with some great memories, photos and stories to pass on to family and friends.

AT Talboys, AT Goddard, Capt Pedder, AT Sweeney, AT Baines
AT Berry was absent

NEWS FROM THE BALKANS

MULTINATIONAL DIVISION (SOUTH WEST)
AND
BRITISH FORCES SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)
OPERATION PALATINE

Sqn Comd **Maj A. H. Campbell-Black**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D. W. Craig**

Our newly formed Britfor Sig Sqn comprises of individuals from a selection of units led by 4 Armd Bde Sig Sqn. We have now settled into the drive to reduce down to a Troop size by the end of the tour. This of course depending on the Commercialisation Implementation Team(CIT) staying on target (so far so good), with all hands to the pump. Our newly appointed 2IC **Capt Paul Buck** is sorting out his G1 skills after a year as Ops Offr, leaving **YofS Neil Ferris** and **FofS Dean Briers** to educate the new ops team consisting of **Sgt John Swanston** and **Sgt Steve Tressider** (The Ops Narks) in the ways of the ops cell. **Capt Buck** burnt his bridges early in the tour by closing down the RMP bar after discovering an illicit spot of after-hours drinking whilst on camp orderly officer. He claims to have been 'merely passing and heard loud music' – he didn't go looking for them at all. Meanwhile poor **Chief Tony Waite** soldiers on as a one man show in the orderly room, with his G5 head on. As for the Boss, even with a radio issued to him, he still manages to be elusive, (he also had the front to call OC Oscar 'The Scarlet Pimpernel') with the RSM constantly searching the metal factory for him. Which reminds us, nobody is to mention the ginger smudge that has appeared on the RSMs top lip. It's rumoured to be the start of a 'gringo' but we'll keep you updated.

OSCAR TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Paul McTurk**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Ollie' **Oliver**

Oscar Tp are now fully settled into their new tasks in Bosnia. The troop have taken over the hill top sites and RLDs. The crew at Gola P have reported sighting an old hermit in the bunker complex and upon further investigation they discovered it was only **LCpl Charlie Forsyth** , the detachment commander. **LCpl** 'Robbo' **Robertson** continues to put in some intense training to prepare himself for another crack at P company and regularly does high reps with the satellite remote control and running up his phone bill. Up on Vitorog **Cpl Paul Lomas** and crew are considering moving into the catering trade with their trademark menu being pie and chips. **LCpl 'Camouflage' Hislop** and his crew are enjoying the solitude, this they relieve by writing books entitled 'The weekly Sitrep'. **Sig** 'Dinger' **Bell** continues as the det entertainment rep with the responsibility of providing literature and movies. Rumour has it that 'Dinger' is a dab hand with the cooks' trailer and can even make scrambled eggs on the move. We'll see if that's true if they ever manage to get it back out of the minefield. **LCpl** 'Scott Rose' heads up the team on Radalici. He and his able crew seem to be making good inroads into opening the first Bosnian branch of the RSPCA.

Meanwhile at the Rear link detachments **LCpl** 'Arfur' **McKenna** is celebrating the forthcoming closure of Gornji Vakuf and his return to UK for his Class 1. **Sig Malcolm** is counting down the hours till his reunion with his other half back at BLMF. **Cpl Sam Huby** at Ljubia is having fun in the sun with the Czech BG. **Sig** 'Scotty' **Walker** is showing a keen interest in PT particularly runs where he lets **Cpl Huby** lead from the front. Sipovo RLD, commanded by **LCpl** 'Timothy' **Stanton**, are all ice cream and flip flops just don't tell the RSM! The Dutch RLD at Sipovo, commanded by **LCpl** 'Stevie' **King**, are keeping the hilltop sites amused with their own welfare videos of local flora and fauna supplied by our Dutch colleagues. Mrkonic Grad RLD – (NCO IC **LCpl McKay**) are integrating well with our friends from the infantry battle-group although the grunts have not yet mastered the power of conversation or politeness. **Cpl Morris** and **Sig** 'Whippy' **Trotter** at Corolici RLD are making the most of the free ice-cream before the det shuts down.

Back at BLMF **SSgt Oliver** is well into his task of memorizing the catalogue from all the CD shops. This he does by paying regular visits to look at the stock on view. **Sig** 'Mad Dog' **Murdoch** has found plenty of opportunity to continue his hobby of collecting tram chassis numbers during a recent visit to Sarajevo. **Sig Sheppard** has also been out and about and now knows the quickest route from Zagreb to Slovenia (Turn left onto the motorway instead of right). After an excellent start to the tour work is becoming routine and the weather is roaring into the nineties, if we can keep it up through the summer we can look forward to a peaceful winter in Germany.

PAPA TROOP - *by Sig Matt Ruddy*

Papa Tp is back! The Troop would first of all like to welcome the lads from 7 Sig Regt who have joined us for the duration of our Tour. The Troop deployed from Osnabruck to BLMF under the watchful eyes of **2Lt**

Mike Parke and **SSgt Paul** 'Old Grumpy' **Davis** and after three rather tiring weeks things are going well. Much of this is down to **Cpl** 'Mo' **Pay's** jovial attitude and **LCpl** 'Thomo' **Thomas** just about managing to keep his temper whilst sorting out the Troop stores. The Troop MT side of life is sad to be saying goodbye to **LCpl Dave Dowson** who will be leaving us shortly to go on his Class I but welcomes instead **Sig Lucy Corlett** who has just joined us in BLMF. Some members of the Troop namely **LCpls Samuel** and **Marlborough** and **Sigs Brittain**, **Ashmore**, **Yates** and **Tooke** have been lucky enough to escape the 'Mental' Factory for a few days to work on their suntans (and also carrying out a bit of work for the CIT Team). This has left the rest of us to come to terms with setting up the Troop's main responsibility, which is providing the Tac HQ for MND(SW). The rest of the Troop's time has been spent being on various NTMs (much to the dismay of **Sigs Hunter** and **Walker**) practicing day and night time call-outs and being woken up early for pre work jaunts with the Troop's resident PTI, **LCpl** 'Chalky' **White** of the REME.

ROMEO TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt** 'Ben' **Howarth**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Jack' **Buckley**

At over seventy strong this conglomerate of departments supports both the headquarters at Banja Luka, as well as hilltop sites and rear link detachments down as far as Split. Not working together for a whole six months (since Kosovo) the joint forces of primarily 4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn(204) and 7 Sig Regt have blended together well. Apart from the usual raids from the fun police, life at the Metal Factory has settled into a relaxed but professional atmosphere. Basic entertainmentis to be found at the bar, the gym, a couple of coffee shops and visiting the girls at the CD shops (to buy CDs). The sales technique is awesome as your musical tastes are well catered for by deliberately skimpily clad females. All too soon we have to say goodbye to **Sgt** 'Where's the gym?' **Butler** and his two quieter amigos from 249. Additionally our 16 Sig Regt brethren are heading back to PTL.

Congratulations are due firstly to **LCpl** 'Work out' **Mallison** on his choice of present for his girlfriend's birthday, and to **Sig** '0898' **Schafer** for the feminine perspective. To Staff for finally completing a PT session without throwing up; to **Cpl 'bouffant-head' Allen** for convincing the General that signals really is black magic; to **Sgt 'mine's a Merc' Swanston** for finally buying a round and to our RAF team of **SAC** 'Adrian' **Moles** and **Sgt** 'I'm not his dad' **Mulgrew** for their contribution to volleyball. Thank you to **Cpl** 'Happy bloke' **Milliken** for keeping us smiling and for reminding us when the next meal starts to the nearest minute, and to **Sig** 'The Clown' **Brierley** for simply keeping us smiling. A special mention is necessary for **Sig** 'Prince William' **Hardy** and her bridge building, keep it up **Sarah**.

So a good, if bumpy start for Really Large Troop. There is all to play for in the looking really keen and earnest stakes with **LCpl Baynes** edging ahead. Even more keenly contested is the driving generators around Bosnia competition (sponsored by the CIT team) with **Cpl Teale** claiming a quite unbelievable distance equivalent to three laps of the globe. Comms are mostly working and we have much to do to keep the Squadron going. Better go as there is a 'gentle but powerful purring' at my window, it must be **LCpl** 'Hot milk at bedtime' **Lane** to take me out for a spin in his classic Jaguar. We can all dream **Laney**…

MULTINATIONAL BRIGADE (CENTRE) HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

Sqn Comd **Maj Mark Roberts**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Mark Tivey**

A big change-around in the Squadron over the last month with farewells to the outgoing OC, **Lt Col Andy Bristow** on promotion and a move to MOD Main Building, to the outgoing Ops Officer, **Capt Jason Gray** who has left us for the delights of JCSC and to **WO1 (RSM) Colin Milne**, who is off to relax (even more?) with 38 Sig Regt - we sincerely wish you all the best of luck. Equal welcomes to **Maj Mark Roberts,** the incoming OC, **Capt Craig Thompson-Smith** who joins us as Ops Officer and to **WO1 (RSM) Mark Tivey**, taking over as RSM. A continued busy period for the Squadron, now just over half way through our tour in Kosovo, sights are set for the successful completion of the tour and our return to Hohne.

Sig Tranter and friends at Liria School, Milosevo

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Adam Corkery**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Dave Sloane**

With the Squadron now two-thirds of the way through Op Agricola 3 and the return to Hohne nearly in sight, Kosovo is now becoming a way of life for the Signal Squadron. New challenges happen daily, for example supplying communications for the Brigade reserve back to HQ MNB(C), backing up 2 RRF in house searches and the Scots DGs in patrolling. All in all the past two months have been quite a busy and hectic period for the Squadron. One of the main recent events was Dynamic Response 2000 or DR2K, which was an exercise to prove how quickly NATO could surge troops into Kosovo from outside the country. This started with the Brigade HQ deploying to a fully tactical field location, to command and control our part of the multinational exercise, and later an element of 1 (US) Marine Corps and 1 (NL) Marine Corps deploying into Kosovo and securing key areas. The Exercise ran smoothly, with the Squadron having many high profile visitors such as Commander KPOR all of whom were very impressed with how well the Brigade HQ and Signal Squadron performed.

In the following weeks after returning from the Exercise there was no rest for the Squadron as the much awaited move to the TFA was fast inbound. Moving a static Brigade HQ from one location to another is not an easy task and so a lot of groundwork had to be done. On the eve of the move the Armoured HQ was deployed to prepare for the staff so they could retain command of MNB(C). After two days the HQ had been moved from the university to the TFA at VJ Barracks and life was improved 100%. Life has continued after the move with 1st lines, PRE and another imminent outing for the armour. Finally a few welcomes and farewells. Firstly welcome to the Troop to **Sgt Allsop** and **Sig McQuillan,** joining us in theatre for six months but a sad farewell from all to **LCpl** 'Biff' **Bithell** leaving us for 2 Sig Regt - best of luck for the future.

ROVER TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Andy Hill**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Andy Buckle**

Rover Tp is spread out in nine locations throughout MNB(C) AOR. The Troop is responsible for two hilltop sites, both housing Rebros and Centrals and seven Rear Link Detachments (RLD). Each RLD consists of three operators and they provide the multinational battle-groups with SCRA(T) and a secure VHF Brigade Command net.

GOLES HILLTOP SITE

There are eight of us at this site, four from 1 Div and we've been in the luxury Temporary Field Accommodation since February, although **LCpl Ben** 'Choggy tan' **Ford** didn't turn up until mid April due to a vast amount of badminton camps that he was wanted for. **LCp1 Dave** 'I've come back for more' **Harkness** is back to the same place he was at last summer with 4 Bde, strange man! Once we'd settled in **Sig Chris Brogan** decided to tell his girlfriend that we were on the front line, but was a little surprised when she wrote back with a, Dear John…. Now the weather's warmer, the number one activity when off shift is 'Sun Godding' with as few clothes as possible! Apart from **LCpl** 'Scouse' **Wright** of course, who's still trying in vain to make the Yorkshire Puddings rise!

SUVI BUNAR HILLTOP SITE

We are sorry to see **Sig Adam** 'Lurch' **Wilson** leave to go back to HQ, we gather they have some cows in dire need of scaring, so at least you'll be busy. Don't worry **Cpl Andy Allen,** you've now got BFBS so you won't miss the football. **Cpl Rob Luke** enjoyed donning his webbing when some locals reported a bomb left 500m from the camp. The site is shared with 19 Regt RA, but it's ours really and they know it!

CZECH RECCE

Life here has improved dramatically since we have moved to the Water Filtration Plant. We now have a swimming pool and random tortoises crawling around. **Sig Khrissy** 'Cat Napper' **Strain** is the new Dr Dolitle as she looks after the two cats. **LCpl Danny Pearson** has made the most of his time here, firing the Draganov sniper rifle and going on patrol near the Serbian border. The Czechs are starting to adapt to the western life style, they now have Kenny from South Park painted on their BMP guarding their camp!

NORWEGIAN BATTALION

New det commander **LCpl Greg Dick** has wasted no time at all getting to know the Norwegians. Within a few hours of arrival, he was out sunbathing with the Norwegian girls - good lad! A final well done to the Norwegian patrol that discovered a dead body a few days ago, shame it turned out to be a plastic skeleton!

SWEDISH BATTALION

Selected from a cast of thousands **LCpl Nat Roberts, Sigs Grace Howard** and **Eddie McSharry** were chosen to man the Swedish Rear Link detachment. Life started on February 12 and began well. Things changed when **Sig McSharry** left us for a while, five weeks in total, to work with the US Marine Corps on Ex Dynamic Response 2000. In the meantime, the Swedish battalion had changed over and it was like starting from the beginning again. When not on shift, the three of us have been actively involved with Swedish patrolling ranging from foot patrols in the local village of Ajvalija to experiencing life with the TAC-P. R&R has now come round and **LCpl Nat Roberts** has left us to be replaced by **LCpl** 'Mac' **MacPherson.**

FINNISH BATTALION

Based in Lipljan our three-man det consists of **LCpls Stuart Codack, Adam Rudge** and **Sig Kim Ashcroft**. We are in relative luxury here with full internet access, satellite TV and decent corimecs, shame about the food though- raw herring three times a day certainly takes some getting used to! With saunas as well, life is certainly a little different here. We also have a decent PX, so we're happy to put up with the unusual food for the extra home comforts.

CANADIAN REAR LINK DETACHMENTS

Life at the three Canadian RLDs has been short, sweet and very enjoyable. The nine people who have had the privilege of serving with the Canadians have learnt a lot about their different comms equipment and have enjoyed working alongside another professional army. Unfortunately, the three dets are closing down as the Canadians are pulling out so we'll miss the waffles and maple syrup and the endless ice hockey matches on TV.

14 SIGNAL TROOP (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)
Tp Comd **Lt Ian Rodger**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Si Donnelly**

After three long months we have finally decided to write some notes for *The WIRE* as we've been so busy working non-stop – honest! We have now finally moved from the Bread Factory into the TFA, and living in decent accommodation instead of living under ponchos. **Lt** 'Swampy' **Rodgers** had a little incident whilst having a jolly on a helicopter one fine Sunday morning, nothing more to be said on that subject. In May some of the Troop were nominated from the cast of thousands to participate in the Kosovo Half Marathon, **WO1 Mary Fry, LCpls** 'Biscuits' **Gray** and **John** 'The Bedhead' **Brookwell** - the search party is still out looking for them. A little incident happened one Saturday night recently involving **Q** 'Where's the pilot' **Angove**. He had G2 Ops in stitches when he burst into their Ops Rooms crying out that the pilot of the Phoenix Unmanned Airjet had ejected into Serbia; that little scheme was thought up by **Sig** 'Obvious' **Mathieson** and Q still hasn't got the beers in for his outburst. There have been many promotions and postings in and out of particular note. Congratulations to **Cpl Daz** 'Combat-tech' **Owen, Cpl Stu** 'Combat-tech' **Gray, LCpl Nicki Donnelly** and **LCpl Si Frost** on their recent promotions and also **JT Jules Field** on her selection to Corporal. Also a big well done to **LCpls Nicki, Simno,** and **Frosty** for passing their 2 to 1 Crammer -watch out Blandford! Goodbye to **Cpl** 'Brummy' **Brumfield** and **Cpl** 'Skippy' **Roach** and hello to **Cpl Luke** 'Lego Head' **Venni, LCpl Lee Allen** and **Sig Jodie Wilinot** - we all hope you enjoy your stay. That's all for now and we'll definitely try to send more notes next month.

P.S: To LC0 'Tyrone' Grixnes - did you enjoy your no.2's inspection - didn't see any medals!!

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE
Tech SSgt **SSgt Dave Baddeley**

We are currently half way through Op Agricola 3 and these first three months have seen us engaged in a variety of activities out here in Kosovo. These have included normal technical support to the Brigade in main locations and in the field, installing Ptarmigan and Radio equipment into the new TFA and also second line support to other units.

To start with, we saw two newly promoted technicians being moved to hilltop sites. **Cpl** 'Demi' **Moore** being moved to Goles and **Cpl Steve Livesey** to Suvi Bunar. Both are providing an invaluable service with the duty technician call-outs being cut by almost 100%. We also saw the departure of two Brigade technicians, **Cpl John Ford** and **Cpl** 'Scott 'Teeth" **Marlow** to sunny Blandford for their upgrading course, which they will surely enjoy!! **Cpl John Fords** PT lessons will, we're sure, be missed and **Cpl Marlows** expertise at R&I and stores accounting will be irreplaceable.

At the moment, **LCpl Pete Hunsberger**, from 1 Div, is attempting to fill **Cpl Marlow's** shoes and finding life a challenge. On top of these responsibilites, **LCpl H** has been busy recently carrying out first line inspections, along with the help of **Cpl** 'Tommo' **Thomasson,** posted in from Rorneo Tp, 15 Sig Regt and LCpl **Daffyd Ellis**, another member of 1 Div Sig Regt.

As far as the other personalities go, **SSgt Dave** 'Magnum PI' **Baddeley** and **LCpl Rog Mortimer** have been reported as having set up camp at PTK, the telecoms building in Pristina. We reckon it's just an excuse for window shopping in Pristina, but at the end of the day they are keeping comms in for the troops on the ground, who I am sure appreciate it.

There is also **Sgt Pete Finnigan** and **Cpl Jon Lynn,** both from 1 Div, who are overcoming the lack of gloop and 'intense' heat (Jon) trying to ensure that the switches and controls in theatre are constantly, up and running. The two radio technicians in the workshops arrived in theatre later that the main party, only to find that the systems techs had been let loose on the Brigade's radio assets. **Sgt Lee Clark**, posted in from 30 Sig Regt, first arrived to save the day followed by **Cpl Adi Worsdall** after recovering from illness back in Hohne.

Apart from the technicians within the workshop, the five technicians have been kept busy. **Sig Gavin Stubbs** and **Sig Hughes** were employed at the TFA during the week prior to the move, installing phones and exchanges. **Sig Paul Wraight** and **Sig Norm** 'The Cat' **Wells** have been assisting the lineys **LCpl Gaz Davies** and **Sig Ian Holmes** with both installing and maintaining lines. They were also both involved in the clearing out of old cables in the University building which **LCpl Davies** was particularly happy with when they dumped it on his lap. Another telemech and late arrival is **Sig** 'Flash' **Hallon** with the little time he has had in theatre he has learned to rewire 436 sevenquad ports and also managed to cram two weeks R&R in there somewhere. What lies ahead for the rest of the tour and our recovery to Hohne, we can only guess.

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col G. J. T. Rafferty**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) A Balsdon**

Despite the hectic pace of life in an operational Headquarters and Signal Regiment, the officers and soldiers of 15 Sig Regt continue to produce the goods on a variety of fronts. We have run Battle Camps, fielded numerous successful sporting teams, entered two teams into the Lanyard Trophy competition, hosted several high profile visits, organised a variety of exercises, and simultaneously achieved our ongoing Mission;

'to provide uninterrupted communications support in order to enable Security Forces Operations in Northern Ireland to be commanded and controlled effectively'.

REGIMENTAL EVENTS: HI TECH CHALLENGE

The Regiment entered two teams into this challenging event. Team 1 was **Capt Helen Murphy, Lt Jamie Balfour** and **Sgt Dave Kilgallon**. Team 2 was **Sgt Stu Murray, Sgt Martina Ashton** and **Sgt Wayne Ballard**. The event took place on Sunday 7 May. We were not told of the race order until the race brief the night before, when to our dismay we were told there would be an extra seven miles to the mountain biking session. The event started with a nine-mile biking stage following a 500m dash to the bikes. This was followed by 10 (optimistic) mins of blowing the kayaks up before starting the 2-mile paddle. As the temperatures soared, so did our frustration at trying to keep the so-called 'yellow blighters' going in a straight line. On the other side we were met with a further seven-mile biking before finishing off with a five mile run up some of the steepest mountains in the region.

Both teams did really well considering the amount of training we had completed (coming 42nd and 49th respectively out of the 118 teams that competed). On route there were a few hiccups, including **Sgt Dave Kilgallon's** bicycle chain giving way with 9 miles to cycle. He ran it just as quickly as **Capt Helen Murphy** could ride. **Sgt Martina Ashton** found that long shoe laces and pedals don't mix, and **Sgt Wayne Ballard** found himself riding a bike with a seat which had worked itself loose. Not fun he informed us. But overall both teams had an excellent, if arduous day and would recommend it to a anyone who is very fit and chasing a different kind of challenge.

Standing (L-R): Sgt Dave Kilgannon, Capt Helen Murphy, Lt Jamie Balfour

WOMANS REGIMENTAL FOOTBALL-6 APRIL 2000

by Sig Kerry Stewart

This competition was a great success and offered a good opportunity for all teams to play for the place in the finals in Aldershot. The games were played in great spirit and the whole organisation of the day was fantastic thanks to **Capt Liz Dallyn**. The best of luck was sent to 39 Brigade who qualified to go through to the finals, 17 April 2000.

EXERCISE CRYSTAL FINN 2000

On Sunday 11 March 15 personnel of 15 Sig Regt set out on an arduous adventure training exercise to Val Thorens in the French Alps. The aim of the Exercise was to consolidate the experienced skier's skills and to teach the beginners in the group the basics of the various disciplines of skiing. Instruction was gained at all levels through Army Ski Instructor and ex-Olympic Downhill Skier **Sgt John McClelland** and **Capt Robin Carpenter**. After a 12 hour minibus/plane/coach journey, it was time to relax before the impending beasting promised all by **Sgt McClelland**. 9a.m. the following morning saw 15 fashion victims on the slopes, ready for action. The Exercise was then split into two groups, one of experienced skiers and one for the novices. The VT Nutters - **Capts Robin Carpenter, Bill Brennan, SSgts John Fielder, Paul Dunn, Fi Fielder, Sgt Richie Gathercole, LCpl Billy Kirkwood** and **Sig Linda Shields**. The VT Nancies - **Sgt John McClelland, Cpl Jay Aldred, LCpl Gez Drummond, LCpl Mickey Smith, Sigs Tracey Walker, Martin Henson and Alan Neesam**.

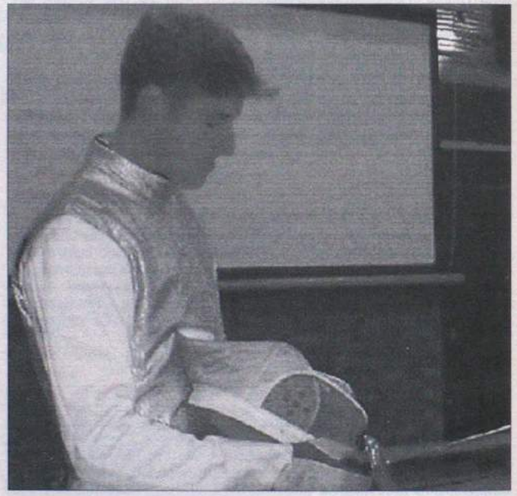
(L-R): Capt Robin Carpenter (Int Corps), SSgt Paul Dunn, Cpl Dawn Poole (Int Corps), LCpl Billy Kirkwood (Int Corps), Sgt Ritchie Gathercole

As the first day progressed the novices got to grips with the nursery slopes. Meanwhile, **Robin Carpenter** impressed all with a tumbling routine over the mogul fields! OUCH! By the beginning of the second week all were skiing confidently, the beginners progressing onto the blue slopes and achieving the army bronze skiing award and the advanced party zipping down reds, but still having difficulty with button lifts - namely **SSgt Fi Fielder** and **SSgt Paul Dunn. Cpl Jay Aldred** decided that his skiing had reached its pinnacle and on his day off decided snow boarding was the way forward! The following day, nursing sprained wrists and bruised limbs, **Cpl Aldred** was back on his skis!

By the middle of the second week, **SSgt John Fielder, Sgt John McClelland, SSgt** 'Richie' **Gathercole** and **Sig Tracey Walker** had all received word of promotion. Congratulatory drinks were in order in the light of four promotions within two days!

REGIMENTAL FENCING NEWS AND THE ARMY CHAMPIONSHIPS

This is the first year that 15 Sig Regt has put forward a team in the Army Fencing Championships. This year it was held at the Princess Royal Barracks at Deepcut and didn't we do well! The three people sent to represent the Regiment were **2Lt Elizabeth** 'I shouldn't have done Lanyard last week' **McLellan, Cpl** 'Richie - Can I take my sword on the plane?' **Hill** and **LCpl Stevie Hicklin.** Apart from having to teach **LCpl Hicklin** how to actually fence, and explain the fact that it wasn't the 'done' thing to follow up with a right hook, the Team exceeded alll expectations. **2Lt McLellan** came away with second place in the Individual Women's Epee. Although the Men's Competition was also very tough both **Cpl Hill** and **LCpl Hicklin** were seeded highly in all three disciplines. The Team did well in the 3-Man Inter-Unit Competition and gained third place, only losing two of their matches. All three members of the Team represented the Corps, helping towards another third place. Many thanks go to **Mr Terry Cullen**, (11 Sig Regt's Coach) for the loan of equipment, (**Cpl Hill** promises that he'll beat you next time). Next year we'll win that trophy!!



LCpl Steve Hicklin – Armed And Dangerous

LANYARD TROPHY 2000

As with most things when **Capt Helen Murphy** announced that she would be running the female Lanyard Team, we were inundated with volunteers. The team consisted of **Capt's Helen Murphy, Liz Dallyn, Bels Talylor, Kerry Venn, 2Lt Liz McLellan, Sgts Shameem Newman, Martina Ashton, LCpl Tracey Walker** and **Sig Pipa Henderson**. Our team should have gone in for a sub aqua contest. First **Capt Kerry Venn** slipped and got one leg in a river, then **LCpl Tracey Walker** sunk thigh deep in a bog. **Sgt Shameem Newman** frustrated at not having a war story to tell back at camp decided to go one better. While crossing one particularly rough and rapid river she hesitated mid river on a stepping rock The next rock to step on only had two inches poking above the water. **Sgt Shameem Newman** being very wary of heights stopped to ponder the vast jump for a few seconds. **Capt Helen Murphy** was very keen to move on because she could smell her Cornish pasties waiting for her. She shouted 'jump', **Sgt Shameem Newman** obliged and jumped. She missed the rock and fell into the river. Suddenly the current got hold of her and she had to cling onto the rock to avoid getting swept down river. Luckily she had on 'Combat 95 gloves type green contact' and was able to cling on to the rock. After analysing the situation for ten minutes **Capt Liz Dallyn** shouted 'drop your bergens' and they then came to the rescue. Falling into the water was just the tonic and the team powered through to the end and came a respectable third.

The 15 Sig Regt men's Lanyard Trophy team was verging on a veteran entry. **Capt Robin Carpenter, WO1(RSM) Al Balsdon** and **SSgt 'Q' Rose** kept the average age well above 30. The youngest member of the

team was co-opted at the last moment from the admin party. Fortunately **LCpl Nathan Hadley** was a veteran in his own way having competed twice before. **Cpl Phil McLeish** is congratulated for finishing despite sustaining an injury very early on in the competition. Every member of the team that started completed the course and thoroughly deserved the carbohydrate drink presented by the admin party at the end.

Standing (L-R): WO1 (RSM) Balsdon, SSgt Rose, LCpl Flay, Cpl Baldwin, Cpl McLeish, Sgt Murray, LCpl Hadley, Capt Carpenter, Capt Hargreaves
Kneeling (L-R): SSgt Jarvis, Cpl Winder, Sig Mugford

ROYAL SIGNALS CORPSAAM 2000 - *by Sgt 'Sven' Gronn*

With the arrival of **Capt Colin Kell** last year, it was inevitable that the Regiment would enter a team into the Royal Signals Corps Skill At Arms Meeting (CORPSAAM). This year's competition was held over the period 9-14 April 2000. Unfortunately, the Regiment with its operational commitments could only muster one team of five plus an individual. With a team line up of **Capt Colin Kell, Lt Jamie Balfour, Sgt Sven Gronn, LCpl Andy Burrows, Sig Adam Ryan** and **Cpl Lee Woodhouse.** Well as it turned out, after a week of shooting the team didn't win anything, but for a scratch team who had received very little training, we could hold our heads up with a creditable fifth major unit placing (out of 13 teams).

Capt Kell, as usual, had a good week, (at one stage he allegedly smiled!) Being an Army 100 shot, he showed the rest of the team how it was done by winning some silverware; coming seventh overall in the Rifle and fourth in the Champion At Arms competitions. In summary, the week was an excellent break from operational commitments and with any luck maybe some of the team will be Army 100 shots in the future.

NISAAM 2000 - *by LCpl Andy Burrows*

This year's Northern Ireland Skill at Arms Meeting was held at Ballykinler Ranges over 2-6 May 2000. The competition was compulsory for all units within The Province and was comprised of a number of shoots under 'operational' conditions. There were entries from four major unit Iron Sight teams including ourselves, 2 RMP, 25 Engr Regt and the newly formed NICSS Regt. The team comprised of **Lt Balfour, Sgt Gronn, Cpl John Connolly, Cpl Fred Deas, Cpl Woodhouse, LCpl Steve Boyd, LCpl Burrows, LCpl Bede Gladish, LCpl Nick Jenkins** and **Sig Ryan**. From the report above you will see that half of the team competed in the CORPSAAM so the initial hopes were high for a good result, and with an excellent weather forecast for the week we were guaranteed a sun tan at the very least.

Our first shoot was the Fire Team Match, which consisted of a 2 mile run followed by a Fire Team Assessment shoot. The whole match was done with 25lb of weight (including rifle) and body armour. Unfortunately, after half a mile we said goodbye to young **Sig** 'Pte' **Ryan** who collapsed with dehydration. Still the remaining seven members went on to have a good shoot but with the loss of one man we could not match the other team scores. The team then went on to complete the Sangar and Roupell Matches. **LCpl Boyd** took Bronze in the Sangar shoot. The FIBUA Match that afternoon saw **Lt Balfour** take silver, an excellent performance with a score of 149. The only shoots remaining were the Pistol Tiles and Falling Plate. In the Pistol Tiles the 'A' Team **(Kell, Balfour, Connolly, Woodhouse** and **Boyd)** achieved a respectable semi-final spot and were only beaten by the overall winning team (the RRF). Similar glory was almost achieved by the 'B' Team (**Gronn, Connolly, Deas, Gladish**) in the falling plate who again got through to the semi's but were beaten by the eventual winners, 25 Engr Regt. All in all it was a good week of shooting and for many a steep learning curve. The Team achieved a first place in the FIBUA Match, third place in the Rifle competition and fourth place in the overall Team Competition.

MERCURY AND THE CO'S CUP - ATHLETICS

by LCpl J. Lowe

On Wednesday 12 April 2000, TM Tp with a little help from its friends decided to represent the squadron for Athletics. Starting off with the 400m hurdles we had **LCpl Lee Khair**. He stormed over the hurdles, making everyone else look like they were carrying fridges. **LCpl Khair** also romped away with the 800m. As a last minute entry from India Troop, **LCpl** 'Chicken' **McLuckie** clucked his way to victory in the 110m hurdles. For the Shot Putt and the Discus, **Cpl Karl Hannah** threw his weapons of war so far we're still waiting for them to land. As far as the jumping events go, there was more of a mix bag of results. For the long and triple jump we had from Romeo Tp, **Cpl Thommason**. He came a respectable third in the Long Jump and a close second in the Triple Jump. He did all this whilst he was supposed to be clearing from the Squadron. (That's what I call dedication). In the 5000m we had **Cpl MacMillan**. For the 1500m we had **Cpl Lake** coming a respectable third. Doing the Javelin we had **SSgt Kev Tierney. LCpl A. B. J. Lowe** managed to run away with the 100m and 200m with extreme ease. **LCpl Lowe** also managed to win the High Jump.

The real hero's of the day were the ladies. They only had five participants doing all the events. In the Discus and Shot Putt we had **Sgt Younger**. She did exceptionally well considering she had excruciating back pain. For the 400m and 800m we had **Cpl Sunny** 'So who's coming second' **Lake** destroying the rest of the field in both disciplines. **LCpl Vanessa Brown** was very unlucky not to win both the 100m and 200m, but came a close second in each race. Lady Luck was shining on **LCpl Louise Parker**. As everyone else succumbed to falling over instead of leaping over the hurdles, she romped to victory leaving the rest nursing cuts and bruises on various parts of their bodies. She also came a close second in the High Jump. Last but not least we had **LCpl Leah** 'Tiny' **Mates** making the leap of faith by winning the Long Jump and the Triple Jump. She did remarkably well considering she was the smallest person on the field.

With things being pretty tight between ourselves and 225 Sig Sqn (the dark side of the force), it all came down to the relays. 225 won the 4x100m and the 4x400m and closed the gap on us ever so slightly. The last race of the day was one to cherish. The Chain of Command race. 233 Sig Sqn, might I add, were the only squadron to include their OC and SSM in this race. It was a very close but 233 came through in the end.

233 Squadron – Winning Team

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj John Mullender.**
SSM **WO2 Steve Russell.**

MOTOR TRANSPORT TROOP - *by Cpl Ingham*

The MT has been as busy as ever over the past few months. As well as the ever hectic way of life in NI, there have been management changes resulting in the amalgamation of the Quartermaster's Department with the MT - now known as Support Tp. A warm welcome to the QM's. In no particular order let's begin with the farewells. Good luck to the following: **Cpl Andy Howe** and **LCpl Adam Huggett** who as I write are probably freezing their bits off in Norway with 249 Sig Sqn. Enjoy fellows! Also to **Sigs Ian Holmes** and **Keith Lovell** and family who I'm sure are now enjoying Gyros, with Pomme Frittes mitt Mayo at 7 Armd Bde and 7 Sig Regt respectively. Now for the new arrivals to the Troop, welcomes go to those fortunate enough to be posted here to 15 Sig Regt: **Cpl Martin Hunt, LCpl Shawn Watson** and **Sig Steve Worthington** and families in from various mainland units. Also to **LCpl Charlie Lister, Sigs Danny Richardson** and **Jock Fleming** who have come over from Germany. Congratulations to **Danny, Steve** and **Charlie** on their recent promotions.

COMMCEN TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Howell-Walsmley**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Gratrick**

COMMCEN Tp is definitely the hub of all sporting events to date this year, Basketball, Netball, Hockey, Swimming, Athletics, Tug of War, Football and Lanyard Trophy. All events less Lanyard Trophy were conducted in between night shifts. On the day of the NI Football Competition we had enough females in the Regiment for two six a side teams. The males in the Regiment had obviously got wind of how good our football skills were and turned up in their droves to support us. (It had nothing to do with the vicious rumour spread that someone was going to do a streak if there was a goal scored.) When it came to the Army sixes it was a struggle to get six girls together. The Team went to Aldershot with no subs. The most memorable game was with 39 Inf Bde, we knew we had a good chance of winning, but let them beat us 13-0. The star of the

football for us was **Sig Pipa Henderson** who was selected for the Army squad again. Well done to **LCpl Sam Skyvington** for winning the javelin on the Morrison Cup, **Sig Henderson** for winning the high jump and **Sig Linda Shields** and **LCpl Tracey Walker** for without them the Team would not have been able to compete.

COMMCEN ANTRIM - *by LCpl Fox*

There seem to be more people coming and going than messages at the moment. Goodbye to **LCpl** 'Permanent Transmit' **Vickers** who has finally left to go to the Intelligence Corps, leaving a nice cushy slot for **LCpl Fox** to move to. **Sig Huish** has the pleasure of taking over from **Sig** 'Disco Queen' **Green**, then last but not least, **Sig Gorman** will step into **Sig Rodwell's** place as he accepts the challenge of 1 RBY Special Comms Selection Course.

COMMCEN PALACE - *by Sig Henson*

There have been recent changeovers in the COMMCEN. Let's start with the goodbyes. **Sig** 'Rodders' **Rodwell** has indeed been sent to COMMCEN Antrim soon to be joined by **LCpl Sam Skyvington** with the inspiring job of Stats, whilst **Cpl** 'Glo' **Fagan** is off to Civ Div. Also not forgetting **LCpl Webb** who recently won her tape and has re-traded to a Tech – well someone has to! So good luck and all the best. Hello to **Sig** 'Le Fox' **Shields, Sig Henson**, and not forgetting **Sig Gorman**.

COMMCEN LISBURN

Since we moved to HQ Sqn on 1December it's technically goodbye to 233 Sqn and **Cpls Lloyd, Phillips** and **MacDonald** in the CDA – although they're still nicking our food! Proper farewells to **LCpl Allen** and to **Claire Lydon** who've gone to civvy street. Congratulations **Claire** on your baby girl **Laura** (19 January) and to **Sgts Newman** and **Anderson** on their engagement – great news!! Also well done to **Sgt Anderson, LCpl Webb,** and **Sigs Walker** and **Green** on their recent promotions. Big hellos to **Sgt Newman, LCpl Joyce, Sigs Emmett, Green** and **Fleming.** Farewells to **Sig Simpson, Sig** 'Stapes' **Staples-Miles, Sig Jenny Read**, **Sig** 'Fanny' **Hannam** and **Sig Matt Green** – very best of luck to you all.

ATTACHMENT TO COMMCEN - *by 2Lt Astley*

On arrival at Lisburn I was delighted to see the COMMCEN in touch with its creative side, with almost nightly campaigns 'To congratulate **Sgts Anderson** and **Newman** on their engagement (courtesy of the Emmett and Green graphic design consultancy). Before having chance to add my name to the petition, I was whisked off to the legendary NIRTT course, and to 5 Regt AAC for a flight over the Province. Following this I received my tasking for the 6-week attachment, including teaching on ITDs, planning a navigation exercise in the Mourne Mountains, and being detached to 9 R IRISH, the RN and RM, 3 Inf Bde and 8 Inf Bde. I was also briefed on the various departments of the Regiment, and its role and mission, in order to understand how a unit operates. Between these were social events including a happy-clappy style theatre trip to 'The Blues Brothers' at the Grand Opera House Belfast, and the memorable Mess Burns' Night (apologies to those whose feet I stood on during reeling!) So far I've battled with the intricacies of Service writing, mostly late at night whilst chinchilla-sitting (think large squirrel/rabbit-type rodent) for absent officers… I've trotted around the perimeter fence numerous times (oh for a memory like a goldfish)… and failed to find the exit from Sqn HQ almost as frequently. I have been made to feel really welcome, if being dragged to circuits, swimming and basketball within ten seconds of arrival counts as such! On a serious note, thank you to everyone who's looked after me and so capably fielded my endless questions about absolutely everything! All the best to those serving in Northern Ireland over the next few months.

MOTOR TRANSPORT SECTION
EXERCISE DRIVE ALIVE PHASE ONE: 1-7 MAY 2000
by Cpl H Jones

Exercise Drive Alive Phase One was a Unit Driving Competition held at Magilligan Training Area, Longkesh and in Barracks, the aim of which was to improve the driving standards of our soldiers and to select a 3-man team to compete in province events later in the year. Day One was designed to test all drivers to the full. Despite feeling slightly sea sick **LCpl** 'Daz' **Pullen** impressed everybody with his hill descents. Day Two was the dreaded day of classroom work. This involved written tests including driving hours, fatigues, NI RTA and breakdown procedure, FMT3-2/3-3 documentation and theory test questions. Newly arrived in province **Sig 'Trev' Reilly** HQ Sqn seemed to fair the best at this phase. Day Three was spent at Longkesh on the manoeuvring area and this proved to be the most difficult day of all. A visit by **Maj Mullender** soon put all the competitors to shame, who along with his driver **LCpl** (now Cpl) **Trethewey** completed the manoeuvring phase with no penalties. The final day was a barrage of tests to sort out the final placings. The three winning competitors were:

a. HQ Sqn **Sig Reilly**.
b. HQ Sqn **Sig Worthington**.
c. 225 Sig Sqn **LCpl Pullen**.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd **WO2 (RQMS) Frost**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Dobbins**

Apart from work, SpTp still finds time to provide people for the numerous sporting events that take place within the Regiment and the Province. The Troop says farewell to **Sgt Chris Hood** who has moved to 11 Sig Regt on promotion, where he will be dishing out blankets, and no doubt spending plenty of time on the golf course; to **Sgt Al Bolton**, who made the massive move up the road to 225 Sig Sqn, where he will probably be taking it just as easy as he did in Support Tp. To **LCpl Nick Trethewey**, who is leaving us shortly on promotion, to play wacky races with the cabs in London, driving the CO of 71 Sig Regt (V), and finally to **Sara Thomas** the Squadron Clerk who leaves to move to Nuneaton. The Troop would like to send their congratulations to **Sig Steve Worthington** and his wife **Lisa** on the birth of their son **Kieran,** also we would like to extend our best wishes to **LCpl Nick Trethewey** and his fiancé **Kelly**, and to **Sig Crissy Marston** and her fiancée **Jim** on their pending marriages. The Troop would like to welcome **SSgt Mark Chivers, Sgt Sean Hyland, Cpl Martin Hunt** and **Sig's Taz Taylor**, 'Revs' **Revelly** and **Trev Rielly** to the Troop. Last but not least congratulations to **Sig Danny Richardson** on his recent promotion to Lance Corporal.

EXERCISE MALIN FINN

Ex Malin Finn was part of HQ Sqn's adventurous training calendar, which took place in the North Channel of the Irish Sea near the Mull of Kintyre. The Exercise took the form of a 12-day sailing expedition, which was broken down into three legs taking four people from the Squadron on each leg. **LCpl** 'Mac' **McFarlane** was skipper and **WO2 (SSM) Steve Russell** was the first-mate.

The first crew was **Sgt Sean** 'Galley Rat' **Hyland, LCpl Neath** 'Just lash me to the helm' **Hadley, Sig Andy** 'Ripp van Winkle' **Pennock,** and **Sig** 'Revs' **Revelly**. For that leg the weather couldn't have been much better, apart from when the wind decided to pick up from nowhere, which added a bit of excitement for a couple of minutes whilst we changed the sails down. During this leg the CO and the QM dropped onto on the boat quite literally, with the kind help of the RAF who high-lined the CO and the QM down onto the boat whilst in the middle of the Irish Sea.

Leg Two started a bit strangely with the majority of the crew feeling seasick after the first day, things picked up drastically with the crew of **Sgt** 'Merm' **Carter, Cpl** 'Rocky 'Just show me which way to point the boat' **Mountain, LCpl Tracey** 'Stop blocking the sun with those sails' **Walker** and **Sig Pippa** 'I was sick 24 times you know' **Henderson,** getting some leisurely sailing in and when the wind totally died on us for some serious sunbathing.

Leg Three saw a complete change in the weather with wind dramatically picking up to around 30knots at times, but the crew **(Sgt Chris Hood, Cpl Angie Richardson** and **Sigs** 'Stevo' **Stevenson** and 'Malley' **Mallinson)** coped with this extremely well. The weather picked up so much that on the way from Girvan to Portpatrick, the skipper decided that things were getting a bit too hairy, so the decision was made to hide away from the weather, which took two days to die down. All in all the expedition was enjoyed by all the crews who showed a great attitude to learning new skills, putting up with sometimes very rough conditions at sea and came out at the end smiling and with a sense of humour intact.

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON - SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

Sqn Comd **Maj Jeremy Tod**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Downie**

As Spring has come and gone, 225 Sig Sqn have had plenty to keep them busy. We have found that as the peace process rumbles on, the result for the Squadron is an increased workload. However, 225 Sqn has had plenty of opportunity to 'Strut its Winning Stuff" during the recent series of CO's Cup Competitions. So far we have claimed the Swimming (at a tiebreak), Tug O' War, Potted Sports and Shooting, relinquishing only the Athletics Trophy to 233 Signal Squadron with the hardest of fights, congratulations to them. Welcomes are extended to **Capt Tam Malley** who takes over as Ops Officer from **Capt Bill Brennan**. We wish **Bill** and **Suzanne** all the best at UKSC(G). Goodbyes are many this season with the imminent departure of **Capts Chris Lamb** and **Robin Carpenter** who go to SHAPE and FIU respectively. **Capt Helen Murphy** also leaves to emigrate to New Zealand. She sends her best wishes to all those that have made her time in the British Army so memorable and extends a warm welcome to any that can make it to NZ for a visit.

ECHO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Balfour**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Fielder**

Firstly a couple of hello's to JT **Danny Bradley** arriving from JSSU Digby and **LCpl Chris Telling** from 14 Sig Regt. The Troop has enjoyed a relatively quiet month with the highlights being a BBQ organised by Delta Watch (cheers lads, excellent spread) and Charlie Watch's Paintballing Day at Ballykinler. Congratulations to **Cpl Al Sharpe** and wife **Jenny** on the birth of their son **William**, and to **Cpl Tommy Scanlan** and wife **Sarah** on the birth of their daughter **Stephanie**. A double celebration for **Cpl Sharpe** as he also passed his driving test this month along with **Cpl Dave Salter** passing it on his second attempt. Well done to **Lt Jamie Balfour** and **Cpl Babs Woodhouse** who represented the Troop in the Regiment shooting team at NISAAM. **Lt Jamie Balfour** managed to walk off with the silver in the FIBUA shoot (still needs some practice with the pistol though). A few members have also left us this month. Goodbye at short notice to the Troop Commander, **Lt Jamie Balfour**, who is off to complete a crammer course before becoming an undergraduate at Shrivenham this September. Also to **Cpl Andy Liddle** and Cpl **Kerry Thomas,** both off to join the ranks at JSSU Oakley. Finally goodbye to **Cpl Dave Hill** who is off to soak up the sun in JSSU Ay Nik.

GOLF TROOP

Tp Comd/Tech Adjt **Capt Ian Hargreaves**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Brian Wilkins**

Work continues to be hectic with many new operational challenges and life here in Northern Ireland continues at a pace. On the sporting front there were noteworthy performances in the Lanyard Trophy by **Capt Ian Hargreaves** and **Cpl Phil McLeish**. **Sgts Dave Kilgallon , Stu Murray** and **Wayne Ballard** all competed in the Hi Tech Challenge, which was an improvised Triathlon event consisting of Mountain Biking, Kayaking and Running. Well done to all. Farewell to **Sgt Chris Warren, Cpl Geordie Cranston** and **Cpl Alex Jelley** who all depart to start what we hope will be successful civilian careers. **Sgt Marie McChesney** has been posted to COMMCEN Brunei and **Cpl Dave Morgan** has left to study hard on his T1 at Blandford. Newly arrived are **Sgt** 'Sandie' **Samuels, Sgt Lyndon Box, Cpl Ryan Lang** and **Cpl** 'Robbo' **Roberts** who we welcome to the Troop. Congratulations go to **Sgt Richie Gathercole** on his selection for promotion to Staff Sergeant and a special mention to our two newly promoted **LCpls Gaz Stokoe** and **Lee Stafford**. Congratulations also go to **Sgt Ritchie Cleminson** on passing his FofS Selection. He will be starting his study this September. Finally, congratulations go to **Sgt Wayne Ballard** and **Tanya** on their recent marriage.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Richard Giles**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Rob Dunseith**

The Squadron held a highly successful battle-camp in April, providing a rare opportunity to get troops together, away from shift systems and offices. Back in camp the management priorities include preparations for the upheaval of moving into purpose built real estate, implementing plans for the forthcoming Marching Season, and dealing with upgrades in some communications systems. Despite the operational challenges (which paradoxically increases the Province's communications assets as the Peace Process evolves) a high proportion of the troops have been able to get away for extra mural events.

INDIA TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Gareth Oliver**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Craig Marlowe**

They say that spring is the season to clean your house from top to bottom, air the linen and generally have a good clear out of all those nooks and crannies. Well, not a Troop to be found at the back of the queue when there's work to be done, India threw open it's doors and sadly parted with a few items of furniture beyond price. The following have gone to new homes, mostly at better rates of pay; **WO2 Ray Neal, FofS Andy Paton, SSgt John Ramsdale, SSgt Simon Graham** and last but definitely by no means least, **Cpl Mark McDonald**. Gone, but unlikely to be forgotten by those who've worked along side them. A big welcome to our brand spanking new Foreman of Signals, **Gaz Williams** and his slightly worn but still extremely functional Tech Sergeant, **Mick Knowles**. Workwise, the Troop has had a busy few months upgrading the various IT systems in our care. Upgrading, and in quite a few cases patching the upgrades. Dragging members of the Troop away from their beloved systems is never an easy task, but when it's accomplished, strange things happen. **Sig McLuckie** volunteered, eventually, to make up the numbers for our team entry to the McKelvie Cup Athletics on the day of the tournament. Not content with just turning up, he then had the sheer audacity to win the 110m hurdles outright. Well done that man. India, normally the prop that supports the rest of the competition placings, pulled off yet another coup by knocking the other teams in the McKelvie Cup Cricket competition for six. All in all, a good few months with the potential for even better times ahead.

NETWORK CONTROL CENTRE - *by LCpl Leah Mates*

NCC Ops Offr **Capt Guy Benson**
Ops Sgt **Sgt Steve Johnson**

Firstly, we would like to welcome a whole new bunch of baby techs straight from the factory, these are **LCpl Mike Davis, LCpl** 'John-boy' **Walton**, and **LCpl Tony Wressel**. Also **LCpl Vanessa Brown** and **LCpl Shaun Barton** both arrived from TM Tp, and **LCpl Jo Ellison** who joined us after a long weekend as a part time receptionist on job placement with 'TESCO'. NCC would like to say a fond farewell to **Cpl Andy Brown** who leaves us for the multiple delights of 21 Sig Regt. The end of the month saw **Cpl Andy** 'Bop Bandit super G' **Brown's** leaving function. Starting with a meal before degenerating later on, as the lads donned their beach gear and headed for the bop. A good night was had by all who attended. The next planned functions are for **Capt Guy Benson,** on posting and **Cpl Steve Whipp,** off to Civ Div. We wish them all the very best for the future.

NCC MOVE TO THE NEW BUILDING

Readers may not be aware but the NCC is relocating to a brand new building within the HQNI compound. Having completed our new communications procedures the Ops Offr, **Capt Guy Benson** and **YofS Russ Darlington** are busy planning a sequential change of communications control to our new space aged, hardened bunker.

NCC ATHLETICS AND SWIMMING

A busy month for NCC Tp, what with athletics and swimming competitions. During the second phase of battle camp the Squadron participated and won both the Mercury Cup and Inter-Squadron Athletics competitions. Followed a week later by the Inter-Squadron Swimming Competition with the girls' team taking first place with the help of **LCpl Vanessa Brown, LCpl Leah Mates** and **LCpl Jo Ellison**. The men's team gave an outstanding performance winning a very respectable second place.

ROMEO TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Colin Kell**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Steve Bartleet**

Since the last edition of *The WIRE* there have been a few changes within the Troop. We have had to say farewell to a few faces that have left for pastures new. **Cpl Richard** 'Thommo' **Thommasson** has swapped the rainy hills of Antrim for those of Kosovo, with 7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn. Also gone but not forgotten are **Sgts Trefor Davies** and **Steven** 'Hutch' **Hutchinson**, who have both departed to RSS Blandford on their Yeoman of Signals Course. Whilst at Blandford they are likely to meet another Romeo Tp refugee, **Cpl Phil Marchant**, who has departed to start his T1 Upgrading and conversion to the new Systems Engineer Technician. Hopefully **Phil** will learn that equipment will work - if it is switched it on! The final mention goes to **Sgt** 'Silver Sven' **Gronn**, who joined the Troop towards the end of a six month tour with HQ Squadron. 'Sven' literally arrived, looked around, went shooting and was then posted to 21 Sig Regt (AS) – you may now finally be able to unpack that MFO! Good luck to all of you who have left us and don't forget – 'One In All In'. We have had a few new faces posted in. **Cpl Nick Clift** (14 Sig Regt); **Cpl Gordon Dunderdale** (NCC, 15 Sig Regt), who is not staying for long as he is off to 11 Regt EOD; **LCpl Matt** 'Wee Thommo' **Thomas**, fresh from training; **Sgt Steve** 'Taff' **Hamblin** (Belfast Roulement Battalion); and the latest addition to the Romeo Tp family, **SSgt (FofS) John Collins** (Foreman of Signals Course). Hello and a warm welcome to you all.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Elisabeth McLellan**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Bri Gillies**

Of course if you work hard you play hard and the turnaround in manning has led to quite a few parties. So we start off by welcoming into PC Repair **Sgt Gaz Watkins** and wife **Fiona** along with **LCpl Hayden Lawer**, and **LCpl Tanya Ballard** who has drawn the short straw and joined TE Workshops for a tour of trend bashing. Installations are not left out and also gain some fresh blood in the form of **Sgt Nick Goodwin** who is accompanied by his wife **Vivien**, and **LCpl Andy Widdup** who comes straight from the school. Welcome to you all and may your tour be a pleasant one. With so many arrivals, room has to be made, and so we say a sad farewell (in most cases) to those that are leaving us to move onto pastures new. First of all goodbye and good luck to **LCpl Kesha Bryan** who has now finally left for civy street. Congratulations to **Cpl Ian Nichols** who has passed selection and is now with **264 (SAS) Sig Sqn**. Off to another Troop go **LCpls Vanessa Brown** and **Sean Barton**, and off to the 'other side' goes the Fat Controller, **Sgt Bob Buckingham**, who has gained his crown and a baby on the way. Last but by no means least we bid a sad farewell to **Sgt Billy Fagan** and wife **Glo** who are off to join the **UNICOM** team, and of course we cannot forget their dog Baxter - the only one brave enough to have a go at **Capt (TOT) Plumb**. The dog has fully recovered! Good luck to you all and many thanks for all your efforts during your time with the best Troop in the Regiment.

The Troop, as ever, has been heavily involved in numerous projects, activities and social events. Well done to **Cpl's Al Walsh** and **Karl Hannah** for the high quality of work produced for the refurbishment of the GOC's office. Thanks to **SSgt Flo Jarvis** and the other DS for the organisation of an excellent battle-camp. A great time was had by all at the leaving party of **Sgt Billy Fagan** whose great sense of humour will be sadly missed by the Troop. Finally, congratulations to **Sig Kev Orr** on his recent marriage to **Becky.** The Troop wishes him all the best for the future.

233 SIG NAL SQUADRON - BATTLE CAMP

Battle camp was held over a two week period at Magilligan Training Area, where the wind blows in every direction including down. Half of the Squadron attended the first week and the other half the second week.

The classic DS pose
(L-R): Sgt Selkirk, SSgt Marlow and the Battle Camp organizer, SSgt Jarvis

Problem Management, (an interesting description for the WOs) which consists of the **WO1** (YofS) **Paul Rose**, **WO1** (FofS) **Chris Gill** and **WO1** (Supervisor IS) **Mick Brooks**, turned up for one day each week to run the command tasks, while the remainder of the Sqn DS managed to stay in the field for two weeks organising various military training stands and lots of field firing!

Time was spent getting sun burnt on the first week and drowned on the second week. Every one who attended covered all of the mandatory ITD's, including the new 233 patented two and a half mile BPFA run, command tasks, fire team assessment, MP5 training and pistol shooting. The command tasks had an amusing theme, all were achievable with the right perception. The tasks were made more interesting by the fact that everyone had a raw egg to carry on their person throughout, with a time penalty added for breakage. One of the more amusing command tasks was the military version of the farmer, the fox, the chicken and the grain, (answers on a postcard). The highlight of both of the weeks was the Friday night social with NCC Tp proving beyond a doubt that they are the Kings and Queens of karaoke.

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

Sqn Comd **Maj N. J. Borrill** R SIGNALS
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. M. Lockwood** R SIGNALS

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON
ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Situation no change in SHQ, a busy schedule of meetings, lunches and for the Ops Team and Chief Clerk lots of courses. Congratulations to **WO2 (YofS)** 'I'll say what I like' **Brudenall** and **WO2 (FofS)** 'Darth' **Sideras** on being selected for promotion to WO1. Goodbye to **Capt Gareth Marsh** who is off on JDSC and welcome to **Capt** 'Call me JC' **Smith**. Welcome to 'Johno' **Johnston** who has moved from Comms Tp to become the Assistant ADPLO. Welcome to **Cpl** 'Big Bloke' **Renforth** who is taking up post as the Assistant BTLO.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt Richardson**
Ops Sect SSgt **SSgt Robinson**
TM SSgt **SSgt Renshaw**

ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES AND CONGRATULATIONS

New arrivals to the Troop are **2Lt Sally Richardson** who joins us from the Troop Commanders Course at Blandford, **Cpl** 'Judge Jules' **Dicks**, **Cpl** 'Rent a crowd' **Faizey**, **LCpl** 'I suppose I'll do it' **Jennings** and just in off the Blandford Technician production line **LCpl** 'Stretch' **Burgon**. A warm welcome to one and all. Farewells to the Sqn Comd, **Capt** 'Whip Lash' **Taylor** who has moved all the way to 15 Sig Regt. All the best and do not be to disheartened when we win the Mercury Cup again! **Sgt Billy Belshaw** has moved to 21 Sig Regt and **Cpl Si Dupree** has finally won a reprieve from his sentence and has been released on parole to Civ Div. **Cpl Bob Harper** and **Cpl** 'I think I'm Ronaldo' **Wedge** have both departed on their T 1's and last but not least **LCpl** 'What Horse?' **Fitzpatrick** is going to the White Helmets after successfully completing his entrance course. Congratulations to **LCpl Kev Board, Sigs Steve Ireson, Jenny Sarsfield** and 'Geordie' **Richardson** for being selected off recent promotion boards.

TM SECTION

Although we have been depleted of our experienced personnel we are still continuing to function at peak efficiency. The Section has had a busy New Year and it looks like there will be no let up in the foreseeable future. Still we have had time to fit in some adventure training in the form of hill walking and not to mention the odd course or two and some outstanding Troop functions. How does it go 'Work Hard, Play Hard'. On a good note our sporting conquests continue to mount up with the winning of the Inter Section Potted Sports Competition. We are starting to ask ourselves the inevitable question 'Can any Section in the Squadron compete with TM Section?' Congratulation to **Cpl Faizey** on his recent promotion to Sergeant and **LCpls Gallacher** and **Wade** on their promotion to Corporal. **Sig** 'Lewie' **Lewis** on successfully completing his PTI 3 Course and **Cpl Wade** on his engagement to **Wendy** (Does she know what she is letting herself in for?)

SUPPORT TROOP
Tp Comd **Maj Spence** RDG
WO1C **WO2 (RQMS) Belarn**

The OC Tp/AO/MTO/QM/Supervising Officer has finally put his cards on the table and is leaving the Army in June. He is moving to 40 Sig Regt as a PSAO, what the AO a hardened Cavalryman Joining the R SIGNALS? - never not in a million years!!!!!! Yes is the answer and very pleased we are to have him in our ranks, may your tradition be Swift and Sure.

REGIMENTAL QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

Firstly the Department would like to say a sad farewell to **Sgt Sean Hyland** who after serving the Squadron for three years must now make a huge 800m move to 15 Sig Regt as the SQMS of HQNI. We would like to welcome **Sgt Al Keir** who has returned to the Squadron after a two year break with JSSU (FI). A big congratulations to **LCpl Rick Sherriff** on being selected for promotion to Corporal (the one who slipped through the net?). The Department has busy time ahead with both the main PRE and POIP periods coming up; as yet again we look forward to another challenging year.

UNIT RUGBY SEASON

After a late start the Unit's Rugby Team's season finally got under way with the NI Minor Units Competition. The team did outstandingly well winning all their games before thrashing 2 RMP in the Final, to guarantee us a place in the Army Minor Units Cup Competition. We were drawn to play 21 Sig Regt in the Quarter Finals which meant a four day trip to the mainland (purely for training purposes of course)! After two days solid training, (mainly round the public houses of Corsham!) we turned up to play 21 Sig Regt at Colerne. It was a hard fought game with the Brigade Team playing with several key players out of position. The game was starting to look like it was slipping away from us in the second half with 21 Sig Regt forging a sizeable margin until the heroics of **SSgt** 'Terry' **McIntyre** brought us back in to the game with a hat-trick of tries. In the end the home side proved to be too strong for us and won the Tie 38 - 27, but as they say in rugby 1TS NOT THE WINNING THAT COUNTS, IT'S THE DRINKING PART!' and needless to say we had a fantastic third half in the bar before moving onto Bath to sample the city's cultural side!

EXERCISE LIGHTNING STRIKE

It all started with yet another final brief from **SSgt** 'Robbo' **Robinson**. Everybody knew what their jobs were, bags were packed, the bus was full and the journey/drinking began! We boarded the ferry on time with all sense of pride and dignity intact, for the time being anyway. As every one started to find out where their rooms were, **LCpl Martin** 'Weird naked guy' **Kennie** (name will be explained later) completed his recce on the bar. As everybody made it down to the bar area, **LCpl Kennie** had already polished off his first drink and had well introduced himself to another. After a rather sociable evening, and because the bar had closed, everybody retired to their cabins. In the early hours one person from our group decided he needed to relieve himself due to carrying out a recce of the bar and not his cabin, he did not realise all cabins were en suite! He decided to search the boat and outer deck areas for a toilet that was much needed! The only problem was his chosen attire, a face cloth!! The first nickname of the weekend was justly awarded! We disembarked and started our journey south from Liverpool to Warminster, which was uneventful apart from when we met up with **Sig Dave** 'Manic Mechanic' **Kirton**, who was joining the group from leave. We found **Sig Kirton** in a service station the bonnet of his vehicle open and his head in it, but with a handful of Riggers, Techs, Stores and TG's we had him on the road in no time. On arrival at Warminster we where shown to where our stand was to take place and set out our plan for the following morning. We then made about a swift return to our accommodation at Knook Camp were we found our beds and more importantly the bar!

We were up the following morning (Saturday) at 0530hrs, to the deep joy of all. We had our breakfast, collected weapons, stores and radios and made our way out onto Salisbury Plain. It was a hectic start to a hectic day. The stand set up was complete and the casualties where all dressed for their big performance, it was now time for the first two groups to see how they would fair on our demanding stand. Finally our first two UOTC teams arrived, keeping up the punctuality expected of soon to be Regular Army officers. The IC teams was taken aside by **Lt** 'I used to be part of the Squadron' **Madgewick** and given a brief on the task their team would have to undertake. Meanwhile the rest of the team members were met by **Cpl** 'No Keys' **Ship** and **LCpl** ' WNG' **Kennie** (DS for the two teams), who kitted out the two teams. Finally the scene was set, two keen and green QRF teams all ready for action. Suddenly there were lights, camera and a few thunder flashes and the two teams sprang to life.

Each team was presented with the aftermath of a coffee jar bomb attack on a vehicle. They had just twelve minutes to assess the situation, treat and extract the casualties, cordon off the area and preserve the crime scene. During all this they were required to call in all appropriate agencies for assistants. The teams were assessed on their command and control, enthusiasm and first aid skills which was carefully scrutinised by the lovely **Sig Faye** 'Florence Nightingale' **Edwards**. The Oscar winning cast for the scenario were **LCpl Neil** 'Does this involve anything physical?' **Beedon** (Vehicle Commander 1), **Sig Steve** 'Magic fun bags' **Ireson** (Vehicle Commander 2), **Sig Jason** 'Did anyone say anything about bungie jumping?' **Ellam** (Terrorist 1) and last but no means least **Sig Dave** 'Manic Mechanic' **Kirton** (Terrorist 2). So our main event came to an end, all that was left to do was pack up and head home but not before we sampled the night life that Warminster had to offer, but that is a whole new set of *Wire* notes.

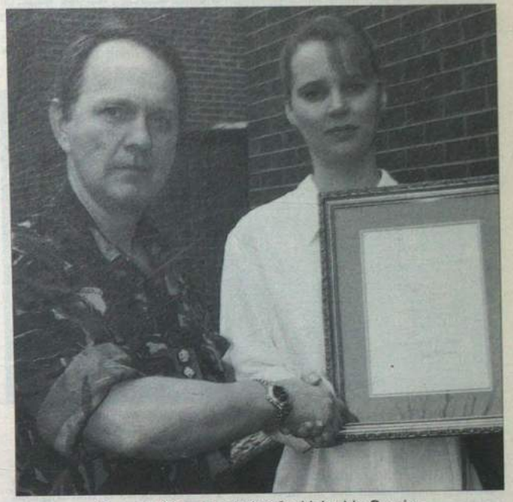
LONG SERVICE AND GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL PRESENTATIONS

SSgt Robinson and **Sgt McBride** were recently presented their Long Service and Good Conduct Medals with other recipients from 2 Regt RMP, who also share the Mess. Unfortunately **SSgt Robinson's** new wife **Sharon** could not make the trip across from the mainland due to work commitments but **Sgt McBride's** wife **Deirdre** and daughter **Shannon** were present to witness the event.

LS & GC Presentation

QUEENS COMMENDATION FOR VALUABLE SERVICE

The Officers and Soldiers of the HQ and Sig Sqn would like to congratulate **Cpl Mandy Duffy** on her well-deserved commendation from Her Majesty the Queen for valuable service. She was presented with her award by the Brigade Commander in early February and has since left the unit for pastures new. We all wish **Mandy** and her new family the very best in the future and hope that her next tour is as successful as this one has been.



Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service
Presentation to Cpl Duffy

8 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (218)

Sqn Comd **Maj Jake Thackray**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Fleming**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

Firstly congratulations to **SSgt Gary Bennett** on being selected for promotion to WO2. Things have calmed down with the SPS Inspection having been cancelled and **Maj Don Duncan** can finally come down from cloud nine as the six monthly audit is over. With time on our hands **Cpl Lee Goldsmith** (AGC) decided that with Richmond Challenge (ITD Camp) just round the corner, it was time for some remedial shooting in the SAT. After four hours of endless fun it was time to knuckle down to the real thing and depart to Magilligan Training Camp for three days with the RSM and his training staff. The ITD Camp was upon us, and yes, being in Ireland the old saying 'If it is not raining, its not training' was true to form.

TRADES PERSON OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to **Sig** 'Stevo' **Stephenson** (Tele Mech) on being selected as Trades Person of the Year.

OFFICERS AND SNCOs V OTHER RANKS FOOTBALL MATCH

The Seniors

For the first time in months the sun was shining on Londonderry and everyone reached for their cameras. The pre-match briefing from **Cpl** 'I have no idea how to referee' **Moore** was one of fair play, professionalism, but most of all good fun. The whistle blew and we were five minutes into the half and **Sgt** 'Scotty' **Pringle** launched a throw-in ball to the RSM who drove a left foot shot straight into the top left hand corner (Andy Cole eat your heart out), 1-0 to the Officers' and Sergeants' Messes. Tackles were flying but so were the boys 15 minutes in to the first half and we were 5-1 down. Time for our tactics to change. **Capt** 'Olly Solchar' **Lamb** swapped centre half for right wing and things took a turn for the worse as we went down 6-1 at half time. By now most of the Junior Ranks had their legs chopped from them and were limping. Time for **LCpl** 'Corps footballer' **Richards** to leave goal and start hunting for goals. After a period of 15 minutes of being marked by most of our side, he broke loose. Yes, it was 7-1 now and time for another tactics change, more chopping, hacking and fowling. It paid off with dancing **Sgt Carl Overton** notching up our second goal, two minutes later we had a third, things were on the up. Time for more tactics, the **WO2 (RQMS)** 'Kev the mountain' **Tunstall** went in goal. We were in our stride now. Then **LCpl**

Gaz Welch broke 8-3 but we fought on only to go 9-3 down with **Cpl** 'Scotty' **Pearson** missing a kick but luck was on their side. Ten minutes to go and **SSgt** 'No one will pass to me' **Coupland** has a rush of blood and a solo run up the wing through myself and 'Dancer' **Overton** only to miss. However, our luck changed when a clearance from **Sig** 'Watch my hair' **Nelson** ricocheted off **LCpl Kev Foster** into goal 9-4. We were on a come back, but it was short lived with **LCpl** 'PTI' **Gourlay** skinning all of us with his pace. Yes, they had reached the Golden 10. Things were all a little one sided, well when the Junior Ranks scored even the Referee congratulated them. Five minutes to go and another own goal by that man again **LCpl Kev Foster** left us at 10-5. Things would have been different, however, if we only had our star player **Maj** 'Harry Kewell' **Thackray** who had been intentionally held up in Brigade HQ.

The Players

SYSCON - *by LCpl Anderson*

For the past month SYSCON has under gone a complete reconstruction to bring us up to the 21st century. The office is now looking much better but for how long? The good news is that **Sig** 'Sid' **Sidorowiczis** is now working in the squadron bar. So, at least the new chairs (very comfy and with wheels) will remain intact. Morale in SYSCON at the moment is very high (we had to write this) and everyone is looking forward to the up and coming marching season.

We would like to take the chance to say hello to **LCpl Adelle Murray** who has just arrived from 1 Mech Bde. Also, goodbye to **LCpl Berty** 'Lundy' **Baxter.** He will be joining the civilian population in the next month. Good luck to him and his beloved **Michelle** for the future. Sadly life in SYSCON will not be the same without **WO2 (FofS) Tez Brown** but fortunately the new FofS, **WO2** 'Sideshow Bob' Vowles is fitting into his shoes nicely. On the 22 of May I had the pleasure of taking the rock climbing during the adventure training phase on the JNCO cadre course. Everyone seemed to enjoy the climbing package that I had prepared for them. I'd like to say there were a few budding spidermen and women - but there weren't! I mustn't forget to mention the disco legs, of course I never get them myself. Well done - a great performance from everyone.

COMMCEN - *by LCpl Applegarth*

The millenium has seen a few changes within the COMMCEN. Arrivals: **LCpl** 'Sammy D' **Applegarth** from 16 Sig Regt, **Sig** 'Stu (pid)' **Plant** from 4 Armd Bde and **Sig** 'I'm Stu Plants' long lost brother' **Fielding** straight from the Factory. Farewells must be said to **Cpl** 'Pete Tong' **Mayhead** as he goes off to re-trade, **Cpl Gaz Moore** and **Capt Jo Stewart** as they both go to Blandford. The Troop was also taken over by **Lt Ian** 'Blue eyes, no thanks, I don't drink' **Lowther**. We mustn't forget to mention **Sig** 'I can't wait to be a civvy' **McCulloch** as she leaves the Army on 24 July and gets married to **Cpl Nick Trethewy** on 19 August. Congratulations from the Squadron to **LCpl Craig Law** and **Jodie** on the birth of their baby boy, **Connor James Law**. April saw a trip to Lisburn for the Mercury Cup as the Squadron managed an overall second place in Hockey and Netball. Well done. The athletics brought two wins for us. One for **Capt** 'Speed of a thousand gazelles' **Lamb** (400m) and a win for **LCpl Applegarth** in the 100m.

TRAINING WING - *Cpl Stewart*

Things are just as busy now with the new ATD year upon us, but there is still time for good all-round training. First up was the JNCO's study day. They had a busy day ahead with battle PT at 0800hrs, twice round the camp fitness trail followed by a stretcher race. **RSM Fleming, Sgt Overton** and **SSgt Taylor** were on hand to lend support, however, we were one man short for the team and all three kindly stepped in (mugs). Then, under the watchful eye of **Capt** 'Granny' **Stewart** it was down to a good old estimate. After a lot of head scratching it was time to let their mouths do the work with three discussion groups. It didn't help matters, though, when the OC Squadron had briefed the whole Brigade HQ and Signal Squadron on the new homosexual policy. As you can imagine all talk was on this, well at least **Cpl Dunn** (AGC) managed to change the topic. With all that talk it was lunch time. In the afternoon it was time for all Corporals to carry out their presentations. These varied from patrolling, to how to press Cbt 95 to making and throwing a petrol bomb. A big WELL DONE to all who took part especially **Cpl Stewart** on his overall A Grading.

The effects of a petrol bomb on Base line shields
(L-R): WO1 (RSM) Fleming, Sig Buckingham, Capt Stewart

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1ST (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col E. M. Flint**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) C. Hymas**

LANYARD TROPHY COMPETITION 2000
by 2lt David Spencer

It all started with a cold, wet and thoroughly miserable Tuesday morning way back in January (the first day back from Christmas leave). This was it, our training for the Lanyard Trophy had started. Only those who have done it know what kind of training is involved. Believe me, it is the last thing you want to be doing at 0700hrs in sub-zero temperatures. At first it all started well, the runs were all steady state. I don't know where **WO2s Flemming** and **Kearney** learned what steady state was, in fact I don't really care, all I know is that I wouldn't like to go for a fast run with them. The training was progressive and the improvement in individual's fitness was visible. This trend carried on until the end of February. Then we entered a Regimental exercise period, and people were no longer able to attend regular training sessions. The whole team did not all meet until we stepped on the transport to leave for training in the UK.

We arrived at Exeter UOTC, which is where we would be based for the next eight days. The idea of our stay there was to recce the route. The four days route recce proved invaluable as well as providing us with a few laughs. We took 14 people back, ten to be in the team and four as the admin team. The second day was our longest, a 20 miler. Now picture this, the team is out on the ground and they ring the admin team to let them know that they will be in early. Unbelievably they couldn't pick us up early as they were doing their own admin!

The actual route had three large rivers that are incredibly difficult to cross (Great Para route selection!). Anyway the first two days had passed and on each day we had not yet all managed to get across these rivers without getting our feet wet. Something had to be done, we needed a plan and fast. What this situation needed was some officer ingenuity, and it duly came in the form of **2Lt Spencer**.

2Lt Spencer: 'Why don't we get some black bin bags and put them over our boots just for the rivers'
SSgt Hook: 'Hmm! Seems like a good idea, well done Sir!'
Remainder of the group: (General nodding of agreement)

The next day.... Unfortunately due to a horrendous injury which would have seen most civvies in hospital (Sore feet), **2Lt Spencer** had to stop early on day three due to lack of moral fibre. This was unfortunate as he missed the river crossing. As the Team Captain was not available to test his new ideas his 2IC, **SSgt** 'It's the way I tell them' **Hook** stepped up. He bravely donned the plastic bags and stepped into the knee high raging torrent. It all seemed to be going well for at least the first two seconds, when it was then **SSgt Hook** realised the flaw in the plan. Black bin liners provide absolutely no grip whatsoever on slimy wet rocks. You could see the point at which he realised this, as his eyes turned from calm blue to white with sheer panic. From this point on to the amusement of the rest of the team it was only a matter of time before he went in. There was a quick jig to the left and then a wobble to the right, then a large amount of blasphemy about **2Lt Spencer** and a final crescendo of splosh!!! However, this was not all, not only had the bags caused him to slip but they had also now filled with water acting like two lead weights. We sat on the bank watching a fully dressed man sitting up to his neck in water, whilst clinging for dear life onto a rock with one hand and trying to remove black bin bags from his feet with his other hand. It was probably the funniest moment of all. It couldn't have happened to a nicer bloke.

Eventually the infamous day arrived. At 0500hrs we were lined up and ready to go, bang!!! We're off. 'Crikey, look how far up the hill they already are' said **Sig Akrill**. 'That doesn't matter, there is absolutely no need to worry because that is the wrong hill.' said **SSgt Lothian** as we decided 270 competitors were wrong. As we rose up the first hill the visibility became very bad and there was a certain amount of following going on. This was annoying, so we deliberately stopped and looked at the map; sure enough everyone around us also did. So when we marched off on a dog leg to disappear into the fog and our fellow competitors, admitting defeat, spun the bezel on their compasses and were never seen again. By the time we reached CP 5 we had established ourselves into a solid fourth position. Check point 11 and the 30-mile point, three-quarters of the way round yet still another ten miles to go. This was a real low point for us because by the time we reached checkpoint 12 we had dropped to fifth.

We battled on to checkpoint 14 where we met up with our admin team. As we came to a halt to get some more water **WO2 (SSM) Flemming** started shouting at us to get going as another team was fast approaching. Not wanting to drop another place we set off at an unbelievable pace with **Cpl Scarrot's** little legs going at ten to the dozen and **Sig Akrill** sounding as though he was going to give birth. We ran all the way to the next checkpoint only to find another team there. We couldn't believe it we had run all the way and had still been overtaken. Oh! Wait a minute that's 30 Sig Regt's the team in front. We flew past them and down the hill to the finish line to the sound of 30 Sig Regt's bagpipes. 'Sorry fellas 30 Sig Regt are just behind us'.(It was a nice tune though). When we crossed the line **WO2 (SSM) Flemming** informed us that the people he saw at Checkpoint 14 were in fact not a team but just people who were interested in seeing who we were, and that he had realised that as soon as he had shouted at us. Anyway was that extra pain really worth that one place. On a final note a big thank you to the admin team and the now **RSM Kearney** for helping us on our way. Cheers lads!

Lanyard Trophy – 'A job well done'

211 SIGNAL SQUADRON BATTLE CAMP EXERCISE FIGHTING AXE 22 – 26 MAY 2000 FROM RRB TP'S PERSPECTIVE – *by Sig Grimes*

As Battlecamps go it started off with a nice lie in until 0430am before we deployed! We were all smocked up and ready for war, looking forward to the first two days of 'non-tac' and getting our heads down. However, as we all know things do change and we then seemed to be awake all week. Well done to everyone who took part in the exercise especially **Sig** 'Shane Shakey' **Stevens** as it was his first exercise in the Troop. Also well done to **LCpl** 'Nuggit Boab' **Toner** who was the operator all week but may need a bit more training in taking down trip flares for obvious reasons! Well done also to **LCpl** 'Jen' **Teague** – the two day warrior, who despite the limited time spent out on the area still managed to shine. The prize for the best mosquito bite goes to **Sig** 'Jonny La Mule' **Carroll** whose head seemed to turn into the FA Cup by EndEx. At EndEx the Troops were assembled into teams ready for the 8km March and Shoot. Comd Tp came first – well done to them and commiseration's to RRB Tp who actually lost a great number of points owing to the appalling efforts on the range by the supposed Troop Marksmen: **Sigs Al Booker** and **Kibble.** We all now know of course that they couldn't hit an Elephants backside with a Banjo!

EXERCISE WEEKEND INITIATIVE 2 – 4 JUNE 2000
by LCpl Lutkin

Here in Germany there is an age-old concern about what single soldiers ought to be getting up to on their free weekends. Sadly there is a great tendency to drink immense amounts of alcohol and never venture further than the world of Playstation and in our case Herford town centre. To overcome this problem we at 211 Sig Sqn devised a plan that would follow the normal, accepted, and very popular regime adopted by our young 'singlies' but also make that first step towards venturing further out into the continent. The idea? Simple: Four teams, a select few but far flung destinations, some simple tasks, some supervision and oodles of scope for imaginative adventures. By all accounts some VERY imaginative adventures were had by all…outstanding. Here's one account that could actually be printed (and sorry but -Fotografieren Verboten):

A typically boring Friday loomed over us yet again with the possibility of working over the weekend, which was published on orders the week before. That was until the man with the stick decided differently! **SSM Kelly** called us all into the Squadron Conference room, (that is all the block orphans and a couple of wannabe block orphans). We all sat there in anticipation waiting for the weekly 'Don't let me down this weekend and Elvis is dead so take those lamb chops up for Monday' talk. However, this did not come but instead a formal set of orders were issued along the lines of:

1 x Minibus
14 x Block Orphans + 1 pad + 'Q' the DS.
3 x locations to choose from in Germany
and finally several tasks to complete in a set time.

Not a problem we all thought. Command Troop's three cities where Kiel, Dusseldorf and Heidelberg. The group decided to go for the latter as it was the furthest away from anything to do with British Squaddies and also the 32000 students that live there. (For some reason **Sig Heath** 'the Captain' **Greville** showed enormous enthusiasm for living like a student again). We departed on the five hour journey down south which incorporated several toilet stops which where approximately every 5oom on direction from **LCpl Jess Limbert.** After some frantic phone calls we finally found accommodation in a Best Western Hotel in Mannheim – a place considered posh by Blackpool standards. The hotel had a swimming pool and a sauna which was used immediately by everybody with or without swimming costumes. **Bdr** 'Subwoofer in de boot' **Bedford** said he could swim faster without shorts, who are we to argue! That night was spent infiltrating the local community in down town Mannheim which was very cosmopolitan. **Sig Leonna** 'pass me another' **Caulfield** found the only Irish bar and **Sig Ken Barlow** found every gutter. **LCpl** 'looters' **Lutkin** tried with immense diplomacy to gain entry into many clubs (let's just hope we now do actually win Euro 2000).

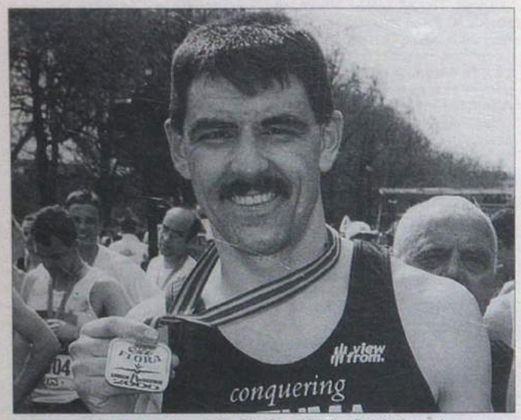
The next day saw us making the short journey to Heidleberg where we started the tasks in hand. Looters and Bedders went to find some accommodation whilst the rest shopped in the PX buying everything American. After sorting the accommodation, the next step was to find somewhere to watch the football and obviously more importantly plan the day's events. After two hours of deciding what to do, **Grevs** decided to shoulder the burden himself, being the hero that he is, and go to the castle and complete the tasks himself…good for him! Needless to say when day became night we continued to integrate with the local populous and had yet another cracking time. It also so happened to be one of the biggest nights of the year in the Heidleberg calendar with a fireworks display over the castle. We weren't that bothered about the fireworks of course but this did empty the bars somewhat again to our advantage. The beers flowed nicely and it was soon time to hit the clubs. This was where the **SQMS** 'John Travolta' **O' Brien** made his point that it really does not matter whether you are old or infirm he could still 'mix it up wid da best of dem, boyaka'…yeah right!

The final day was spent travelling back and trying to work out how much we had spent. Who cares! It was a spot on weekend which hopefully will be repeated soon.

26.2 MILES FOR THE NATIONAL ASTHMA CAMPAIGN
by SSgt Deano Cox

This event is the perfect vehicle to raise money for many charities that are often close to the heart to the runners involved and that was certainly the case for 211 Sig Sqn's, **SSgt Deano Cox. Dean** ran the London Marathon 2000 on Sunday 16 April, (which also happened to be his 34th birthday – what a present!) to raise money for his chosen charity, 'The National Asthma Campaign'. His son **Mitchell** (aged 2 and a half) was diagnosed with asthma a short while ago and therefore **Dean** could not resist the lure of the big run to contribute towards the efforts of this

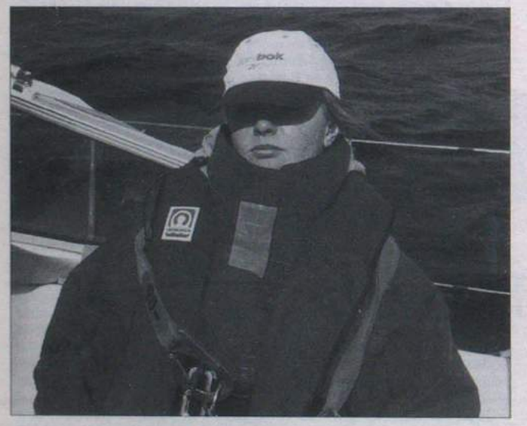
fantastic charity. He completed the run, his fourth London Marathon overall, achieving his personal best of 4 hours, 20 mins and 16 Secs. All told he managed raise over £1500 (DM 4656) for Asthma Research.



SSgt Dean Cox 211 Sig Sqn 'At the finish line...'

DIVISIONAL SAIL TRAINING WEEK
by 2Lt Kathy Burgoine

After two arduous weeks on exercise our team of sailors were ready for a relaxing and sunny cruise from Kiel on the north coast of Germany, around the Danish Isles and back again for tea and fish fingers! Little did they know what they were letting themselves in for! After a gentle break-in with a training afternoon the eight crews were to compete in several races including a night passage. The first race left us marooned and battered after encountering a squall whilst everyone else sailed on unaffected by our freak weather conditions! The gale force wind appeared from nowhere, bringing with it hale, sleet and fog. The mast was vibrating so hard that even the skipper showed fear in his face as we struggled to bring the sails down! This was not the end of our encounters with the fickle mother nature. Going from one extreme to the other we later found ourselves without wind and with **Lt** 'Shakey' **Shakespeare** standing on the fore-deck poling out the jib with the boat hook! Winning the races became more vital as the points added up, and the sailing became increasingly exciting and tactful. Yachts began to leave the main fleet to try their luck at navigating different routes, whilst tacking around the buoys became more heated and exciting as places were gained and lost in seconds. As the week progressed our sailing skills improved and nothing could beat the early morning visit to the bakery for a daily Danish Pastry!



Sailing
'Come on...smile...this is great. LCpl Opie feels another wave'

2Lt Burgoine proved her aptitude for attending university by not being able to solve a simple puzzle of placing two extra people into a scenario, but did however manage to place eight extra! How? We'd love to know how but it defies all logic! **SSgt Cox** ensured the good weather was enjoyed by all by keeping a steady flow of pork chops and Bratwurst arriving, which were then expertly cooked on the BBQ by **LCpl** 'Delia Smith' **Thompson**. Yet even with all this good living, no one had the chance to get fat as **Cpl Chris** ' What's down this hill?' **Vickers** kept us all in shape with his daily PT sessions!

212 SIG SQN BATTLE CAMP
EXERCISE METAL JACKET
by Sig 'Dale' Turner and LCpl 'Al' Taylor

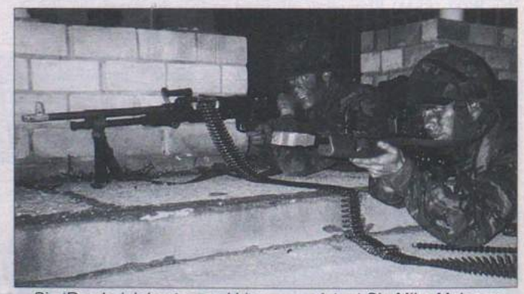
The annual 212 Squadron Battle Camp started at some ungodly hour on Monday 22 May where we moved to Haltern Training Area. Having deployed we were given a set of Troop defence orders by **2Lt** 'Chris' **Holland** and then moved off to our defensive location. Once firmly into routine, recce groups were sent out led admirably by **Cpl Ian Fowler**, **Cpl Chris** 'Kit Bag' **Simmonds** and **LCpl Al** 'Startled Rabbit' **Taylor**. All appeared to be going well until **Al Taylors** Section were ambushed much to the amusement of those listening in on the radio, the phrase 'squeal like a pig' came to mind **as Sig** 'Ginge' **Turner** tried to give a contact report. Having been on the receiving end of endless streams of tales of the bravery shown by the recce sections the Troop moved into night routine to prepare for a possible enemy attack.

In the wee small hours of the morning those asleep soundly in their trenches were woken to the noise of an attack on their positions. Despite returning as much fire as possible, though not enough to kill **Sgt Fraz** 'Invincible' **Reid** it was necessary to withdraw from the position. This went without its fair share of incident with 'Ginge' **Turner** getting captured for the first of many times during the exercise. Also Two 'Kit Bag' Section left the majority of their equipment behind. Having regrouped we decided that 'Ginge' **Turner** was indeed missing in action and, having all seen the Blair Witch Project we decided that it would be better to move off and await further adventures rather than go back into those woods again!

Tuesday saw the Troop practice fighting in woods and forests (FIWAF) which the Troop enjoyed due mainly to the protection given by **Sig** 'Rambo' **Johnston** and his gun assistant **Sig Mike Maloney** who had arrived at the unit only hours before deployment, lucky lad. The day ended in victory for the Troop as we regained the position lost the previous night not without a cost though, the valiant death of **Sgt Aidy Simms**. After moving to Bockheimburg and into a hasty harbour we were tasked to escort the Commanding Officer out of the TAOR. However, along the route another ambush was sprung with the Troop springing ninja like into action against the enemy but not quick enough to prevent the Commanding Officer's death. After routing the much-vaunted enemy, we once again took to the road...

In the pouring rain we moved onto the Sennelager Training Area where **Capt Jase Nichols** led a gruelling tab to the next bivvi location. Thursday consisted of close target recces in preparation for a dawn assault on the OBUA village. Again things didn't go according to plan with the majority of the patrols being captured; notably the troop Houdini, 'Ginge' **Turner**. The recce continued into the night and gave everyone the chance to rest and recover.

Another late night tab had the troops ready to assault the OBUA village at first light on Friday morning, which was to be the culmination of our training. Despite everyone claiming to have little or no ammunition left the initial assaults were supported by plenty of fire and once in the buildings the rooms were cleared and all enemy sand bagged and handed over to the pleasures of the **SSM Dave** 'Geneva Convention' **Rook**. Despite the quickness of the assault the enemy had devised a new weapon to slow the attackers down, flour, which was dropped from the top windows onto the Troop giving some of the sections a very ghostly look (Ex Asslt Pl Comd now **Sig** (Capt) **Jase Nichols** and Asslt Sect Comd **LCpl** 'Iain' **Cowley**.



Sig 'Rambo' Johnston and his gun assistant Sig Mike Maloney give fire support

To say that the exercise was a success would be an understatement as by the end of the final attack there were some big smiles and a real sense of achievement within the Squadron. This was only possible thanks to the great effort put in by **Sgt Lee** 'Barney' **Balmforth** and the other members of the Squadron who acted as enemy. Congratulations to **Cpl Blacklock** who was awarded the Stone Warrior award for the best soldier in the field – he takes with him a trophy and a significant limp!

REGIMENTAL TUG OF WAR TEAM – 'GANTRY DOGS'
by WO2 (SSM) D. Rook

The seasons' training began in February amongst the rain and gloom of a surprisingly mild German Winter. This was very much a new team with few experienced 'pullers' for the Team Coach to mould into men so strong that their arms and legs were to be like 'blue steel that a cat could not scratch'. A brand new Gantry was also built at the Werre Strasse sports pitch. It became a refreshing change instead of dragging a metal

cage filled with old tank tracks endlessly around the grass. Our first competition was an invitation to the Aldershot Show. After an initial nervous start we found that we were not far behind the major teams with some excellent wins against 2CS, 3 RSME, 2 RSMRE, 14 Regt RA. Both A and B teams proved that some hard training had not been wasted finishing fifth and fourth in both weights, respectively. After a long drive back to Germany to participate in Ex Premier Link 3 the Regiments TOW and Athletics Teams travelled back again to UK to train for the Morrison Cup Millennium Games.

Tug o' war

On Friday 19 May, we lined up against other units from around the Corps. We were determined to take the Morrison Cup trophy back to Herford. There were six teams in the male competition and three female teams entered their competition. The final for the male competition was after the female event that was gallantly won by the ladies of 14 Sig Regt. The crowd was driven to a frenzied state as our team won the first end and the crowd erupted. After changing ends the 11 Sig Regt 'A' team recovered and courageously clawed back to win the second end. After a nail biting toss of the coin, our team won the 'favoured' end and with the Coach shouting himself horse the 'A' Team collapsed after winning the third and final end, becoming Morrison Cup Champions of the Millennium Games. A special mention must go to the 'B' Team who placed a very creditable third position, plus the unit Female Team who managed third position against strong opposition.

The SOinC (A) presented individual trophies to the winning team and after some much admired foot drill in anticipation of receiving the Morrison Cup Shield, HQNI and 15 Sig Regt apologised for not returning it and we are assured it is in the post! The teams then returned to Herford, only to drive down to Rheindahlen to compete in the Rheindahlen 'Not Very' Summer Show! The training again paid off with wins against all the teams that had turned up from around Germany. A and B teams from the Regiment were entered again and won against all the opposition from the following units: 26 Regt RA 'A' and 'B' teams, 3 CS, 1 CS, 4 RSMRE. The final in the centre arena proved a disappointing event as the 26 Regt RA 'A' team, beat our 'A' team by two straight pulls to take a trophy we should have really won. There is always next year to look forward to!

201 SQUADRON ADVENTURE TRAINING
by Lt Michele Hanlon

May saw some of the Squadron down tools and head to Bavaria for a spot of level two adventure training. As part of a ten day package the soldiers were split into several groups to pursue a variety of activities including climbing, kayaking and hill walking with the aim of finishing the package with a qualification.

The Climbing group under the direction of **SSgt Ian Conlan** and **2Lt Cathy Stephens** were soon challenged on the first day when one of the group **LCpl** 'Disco leg' **Harvey** was found to have a fear of anything higher than his boots. However, as the week commenced he overcame this and became at one with the rock, and was soon named limpet mainly due to the fact that he was determined not to fall off. He was also the only member of the group to scale a Grade Five as everyone else fell, literally by the wayside! **Sig** 'Scouse' **Barwise** was also a natural and took to his new found sport like a walk in the park. Overall the week was a great success with a series of days both in and out of doors and culminating in all of the students receiving their Rock Climbing Proficiency Qualification.

The four walking groups began their long road to a Summer Mountaineering Proficiency qualification by easing into the training by a gentle climb (not) just to get the legs working. After the initial warm up we then began to bag some peaks and were soon up above 1800m learning ropetricks, weather forecasting, navigation and in the case of my group some very bad jokes. The week continued with a few more quality days in the sunshine and culminated with an expedition to a mountain hut where **Sig** 'I am a Jenga king' **Jenkinson** showed us all a few moves during extreme jenga and the epic millennium snail racing championships took place. So now after all their hard work all the walkers are more than ready for the dizzy heights of K2 and Everest so watch this space for their exploits.

The week culminated in white water rafting, water skiing and mountain biking where the emphasis was more on the mountain than the biking. Overall an excellent ten days, special thanks go to **SSgt** 'Gaz' **Davies** for all his hard work behind the scenes which made the adventure training run smoothly and to all of the instructors for their assistance.

1ST (UK) ARMD DIV V ASTLEY BRIDGE CC TAVERNERS IN CONJUNCTION WITH EXERCISE SILVER CHILD III
by Sgt 'Al' Finn

Cricket line up 'Exercise Silver Child III'

On Saturday 22 April 2000 Astley Bridge cricket club from Bolton Manchester arrived in Herford to play the Regiment. The weather was a little hit and miss prior to the arrival of the opposition and the Regiment's team selection was a little last minute, however, **SSgt Matless** the Regiment's Captain won the toss and selected the away team to bat first. They then proceeded to score a total of 75 all out showing an excellent combination of bowling and fielding from the home team. As the sun shone and the temperature rose the home team were led into bat by their Captain and **Cpl** 'Blackie' **Blacklock** who spent no time at all getting their eye in. The skipper retired on a great score of 27 which opened the way for **Daniel Hymas** to show his expertise with the bat as well as with the bowling. **Cpl Blacklock** also retired after a good innings and **Sgt** 'Al' **Finn** picked off the final runs. The day was rounded off with a charity families disco in the White Rhino club in Herford. Many thanks to all those who helped make the day a complete success especially **Cpl Blacklock**, **Mrs Vanessa Finn** and last but not least the contact for the game **Mr Gerry Matthews** (ex RRF) who still lives in Celle. The whole day raised a total of DM1076.52 as well as the contribution from Astley Bridge CC, who with only one week's notice, were able to raise two hundred and eighty pounds towards the Silver Child charity of which all proceeds go to Great Ormond Street Hospital. Astley Bridge are hoping to return to Herford in 2001 on their annual BAG cricket tour. Should any team wish to arrange a game for Easter next year please contact **Sgt Finn** on Herford Mil 3574.

HERFORD MARCHES - ***by LCpl McGinley***

On Saturday 27 May, the 23rd International Herford Marches took place. It was held at Wentworth Barracks, 1 (UK) ADSR. The event consists of approximately a 15km march and shoot (using a Browning 9mm pistol) with nine command tasks to be completed along the way. 1 (UK) ADSR entered two teams from the mighty 201 Sqn. The teams consisted of three people each: Team 'A' comprised of **Cpl** 'Smudge' **Smith**, **LCpl** 'Ged' **McGinley** and **Sig** 'Rab' **MacLean**. Team 'B' was **Sig** 'Head' **Wilson**, **Sig** 'Russ' **Hearty** and **Sig Thompson**. With teams entered from Germany, Holland and Denmark as well as many other countries, competition was always going to be tough. The event was run by the local German unit which proved to hinder 201 Sqn's chances at some of the command tasks, especially on the boat stand , where Team 'A' decided to row the wrong way along the river; also on the map reading stand where the test paper was written in German (knowing how to order a gyros and chips didn't help much here). The other events include stripping and assembling an Uzi, a river crossing, first aid, a stretcher race and an assault course. Both teams did reasonably well on the command tasks, despite **Sig** 'I want to be a Tech' **Hearty** doing his best to sink his team on the boat stand; and **Sig** 'I don't sweat' **MacLean** taking his team on a short cut (Honest!) through a field of stinging nettles. However, the faster speed over the march ensured that Team 'A' finished ahead of Team 'B', with the teams finishing seventh and eighth respectively. After the event there was a barbecue and drinks held in the Royal British Legion. If these activities had counted towards the final score then Team 'A' would have finished a lot higher than seventh place!

DIVISIONAL SKILL AT ARMS MEETING 2000
by Cpl Warnes

The Divisional Skill at Arms meeting was held at Sennelager ranges over the dates of 23-26 May. The Regimental Team consisted of four teams of four, all varying in competition experience so we were in with a good chance of a few medals, or so we thought. The competition started with a rifle APWT in which a few of the team did really well, **Cpl** 'Paul' **Lester**, **LCpl** 'John' **Doran** and **Sig** 'Zilfinquar' **Chowdry** all scoring highly and gained qualification into the next round. Unfortunately this was as far as they got. Pistol APWT was the next on the list and again a few high scores from the two shoots that we did, **Cpl** 'Wilf' **Warnes**, **Cpl** 'Paul' **Lester** and **Sig** 'Gav' **Wilson** qualifying for the next round yet again the shooting stopped at this point. The LSW was too painful to print, apart from the score of **Sgt** 'Gerry' **McGachy** who did well but yet again had a dismal second round, story of our life! Last but not least was

the Fire team assessment, which I nearly died on even though I am still adamant I timed it to perfection. It consisted of a two mile run with 25lbs, weapon, webbing, ammo and wearing your helmet, after all that you still had to fire 35 rounds at varying distances and in NBC kit. Both team scores were good but not good enough to win anything. When it was all over the Unit came a close second to 35 Eng Regt but to this day we are still baffled how this happened as we beat them on the Rifle and Pistol competitions and the Fire Team assessment, however, they did beat us on LSW. It was a close run thing but unfortunately no silver this time!

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col I. Cameron-Mowat**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. C. Keilty**

The Regiment has been involved in a diverse programme of military training, sport and charity. As most of the Regiment drove out of the camp gates on deployment to America on Ex Roving Sands and to Germany on Ex Arrcade FusioN, 219 Sig Sqn arrived back from Bosnia where the Squadron has been serving on Op Palatine since December 1999. The Regiment has also recently been awarded the Birtwhistle Pennant of Merit for Recruiting, presented to CO, **Lt Col Cameron-Mowat** by the Master of Signals, **Maj Gen I. O. J. Sprackling OBE**.

The Master of Signals presents the Birtwhistle Pennant of Merit for Recruiting to the CO

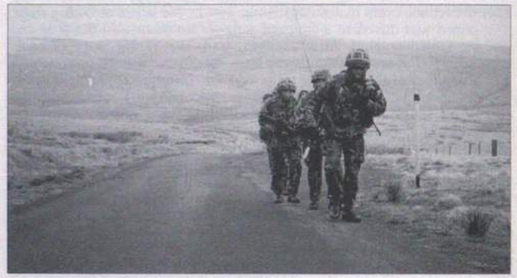
EXERCISE KOHIMA LEADER 03-14 APRIL 2000
LEADERSHIP COURSE

Since last year's Leadership Course had been cancelled due to deployment to Kosovo, it was with much relief that the coach pulled out of Imphal Bks on 3 April heading north to Otterburn. Something woke me from my slumber; there was the smell of DS in the air. After some short organisational shouting by the Training Warrant Officer, **WO2 (SSM)** 'Geordie' **Hancock** we were introduced to a gentle tab over the undulating terrain of Otterburn Training Area. After the 5-mile warm up we were fed, accommodated, kitted out and thoroughly briefed prior to receiving the first of many lessons that made up Part One of the Leadership Course. This training phase covered battle PT, combat estimates, skills lesson, discussion groups, range work, navigation by night and day, field-craft and tactics.

Saturday was the start of Ex Round Robin organised by the RSM and the Training Warrant Officer; a navigation exercise completed in five teams over some challenging terrain. Inter-section rivalry really kicked in and everyone gave their all to get round the course. The highlight for most was the 264 Sig Sqn stand where we were introduced to a range of foreign weapons, and then had to give a 5-minute presentation on their characteristics! A GPMG SF shoot followed this, which was a new experience for many of us. The other memorable event was on the 'Stalking Stand' where we were issued a single round and had to use cover to advance up a hill against an Observation Post. **Sig Amar** almost frightened **Lt** 'Jamie' **Noble** out of his skin by popping up literally a few feet in front of him, unnoticed.

Command Tasks 'What happens now?'

After the stands we were issued orders and the following morning moved out of the relative comfort of the camp to the baby's head infested wilderness that was to be our home for the next phase, test week. This busy week gave us all a chance to strut our stuff as Section Commanders or 2IC. Burdened only by the newly acquired skills of receiving and giving section orders, and the occasional prod from the section DS, we got used to administering ourselves in the field. For some it was a long and uncomfortable process but we all got there in the end. We practised occupation of harbours, recce patrols, standing patrols and fighting patrols throughout the Exercise. On the go for three days and unkind weather left us all tired as we approached Endex. **WO1 Terry** did raise spirits on the Night Patrol range as he followed a fire team along a trail of trip-flares and booby traps. The patrol failed to trigger a sandbag, which was supposed to knock a member of the patrol on a bridge. The fire team crossed safely until **Mr Terry**, in a scene reminiscent of a Roadrunner cartoon (**Mr Terry** cast as Wily E. Coyote), jumped on the bridge and was struck by the sandbag, which launched him into the water.



The long walk home

The final platoon attack at dawn gave us the opportunity of putting all the skills we had learned into practice. So that was Endex. Well, not quite. There was an added bonus of an inter-section March and Shoot competition to round things off. Dragging up our reserves of energy we got round, in particular **Sig Cowan** was witnessed at the heavy end of a jerrican-laden stretcher pushing two of his colleagues up the final hill. A formal dinner marked the end of the course for the students and DS. The CO, **Lt Col Cameron-Mowat**, presented the prizes and, for the first time in two weeks, managed to render **Sig** 'Taff' **Tutton** speechless when he was not only awarded the prize for top student but was also promoted on the spot.

Top Student – Sig 'Taff' Tutton

The course was thoroughly enjoyed by both students and DS. On our return to York we were given a personal de-brief and were presented with our certificates of achievement. Finally we posed for the course photograph which will be a memento of the hardest thing we have done ..... so far.

MORRISON CUP 2000

The Regiments sporting eyes were fixed on the performance of the Athletics team at the Corps Meet, 18–20 May 2000, competing for the Morrison Cup. Staged over two days for this special Millennium event, the team, complete with new team tracksuits arrived to discover their luxury accommodation was a tented camp at Weymouth. The driving wind and rain battering the side of their tents did not impress the team but after initial cries of mutiny everyone settled in for a good night's sleep.

Awaking to dark clouds and darker faces an English breakfast and a mug of tea set the team up for the day's events. The team had had minimal time to practise so did not know its true potential. Fortunately we had a few cross-country stars, **Sigs Grady**, **Tucker** and **Shepherd** who soon found themselves entered in the long distance events and some seasoned veterans including **Cpl Wood**, **LCpl Greenhill** and **Sig Dourley,** who could be relied upon as a nerve calming influence. Day One opened with a downpour, dampening the track and competitors' but soon **Sig Caplin** was storming home to finish second in the women's 5000m and later **Sig Tucker** finished second in the men's 5000m. By the final event of the day the men's team were in third place and the women's team in fourth place. Fortunately the team did not get blown away in the night and arrived at Blandford on Day Two to put in some outstanding individual efforts, notably **Sig Greenhaugh** in the women's 200m, **Sig Grady** in the men's 1500m and **Cpl Wood** in the men's 100m. Also **LCpls Greenhill**, **Warner** and **Sig Dourley** in the High, Triple and Long jumps respectively. By the 4 x 400m relay race the team was still in third place, just behind 1 (UK) Div & Sig Regt. We had a strong team and knew that victory was not beyond our grasp. After a brilliant second leg by **Sig Cowan** the team lay in second place, but as **LCpl Gittins** overtook a runner in the third leg the two athletes clashed and **LCpl Gittins** made a dramatic tumble. All seemed to be lost. Cheered by the crowds **LCpl Gittins** quickly jumped to his feet and with real determination retook two places before handing over to **Sig Grady,** who left the 1 (UK) Div challenger standing and cruised home into second place.

The team took home second place in the men's competition, the winning team being 11 Sig Regt. Sadly the Morrison Cup evaded us for another year but we returned to York with medals and are looking forward to the coming season.

RACE THE SUN 2000 - £4,000 RAISED FOR LOCAL CHARITY

Race The Sun is an annual charity competition, which takes the form of a 15-leg relay, over 182 miles in a 12 hour period. The event is organised by 2 Sig Regt and legs are varied and challenging ranging from canoeing to mountain biking, swimming to tabbing through scenic Yorkshire countryside. The competition is open to all units to enter and raises considerable funds for local charities.

The entry for Race the Sun 2000 was 11 teams who came from a wide

selection of units, including for the first time, a civilian police team. The race, held on 25 May 2000, started in traditional style as dawn broke, well a little later, at 0500hrs. Each leg has a twist but **Sgt** 'Dean' **Nichols** started the day in style by using a canoe without a spray deck and demonstrated the first submarine ever seen in York. There were outstanding performances from **Capt** 'Splitter' **Scott** who competed in three events and **WO1** 'Andy' **Terry** who completed two events back to back, which included winning the orienteering. All the events ran without a hitch thanks to the hard work and organisation of **WO2 (QMSI)** 'Dave' **Clark**. All 220 competitors entered into the sportsmanship spirit of the day, which resulted in 11 Sig Regt finishing as the well-deserved winners of the event. 30 Sig Regt won the trophy for raising the most money for charity and despite heavy operational commitments their team achieved third place. The Combined Mess's Team from 2 Sig Regt proved that the oldies have stamina, the team had an average age of 40 years and they achieved fourth place. The Leicester police team was awarded the shield for Best Effort, an outstanding achievement in completing the event and coping with all the Army jargon. The event raised over £4,000 for charity and a huge thank you to Nestle, the event sponsors.

DATE FOR THE DIARY
RACE THE SUN 2001
is planned for
10 May 2001

ASSISTING ITV's YEAR OF PROMISE
A GARDEN FOR THE SENSES

Early in May volunteers from 214 Sig Sqn, led by **Capt Richardson**, put their talents to work for 'ITV's Year of Promise'. They assisted the building of a special garden for blind and partially sighted children at Knaresborough. 'Henshaws Garden of Senses' will allow children who cannot enjoy the visual sight of a garden to experience the beauty of the outdoors through the sensations of touch and smell. **Cpl** 'Bob' **Green** and **LCpl** 'Nic' **Burnip** developed some good blisters as they levelled ground for turfing, **LCpl Anil** was IC Fire-Starter burning old foliage and **Sigs Bradley** and **Adkins** did some fine cement mixing and wheel-barrow work. The event was covered by Yorkshire Television's programme 'Tonight'.

Capt Richardson and the Gardening Team at 'Henshaws Garden of Senses'

MIKE TROOP

Following the post-RSIT lull life is hotting up again for Mike Tp with the preparations for Ex Roving Sands and Arrcade Fusion. The Troop is really looking forward to the return of the crew from Bosnia in June and there are other changes afoot. **Sgt** 'Bertie' **Hoyle** is off to 7 Sig Regt as a Troop Staff Sergeant, yes miracles do happen. Also leaving are **Cpls** 'Dave' **Randall** and 'Johnny Mac' **McKeown** on their T1 course. Congratulations to **SSgt** 'Daz' **Evans** and his wife, **Jo**, on the birth of baby **Hannah** and to **Cpl** 'Taff' **Livesey** on his well-earned promotion and move to 214 Sig Sqn. Finally welcome to the new **WO1 (FofS) Dodd** and to **LCpl Caplin** and **Sigs Hem, Ishwor** and **Pitamber** posted in from the factory.

Why not pay your subscription by Direct Debit? Ring 01258 482079 and we will send you a form

Mike Troop – The Full Team

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Capt Stuart Scott**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Kev** 'The Pocket Rocket' **Smith**

A hearty goodbye and good luck to our recently departed OC, **Maj David Somerville**, who has up'd and left us for sunnier climes in PJHQ.

TN 021 ROMAN TROOP
Tp Comd **SSgt Chris Symonds**

Roman Tp has had a busy period, losing our Troop OC, **Lt (soon to be Capt) Stu** 'Johnny Bravo' **Whittley** up to SHQ as the acting 2IC 214 Sig Sqn, and just when **SSgt Chris** 'High and tight' **Symonds** had started to get him broken in! In true Roman tradition, members of the Troop took part in both the Super Siggy competition and the Regimental Cadre Course. The Troop gladiators were **Sigs Ashcroft, Davis, Dixon, Sexton** and **Smith**. Although not all completed the full course, **Sig** 'Ronald McDonald' **Ashcroft** came out as the fittest Roman (Shock!) and **Sig** 'Smoking fist' **Smith** demonstrated he is a closet military doctrine geek when he scored well in the field-craft and leadership phases of the Exercise. For once our good-byes are shorter than our hellos. After serving an illustrious 22 years **Cpl Eddy** 'The Guvnor' **Leek** will be dined out in June. Welcome to **Sig Dean**, recently arrived from training and to our newest Gurkha soldiers in the Troop, **LCpls Anil** and **Bom**. Watch out all you Skiers; **Cpl Tony** 'Corps Skier' **Orange** is arriving from BFG! The Troop is looking forward to a good exercise in Germany and stocking up for summer BBQ's, whilst contemplating how to take on the upcoming Project Cormorant in the very near future.

TN 023 VIKING TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Jamie Noble**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Terry Shiels**

Preparation continues for our summer of fun in the good ol' US of A. To prepare us for this arduous task we went on a little day out…

All was set, even the sun was shining but unfortunately **Cpl** 'Gav' **Bevan** volunteered to drive. However we soon arrived in Keswick and found our peaceful family campsite and began assembling our tents. Despite his insistence **Cpl** 'I'm in charge ' **Parkhill** could not get three people into his crisp packet size tent. Having settled in we took on Mount Skiddaw and being a bunch of gladiators we opted for the hard route stopping for lunch at the top where **Sig** 'Ginger' **Mitchell** made friends with a goat and lost his food. We then slipped our way back to camp on some unforeseen snow and **Sig John** 'baby' **Rees** made good use of his backside. Then **Cpl** 'I'm still in charge' **Parkhill** decided we would climb the neighbouring mountain, much to the dismay of the older group members, not mentioning any names; **LCpl** 'Daz' **Culver**. Tired and wet we eventually got back to base camp, showered, changed and into the quiet Lake District town for a Babycham or two before waking the whole campsite on our return. Then the rain came and **Cpl Andy Plumb** found that his tent was not totally waterproof, much to the dismay of **LCpl Andy Williams** who had decided to sleep in it. The following morning, aching and wet we packed our tents away and headed off back to York for a well-needed rest and to tell stories of 'The Day We Conquered The Mountain'.

TN 024 CELTIC TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Dhan Gurung**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Debendra**

Life for Celtic Tp has been geared towards the forthcoming Ex Roving Sands. In preparation Celtic, Viking along with personnel from 219 Sig Sqn deployed to Kirton Lindsey on Monday 8 May to support the 22 Air Defence Regiment. The purpose of this Lincolnshire outing, Ex Dragon's Heart was to test the compatibility of Ptarmigan with ADCIS. It was a resounding success. Since our return to camp we have been extremely busy preparing all the vehicles and driving them to the docks at Immingham. Fortunately it was realised that the 1624 generators had been left behind before the boats set sail…..

3(UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISONAL SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Neil Couch**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Stoker**

REGIMENTAL ROUND UP

Marital Bless - The wedding epidemic continues to sweep through Bulford as **Lt Ollie Gardiner** joins the Commanding Officer, **Lt Col Neil Couch,** on the long walk to the alter this June. Congratulations to both of them (No, not to each other), congratulations also to **Rachael** and **Emma.** Following closely in their footsteps are **Capt Richard Odling** and **Hannah,** due to be married in the Summer and waiting in the wings is Brigadier sorry **Lt Grice** who informs us that he is now betrothed to **Janina.** Such a keeness to follow their Commanding Officer is obviously admirable……keep watching the Blue List!!

Lanyard Trophy - In an attempt to produce a team from 3DSR that could actually finish the Lanyard the Regiment found a combination of naive youth, pressed men and pensioners with egos years younger than their bodies. The aim was to get all ten to around the 40 miles mark in one piece and apart from some Lion Sun foot problems we almost achieved it. We finished in seventh place despite the 2IC's inconsistent use of his map and compass and the Regiment thanks **WO2 (SSM) Archer** for preparing the team:

Maj '41 going on 18' **Bateson**
Lt 'Upside down wings' **Irwin**
WO2 'Last Lanyard?' **Archer**
SSgt 'Do I get sponsorship' **Howson**
Sgt 'I walk, not talk' **Brown**
Cpl 'Suffer in silence' **Lovick**
LCpl 'Where's he gone?' **Westerman**
LCpl 'Eight hours to warm up' **Ackers**
LCpl 'If it's good for Lt Irwin ….' **Richardson**
LCpl '39 miles too far' **Kemp**

One of the secrets of our success was the physical and moral support provided by our superb back up team led by the UWO, **Capt** 'Not as good as 249 Sig Sqn, Wyc, Aye' **Terry Crane.** Thanks to **LCpls Coates** and **Newcombe** and **Sig Whyllie.**

IRON FIST

On the only sunny day in March the Regiment was invited to challenge 14 Sig Regt (EW) to a sports competition at Brawdy. With over 150 soldiers we descended on Cawdor Barracks ready to do battle with the forgotten Regiment in Wales. Having the home advantage 14 Sig Regt were victorious in the Hockey, Cross-Country and the Volley-Ball with 3 (UK) Div winning the Football.

The successful Boxing Team
Back Row: Cpl Tharby, Sig Locke, Cpl Matthews, Capt Crane (Boxing Officer), Cpl Watts, Lt Irwin, Sig Conner, Sig Nash
Front Row: LCpl Richardson, LCpl Ball, LCpl Wheeler, Sig Needs

The best and most battered boxer on the night
Lt Irwin Light Heavyweight Winner

The day culminated with a spectacular Novice Boxing Competition. All boxers showed great courage and the contest was only decided by the winning Welter Weight after both Regiments chalked up three bouts each. The decision went to 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt who came away with the Iron Fist Shield. The Regiment would like to thank 14 Sig Regt for an excellent two days in Brawdy. The additional silverware in the trophy cabinet will be keenly defended the next time we meet.

HOCKEY

STOP PRESS – Even more success for **SSgt Bru Baker** and his Ladies Hockey Team. On Friday 9 June 2000 the 3DSR team represented the Army in the first Tri Service Cup Winners Cup at Portsmouth. As Army Champions they played RAF Innsworth and BRNC Dartmouth. Despite missing the 2IC's support, two magnificent performances meant they were Tri Service Champions running out 11-0 and 11-3 victors. Deserved success for talented players and an extremely well drilled team. Congratulations also to **Cpls Tracey Hoffman** and **Tracey Prowse** and **Sigs Salmon** and **Harris** on their Combined Service representation over the same Festival of Hockey weekend.

The loneliness of the long distance runners. Despite having second, third and fourth places in the cross country run a lack of depth on the day resulted in a 14 Sig Regt win.

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj R. J. Quinlan**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) McNaught**

OVERLOON TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Irwin**
Tp SSgt **Sgt J. Rowe**

The Exercise season came and went in a flash, starting way back at the end of January and culminating in Ex Spring Foray in Mid May. Overloon Tp, as usual, performed well on all of the exercises providing all of the many systems to the Staff. On Ex Spring Foray the Troop managed to be 'Main' for a substantial period and dazzled the HQ Staff with their knowledge and high levels of performance. During the Exercise period the Squadron was augmented by manpower from 238 Sig Sqn and 249 Sig Sqn (AMF), who all proved to be of immense help during this taxing Exercise and we thank them for all the hard work they put in. In O Tp, a soldier gets 'crated' for a mention in '*The WIRE*' – so here goes for welcomes, farewells and congratulations. Welcome to **Lt Irwin** from 206 Sig Sqn, **Bdr Pogue, LCpl Nicky Dodgeson, LCpl Liam Parker, Sig** 'Randy' **Hussey** from W Tp, **Sig Nick Pallis** from MTCC Colchester and **Sig Royal** from the factory. Farewell to **LCpl Andy Higgins** off to Civvy Street, **LCpl** 'AK' **Akkulugadu** posted to NI, **SSgt Dave Oliver** posted to 30 Sig Regt on completion of Info Sys Op training, **Cpl Julian Towers** posted to Aldershot, **Sig Chris** 'Frankenstein' **Hartell** off to Civ Div, **Sig Martin Harper** to 2 Sig Regt, **Bdr Larry Loates** back to the Gunners, **Gnr** 'Smudge' **Smith** back to the big boys at 40 Regt RA, **Sig Kathy Simpson** to W Tp and **Capt Pat Pritchett** to 7 Sig Regt. Congratulations on promotion to **Sgt Joe Rowe, Cpl Trev Evans, LCpl Nicky Dodgeson** and **LCpl Parker**. Also a big well done to **Cpl Tracey Hoffman** in being a member of the Div Hockey Team champions , and to **Sig Sally Marsh** for her successful selection for Nursing Training in September.

BUSSACO TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt S. Lumley**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Mine's a Port' **Howson**

Welcome to **Sgt Jim Grey** who has joined the Troop from 243 Sig Sqn , **LCpl Robbie Turner** from 280 Sig Sqn, **LCpl G. Symons** who has come from JSSU , **Cpl Rob Hickley** and his wife **Toni**, who have joined us from HQ Sqn along with **LCpl** 'Bobbi' **Ball** and his wife **Mandy**, and **LCpl Martin** 'LA' **Treen.** Farewell to **SSgt Mick Brown** and wife **Kay** who have gone to 1 Mech Bde, we also say goodbye to **Sig Al Locke** and **Sig Lee Brakewell** who have both left the army – best of luck, and last but not least **Cpl Andy Gleadall** and his wife **Caroline** who have gone to Blandford. Over the last few week the Troop has been busy on exercise preparation and on exercise Red Tricorn two/Spring Foray. We are currently preparing for RSIT at the end of June. Preparations are also underway for the Regimental Open Day. **SSgt Pete Howson** and **Cpl Mark** 'Stonemeat' **Flintham** are trying every scam possible to raise funds, as they are helping CUOTC on Ex Deja Blue, an expedition to Capetown, South Africa. The aims of this expedition are to celebrate CUOTC battle honour whilst raising funds for East Anglia Children's Hospice (EACH). Any donations sent to 202 Sig Sqn will be gratefully received.

WATERLOO TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt P. Simpson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Wringe**

Well it's another busy period since the new millennium, so much so that the years halfway through already. There's been plenty of comings and goings in that time. Firstly we'll start with those who have managed to escape the clutches of 3 Div. We start with the ever popular **Cpl** 'basics' **Giddens** to 19 Mech, **LCpl Gaz Wilmott** to civvy street, **Cpl** 'Barney' **Rumble, LCpl Nikki Wilkie** and **LCpl Glen Lyon** all to RSS Blandford. We will al miss your vast wealth of experience. We welcome **LCpl** 'Monbrow' **Wood** and **Sigs** 'Paddy' **Coakley**, **John Parry** and **Jamie** 'No 2' **Thompson**. We also welcome back **Cpl** 'Taff' **Morris** from his DMI course at Bovington. As usual we've had plenty to do during the Exercise Season. At present everyone's busy preparing for RSIT at the end of June, we've never seen 43's looking so clean although no doubt this won't last. It's not all work and no play though, and the Squadron has managed to fit in lots of PT everyday which has resulted in us winning the CO's monthly run.

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Capt R. J. Odling**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) S. T. Archer**

INKERMAN TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt G. Irwin**
Tp SSgt **SSgt M. Angove**

We would like to welcome to the Troop **Sig Alan Simpson, Sig** 'Dave' **Thompson, Sig Tony Scriven** and **Sig Sam Hall.** We would like to say farewell to **Lt Gary Irwin** who is going off to enjoy the pleasures of 202 Sig Sqn, 3 Div Main. Goodbye to **LCpl Lorna Moses** all the best for the future in N.I. Last but not least **Sig Tim Cooper** who is off to 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn and will surely be missed by the female population of Bulford? Hello and goodbye to **2Lt Dean Atkinson** who is off to Blandford to attend his Troop Commanders course, ENJOY!!! Maybe that is a good thing as he uses our masts for target practice on exercise. **Sig Cooper** and **Sig Thompson** have promising careers ahead of them as they can juggle callsigns and configs to suit themselves. Maybe you boys should think about moving to Radcon! Congratulations to **Sean Thomas** on his promotion to Corporal, don't forget to get your crate in. Warning! Warning! To all females at 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn, **Sig Cooper** enjoys chasing spiders in the girls block. You will soon find out. We would like to say a huge thank you to **Lt Irwin, 2Lt Atkinson** and **SSgt** 'Daddy' **Angove** for maintaining our morale during the exercise. It was much appreciated by all. **Sig Paul Kerridge** and **Sig Dave Harris** are both getting married in the near future (not to each other). **Sig Dave Durward** is leaving us to become an RP in the local guardroom, I think it has something to do with his fetish for handcuffs. **Sig Wayne Kennett** is returning to the Troop, typing up car passes has proven too much for him. A big congratulations to **LCpl Jim Kemp** and his new wife **Esta** on their recent wedding.

MONS TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Gardner**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Fairfield**

Welcomes to the newest troop members **Sig Jeff Townsley** from 7 Sig Regt, **Sig** 'Taff' **Needs** and **Sig Tony Szejok** from the factory. Fond farewells to **LCpl Matt** 'Marvellous' **Parvin** posted to Blandford and **Sig Tammy Thompson** who left for Civvie street. Congratulations to **LCpl Steve Wood** (JCUFI), the grapevine informs us that you've finally got your Corporal tape up. Congratulations to **Sig Jimmy** and **Serena Somervile** on the birth of there son **Darren**. Congratulations to **Cpl Matt** and **Michelle Kutzner** and **LCpl Matt Parvin** on tying the Knot and finally to the boss **Lt Ollie** and **Emma Gardner** who will have tied the knot, by the time this goes to print. Good luck **Emma** from all the Troop!!!

EXERCISE LION SUN - *by Sig Stacey Blackman 206 Sqn*

Section One of Dhofor Troop 222 Sig Sqn, was mainly made up of us attached personnel, as well as some personnel of 222 Sig Sqn. At the start of the Exercise morale was high, everyone was on a buzz due to the

various forms of transport used to get us to the first location. First we set off on an LCU Boat, then a few miles from the shore each section got on to a Rigid Raider and prepared to land. Once on shore we were briefed and then taken to our first location via Wessex helicopter. For the next four days we proceeded to tab up and down mountains in sunny Cyprus, visiting different check points and stands. Needless to say by the end of the week, morale was beginning to drop slightly, even more so when we had to cut short the exercise phase by a day due to the worst torrential rain Cyprus has seen in ten years!!.....Then came R & R .....STOP PRESS .....Pictures and Reports from 222 Sqn. Next Issue (**Capt Selwood** promises the whole truth behind the Restaurant incident)!

7 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col David Jones**
RSM **WO1 Steve Smoothy**

229 SIGNAL SQUADRON
CHARLIE TROOP – TRUNK NODE 011
EXERCISE WET FEET (24 – 2 APRIL 2000)

Ex Wet Feet was an Adventurous Training Exercise held over the period 24 – 28 April 2000, at the British Mohnesee Sailing Club. Participants were given the option to choose between Dinghy Sailing, Mountain Biking and Windsurfing. They all achieved RYA Level 2 Dinghy Sailing qualifications, which entitles them to take a boat out unaccompanied in light winds. The two windsurfing enthusiasts achieved Level 1, with similar entitlements.

We left camp on the Monday evening, and headed for the Mohnesee Dam near Soest for a week-long Sailing Course. We had a warm welcome from **Sgt Quinn-Williams** and his wife **Donna** on arrival, with a quick brief on the activities we'd be doing throughout the week. The last thing we were told that first night was that we'd have to do a swimming test in the morning. 9 o'clock Tuesday we all stood at the waters edge in our swimming gear. Everyone was convinced that at any minute they were going to give us wetsuits. They didn't, and **Lt Evans** and **Sig** 'Ming' **Leeming** were the first ones in with the fishes. After our swim test in a freezing cold lake we all got issued our kit – brand new wetsuits and buoyancy aids. Later that day after dry training we took out a one-man boat each (Toppers). Everyone started colliding with each other, apart from **Sig** 'Ming' **Leeming**, who spent most of the week capsizing. By the Friday 'Ming' had a new name: Uncle Albert – As every boat he got into, he had sunk.

During our breaks off the lake, **Sig** 'Taff' **Phillips, Sig** 'Acky' **Atkinson, Sig** 'Macca' **McAbe** and **Sig** 'Ming' **Leeming** had made a water display team. The 4-man team's job was to keep up morale and make sure every single person was thrown in every day. As **Foreman** 'Boycy' **Sutton** was thrown off the jetty daily, his words would be 'such tomfoolery', 'What a jolly wheeze' or 'Such japery'.

(L-R): Sig Phillips, Sig Atkinson, Sig Leeming, Sig McAbe

While most of us sailed, three brave members of the Squadron tried their hands at Windsurfing. **Sig Nicki Johns** and **Sig Claire Roberts**, fancying themselves as cool surfer chicks, chose Windsurfing for the week instead of sailing. Their instructor **Rob** foolishly thought he would be having an easy time with only two enthusiastic students to teach, but he was wrong ... He soon discovered this on Day Two, when he was forced to deploy the rescue boat to retrieve them both. After much time spent in the water, and a few teddies thrown in the corner, the pair soon became confident on the board, and could be seen showboating up and down the lake. Progressing well, towards the end of the week the girls decided they could handle a bigger sail. Well done to **Nicki Johns** who managed to look a bit pro, whereas **Claire Roberts** who had a few problems lifting the bigger sail stayed comfortable with the kiddies one. For all those in 229 (Berlin) Signal Squadron who want to experience some more soggy adventures, Ex Wet Feet II will be happening this September ..... watch this space!!

229 Sig Sqn Sailing Posse

EXERCISE ACTIVE IMPROVEMENT (15 – 25 May 2000)

TN 011 deployed on Ex Active Improvement, with hope of many jollies around Holland, which were shortened in time and distance to McDonald's and the Chinky, which wouldn't have happened without our new 'Egg Op' **LCpl Hastings**. However, she could have saved herself a lot of time and effort if she just used 20 litres of benz .... As the days were passing by, the lads found new ways to entertain themselves: Some by fishing – God knows why **Sig Evans** 'Steph' and **LCpl Vickers** 'Rob' would want to sit happy as gnomes in the pouring rain for hours, apparently catching the same fish.

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON - LANYARD TROPHY 2000
by Sig 'Red-eye' Reddy and LCpl 'Sharky' Lane

Under close 'supervision' of **Sgt Dean** 'Chicken Bones' **Wilson** (twice lanyard winner) a team from 7 Sig Regt travelled to the UK to do their bit as representatives of BFG. The ten-man team, largely from 231 Sig Sqn 'gelled' on the two-week isolation training in Dartmoor, with our fitness and stamina improving dramatically, and a strong teamwork element quickly evolved, on (and especially off) the training areas. The team consisted of the following characters: **Sgt Wilson** sometimes preferred the use of chicken bones rather than the map, which encouraged us into finding short-cuts (especially if we wanted to get home before dark!). **Sig** 'Bibbs' **Bibby** was immediately enrolled as IC moral, as nothing seemed to get him down. A sure Baron of the work hard and play hard theory! **Sig Andi Porter**- The 'legs' of our team- was an excellent pace setter when at the front, however, his path-finding abilities often landed him up to his neck in bogs! (a worrying fact when he is a foot taller than all of us). **Sig Ross** 'Pickles- Porrige-Wog' **Nicholls** was extremely upset to be missing out on a night in Barnstable, due to 'tiredness.' After a few beers we were all off to sleep, where he was kept awake by the musical radiators! **Sig Chris** 'Ted' **Heath** was the youngest and quietest of the crew, however his determination was an encouragement to us all- when he was awake! **Sig Lee** 'Tales' **Tailor** was undoubtedly an asset to the team. Not only as another pacesetter and map reader, but also (occasionally) swapping with myself as 'rear man' and keep the team together. However, get him on the dance floor and his re-enactment of Saturday Night Fever can take out the whole team! **LCpl** 'Merc' **Ainscough** sustained an injury, but as to not let the team down again showed great determination and helped the team to bond, however he did not like people eating in the mini-bus (allegedly). **Sig Andy** 'Red-eye' **Reddy** only achieved 2IC moral with the infamous 'diving off stepping stones into a river with a 20lb bergen' trick. **LCpl** 'Sharky' **Lane** was better known for his nights out and spotting the innocent single women. Always there to give a helping hand at the back of the team, and finding good pubs and kebab shops on the way. **Cpl** 'Taff' **Kinsey** was a late addition to the team, as **Sig Ted Heath** joined the admin crew, and last but not least (no pun intended) **Lt Mayne**- Lanyard OC.... and Boss? Keeping a watchful eye on the team from afar (namely Blandford).

The day of the event dawned damp and miserable, but the team set off at a cracking pace, and by check-point 3 we were in second place with 216 Sig Sqn 800m ahead. As the weather closed in, visibility was reduced to 50m we had difficulty in finding check-point 5. **Sig Porter** picked up an injury as his talent for finding the boggiest area held true- and we had to leave him at check-point 6. The OC struggled with the hill to CP7 and also had to be dropped from the team. Now an 8-man team we could not afford any other mishaps, and although we had passed no other teams, and had not been overtaken ourselves, we held tenth place. To make up time we ran to check-point 11 and overtook a few teams. We were now on the last strip to the adjoining tors to the finish, we obviously past teams in the fog as we were now fourth. By check-point 13, completing the course seemed more important than winning, but then we saw others in front of us- it was just the challenge we needed as we hit check-point 15 and the home run down hill to the finish. At a time of 12 hours dead, we were piped in, and a huge congratulations from everyone- not just 7 Sig Regt, but in honour of 'a great achievement' in coming from tenth to third to bring it home for BFG.

A final special thanks must go to our admin team, **SSgt Wakeling**, **Sgt** 'Capo' **Carpenter**, **Sig Cox** and **Sig Heath** without whose support this accomplishment could not have been achieved.

LIMA TROOP - *by LCpl Kev Cranney*
Tp Comd **Lt Jon Mayne**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Mitch' **Mitchell**

The Troop would like to welcome in a few new faces and say goodbye to a couple of characters. **Sig** 'Ears' **Smith**, is posted to 4 Armd Bde, and he says he will miss everybody, especially **SSgt Phil Hay**. Also posted is **Sig** 'Scotty' **Newitt** to 8 Inf Bde, and he is already on the look out for a new attorney to look after him. We would like to give a quick mention to **Cpl** 'Pils' **Lamont**, **LCpl Bill Murray** and **Sig Jefferies** who are on the way to Bosnia. Also congratulations have to be given to **Sig Jefferies** for her recent engagement to **LCpl Manns**. New arrivals to the Troop are **LCpl Kemp, Sig Stainthorpe**, and **Sig Kennet**. We would also like to congratulate **Sig Scott** and **Sig Barclay** for their recent promotion from linemen to storemen. (Well done, we all know your going to be really happy in your new work!) Ending on a high note , and just gloat over SHQ briefly, Lima Troop recently won the Inter Troop Sports Competition, trouncing SHQ despite their best efforts to sway the referee.

OSCAR TROOP - *by LCpl Matt Childs and Sig Pete Corr*
Tp Comd **2Lt Harriet Hebblethwaite**
Tp Sgts **Sgt** 'Capo' **Carpenter**
Sgt 'Comedy' **Dave Burke**

Not a great deal to report from the mighty Oscar since the unqualified success of the Mozambique fundraiser and ITD week thanks to **SSM** 'Pyro' **Weaver** , which left **LCpl Matt Childs** the only honest alcoholic in the Squadron. A big fat Oscar welcome goes out to **2Lt Hattie Hebblethwaite**, the new OC. Welcome to the Troop Boss…Enjoy! Oscar would also like to welcome back **LCpl Ben Walker** and **Sig Pete Stevens** from Uniform Tp… welcome back fellas, the skiving stops here! Farewell for the moment to **SSgt** 'Robbo' **Robertson**, who has left the troop for a stint as an RQMS in Bosnia. Hurry back Staff, we're missing you already! Congratulations go out to **Cpl Steve Ritchie** on his marriage to **Tracey**, and to **LCpl Tim Mullett** on his marriage to **Kay.** Well done guys, may your cups runneth over and sobriety never rear it's ugly head! The biggest Hooray of the lot must go out to **Sig Andy Reddy** and **Sig Ted Heath.** As part of the Regimental Lanyard Trophy team they completed the gruelling event in style, finishing in a fantastic third place overall, behind two Airborne teams. Well done lads, a fantastic effort there!

QUEBEC TROOP - *by Cpl Charlie Hart*
Tp Comd **SSgt Andy Saunders**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Tony Black**

Quebec Tp, fresh from its reformation within the squadron, is now up and running well. The tech workshop, having been attached to the Troop, as well as the Sqn CIS element, comprising mostly of Telemechs, has boosted Troop numbers to approximately 40, an all time record for us. Having swelled the Troop's numbers, we now lose a number of TG's on attachment to Bosnia with 4 Armd Brigade, with the majority of remaining personnel going to the sunny Falkland Islands at the end of July.

We welcome eight new members to the Troop, **Sgt Paul Newell**, **Cpls Glen** and **Charlie Sunderland**, our happy husband and wife combo, **Cpl Dan Hine**, **LCpls Sharon Mcreede, Willy Todd, Neil Pope** and 'Trigger' **Routledge**. Goodbye to **SSgt Andy Saunders** who is leaving us shortly for HQ Sqn to go and work with the computer gimps in CIS Focus.

RADIO TROOP - *by Cpl 'Murf' Murphy*
Tp Comd **Lt** 'Kiwi' **McLeary**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Ian Thorburn**

Half the Troop is deploying to Bosnia with 4 Armd Bde and the other to the sunny Falkland Islands. The Troop would like to say welcome to all the new arrivals and someday when we are all back we might get to meet. It's with sadness that we must say goodbye to **Cpl** 'Si' **Riley** and **LCpl Andy Day** who are both off into the big world of civ div. Besides all the preparation for deployment the troop has been able to get the odd day away from the trials of the garage and the main craze at the moment is water skiing. We would also like to say welcome our new Troop Comd, **Lt** 'Kiwi' **McLeary** who is on exchange from New Zealand to see how the REAL Army do things. We would also like to welcome our new Staff Sergeant, **SSgt** 'Ian' **Thorburn** who joins us from 30 Sig Regt only to lose us all for the next six months, but hopefully one day there will be a Troop to look after.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Phil Baker**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Ian Carter**

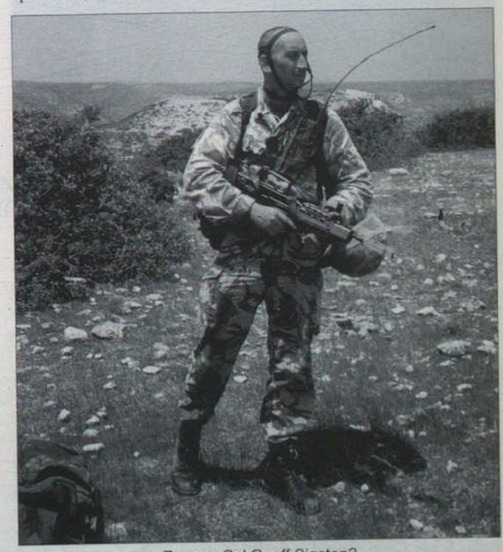
The focus of the last few months has been the Squadron's battle-camp in Cyprus from which we have just returned. Here are the Squadron's news and views.

DELTA TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Jones**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Newton**

First of all we would like to say welcome to **Cpl** 'Randy' **Randerson, LCpl** 'Scotty' **O'Neil, LCpl Sandra Evans, Sig** 'Chico' **Ankers, Sig** 'Stainsy' **McColm** and **Sig** 'Cardinal Richlieu' **Dennistoun** who have joined the Troop just in time for our fun in the sun. The Exercise started on a Sunday morning, which set the tone for all that was to follow, with the Squadron eventually arriving in Cyprus two days after departing sunny Krefeld. We had a nice overnight stop in Brize Norton courtesy of the RAF where the entertainment was limited to say the least. On arrival in

Sgt Mapstone, Lt Tatyana Noakes, SSgt Sean Cooke, Sgt Richards and Sgt Wright McCartney

Cyprus we had the usual set of lectures on what to do and what not to do mostly the latter, then a nice few days at the ranges honing our shooting and military skills to perfection. Bayonet drills gave everyone a huge injection of adrenaline especially **LCpl Evans** who seemed to enjoy it a little too much. The SSM did an excellent job of motivating those using the bayonets but he over exerted his voice and spent a week being quieter than usual. The second week was spent down at Pyla Ranges in Dhekelia for the live firing phase of the exercise. The range package included some aspects that were completely new to the majority but everyone enjoyed their time converting live rounds to empty cases. Whilst at Pyla there was the usual abundance of background activities with the survival phase being most widely talked about. Killing and cooking a chicken seemed easy enough but a valuable lesson was learned, make sure the chicken is cooked fully! The chickens got their own back by sending **LCpl** 'Mat' **Burton** and **Sig** 'I luv Clare' **Harris** down with a very nasty case of the trots. They were so bad that they had to be accommodated in Akrotiri Hospital for a spot of rest, relaxation and stool observation. Nice!



Zeus or Cpl Geoff Sigston?

The next stage of the Exercise was the FTX or 'Further Operations' as we were told to call it. The first day was a day of special tasking including patrolling, crowd control, mine clearance, mountain goat hill climbing, dog handling and an incredible ambush in which we sat for five hours waiting for an enemy who couldn't find their way.

Cpl Randerson, treated for insanity
(RAF Arms Explosive Search Dog
latches on to parts not seen in the photo

The ambush was almost ruined by **Cpl Jeff** 'Ferengi' **Sigston** who decided he was really cold and wanted to walk around to try and keep warm. Because of this **SSgt Stef Newton** thought that he was an enemy and screamed a challenge. He wasn't too impressed to say the least to find a shivering Corporal grinning back. The rest of the exercise was much of the same, little sleep and compo rations climaxing with a dawn attack on Paramali Village.

R&R was a three-day excursion to Egypt by cruise ship. As usual nothing ever goes to plan and **LCpl** 'Robbo' **Robinson** forgot his passport and had to get a taxi thirty miles to retrieve it. Everything else ran smoothly just like the cocktails. Egypt itself consisted of three Pyramids, the Sphinx, a papyrus museum and for **LCpl** 'Mat' **Burton** a camel ride with a little bit of extortion involved. The consensus was that everyone enjoyed themselves and most would return at a later date.

WO2 SSM Carter followed by WO2 FofS Dave Jones

PAPA TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Tania Noakes**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Andy Mapstone**

After extensive training/firing on Akrotiri and Pyla ranges, the Troop was very happy to be on the bus back to Radio Sonde, until they actually got to Radio Sonde and realised that the exercise phase was to start less than 24hours later. The smoker in the evening saw a definite amount of letting off steam with all the Troops having prepared skits and songs. Papa Tp stole the limelight here with a Jungle Book song with new and all-improved lyrics. The song was courtesy of **Cpl Duddles**, **LCpl Minto**, **Sig Cartmell** and **Sig Malcom**. The band was high-jacked that evening by **Sgt Atherton** and **Cpl Duddles** to play something a little more upbeat than the traditional Greek music that the Squadron had thoughtfully arranged. One of the attached Medics, **Cpl Karen Stewart** from 3 Royal Irish, waded in and provided some classic little Irish numbers just to make sure the evening just kept on flowing. Then come the FTX, cunningly relabelled as 'Operations' in order to help the new OC and SSM (who weren't with us in Kosovo last year) bond with the Squadron. The 'Operation' saw a new strategy called 'it pays to be a tabber'. Highlights included a Wessex lift for the Troop, the beach assault followed immediately by breakfast (It's the new tactic in Staff college don't you know), and the final attack on Paramali village which saw three attacks from three different directions and the biggest blue on blue you can imagine.

During the month all Troops were given a few nights out away from Radio Sonde Camp, limited to specified places in the Sovereign Base Areas. For Papa Tp these tended to end up in a Karaoke bar, even when there was no Karaoke machine! The fourth and final week brought in the R&R and Adventure Training phase. The 'Adventure Training' consisted largely of activities such as banana boat and jet ski rides, trips to Paphos and 'Wet and Wild' and dubious fishing trips out of Limassol. However, the most adventurous moments happened on the bus journeys because of the local driving.

The R&R for most members of the Troop consisted of a three-day cruise to Cairo and the Pyramids at Giza. The reactions varied from very positive to the cynics, who just thought it was a pile of rocks, went to Kentucky Fried Chicken at the Sphinx and then were seen at MacDonalds when we went to the Egyptian museum at Cairo.

SUPPORT TROOP
Tp SSgt **SSgt George McGuire**

First, We would like to say a big thank you to all the attached elements of Support Tp, without them the Exercise would not have been the big success that it was. Secondly, we would like to welcome **SSgt George McGuire** who joined Hotel Tp just prior to the Exercise. The Exercise began at a blistering pace in the gym at Krefeld on a hot Sunday morning, then off to RAF Brize Norton for an overnight stay in Hotel 'Gateway House'. We finally arrived at Hotel 'Radio Sonde' where **SSgt Adi Chapman** was on hand to greet every member of the Squadron with his normal kind hearted approach to life.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj W. J. Drain**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) S. Bovan**

A fairly busy period for the department what with all the forthcoming deployments. Much re-shuffling of documents and personnel is invariably necessary to ensure a pain free deployment, and this has been no exception. **LCpl** 'Chappie' **Chapman** now has more hair on his desk than on his head, and the SSM has been so badly effected, he has taken time from work to visit Lourdes for some spiritual guidance. Meanwhile, whilst the OC (The Grim Reaper) has been away on essential duty, the Dungeon dwellers of the SQMS's department have been busy assessing COSHH, Risks and just about anything that comes anywhere near them in preparation for the forthcoming EHT inspection. Unfortunately, we are having to say goodbye to our Squadron Clerk, **Mrs Jennie McKenzie**, who leaves us after two years due to her family's posting to Tewkesbury. We wish them all the very best of luck and would like to thank **Jennie** for her loyal service. We are now looking forward to exercise in June, Adventure Training in July, and in the meantime will continue to cope with anything else that crops up.

QUARTERMASTER'S (TECHNICAL) DEPARTMENT
QM **Capt R. Cory**
RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Burge**

There has some movement within the department since the last *WIRE*: **Cpl** 'Des' **Lang** has deployed to Bosnia with the Commercialisation Implementation Team and **Sig** 'Geordie' **Ellis** has moved over the 231 Sig Sqn prior to deploying to Bosnia on Regimental commitment. **Sgt** 'Mick' **Neil** has moved to 21 Engineer Regiment and **Sgt** 'Jock' **Castle** is off to Bulford on promotion (congratulations) to join 3 Div and both depart with our best wishes for them and their families for the future. On the sporting front the Golf Clubs are out, and the QM and **SSgt** 'Scotty' **Scott** recently squared up to each other in the Officers' Mess vs Sergeants' Mess competition. 'Played before then sir'? Apparently, not very much. Well done to the Sergeants' Mess, 'We'll be back'. With members of the Department representing the Regiment at Football (**SSgt Scott**), and Rugby (RQMS 'Taff' **Burge**), so with the QM's golf obviously aside, we can be justifiably proud of our sporting achievements. Congratulations go to: **LCpl Clare Boswell** (nee McIntyre) who recently married **LCpl** 'Bossey' **Boswell** from 280 (UK) Sig Sqn, and to **Cpl Dom Cooke** on being awarded Commander KFOR's commendation for his outstanding work on Op Agricola.

Cpl Dom Cooke 'Another brew for the QM Dom?'

MOTOR TRANSPORT TROOP
MTO **Capt N. R. Coatsworth**
Tp SSgt **SSgt P. Hay**

In keeping with National Road Safety Week, 7 Sig Regt recently held its own campaign between 2-7 May 2000. The first day consisted mainly of lectures, including: BFG Documentation, Drink Driving and the regulation of Driver's hours and was finished off with an inter-active Highway Code test. The remaining three days were taken up with defensive driving techniques such as: Skid Car training, 55 Seater Coach manoeuvring, and the affectionately named 'Baby Bender' (Big Truck to you and me) training, all of which could be seen meticulously negotiating their way around camp, or in the case of the Skid Car around, and around and around the square. **SSgt** 'Phil' **Hay** of MT Tp, instructing on the skid car, earned himself cult status by stepping out of the vehicle apparently unaffected by over ten hours of 'Dukes of Hazard' style twists and turns (evidently he's always been that colour). Unfortunately the same can't be said for some of his passengers who looked a little worse for wear.

FOOTBALL
7 SIGNAL REGIMENT BEAT ARMY CHAMPIONS

As Champions of the Western Premier League, 7 Sig Regt's reward was to be drawn against the Army Champions, 28 Engineer Regiment in the Premier League play-offs. With temperatures reaching 28C, the two teams lined up for battle, in weather more usually associated with the Spanish Premier Liega. The hot weather was matched by a blistering start to the game, with the Signals almost taking an early lead via a shot from **Sig** 'Scotty' **Scott** which narrowly missed the post. As the tempo of the game settled, the Engineers began pressing for the first goal, but the back three for the Signallers held firm, and their keeper remained unbeaten. It was looking more and more likely that the first goal would come from a set piece, and sure enough, just before half time, the first goal was bundled over the line by **Sig** 'Scotty' **Scott** following a corner.

Early in the second half, the referee blew for another corner, and as the kick was taken, **Sig Harris** was adjudged to have been fouled and was awarded a penalty. **LCpl** 'Stevo' **Stephenson** stepped forward, sent the keeper the wrong way and derived great pleasure in changing the score to 2-0. The Engineers, now with it all to do, immediately raised the tempo and, with 40 minutes still to play, began attacking with a new-found desire. Time and again they broke through the Signaller's defence, only to be thwarted at the final hurdle. **Cpl Dave Harthill**, pulled off a magnificent save, and **Sig** 'Coxy' **Cox** cleared the ball off the line to keep Harthill's clean sheet intact.

The final whistle was blown with the score still at: 7 Signal Regiment 2, 28 Engineer Regiment 0, **LCpl** 'Stevo' **Stephenson** was named man-of-the-match and the Signallers look forward to meeting 3 Battalion REME in the final on 31 May in Münster.

LAS VEGAS BOXING TOUR - MAY 2000 – *by Sgt 'Rosey' Rosendale*

In May this year, Finchley & District Amateur Boxing Club from London, visited the boxing capital of the world, Las Vegas, USA. For the fourth successive year, the club competed against the State of Nevada Boxing Club, a boxing club owned by the legendary **'Sugar' Ray Leonard**, and managed by world championship referee **Richard Steele**. Having been associated with Finchley ABC for many years, I was fortunate enough to be invited on this year's tour, as a coach, and as a British judge for the competition itself. With a team of five Coaches and 18 young boxers, Finchley ABC were keen to avenge the narrow defeats of the past three years, and bring the 'Nevada Partners' trophy home to British soil.

On Day One, the boxers were given a complete day's rest, with many of the young fighters showing the effects of fatigue and tiredness from the long journey the day before. On Day Two, we started the first of many training sessions at the fabulous State of Nevada Boxing Club. The Nevada boxers heralded from USA, Mexico, Peurto Rico and Cuba, and they all had the same thing in common. Tough, aggressive and proud, but also talented and determined to win on home soil. The all action, come forward style would suit many of the London fighters, and after four days of acclimatisation and light training, the boxers were ready for their big night.

After the weigh-in, the boxers were treated to a slap up breakfast, and then rested in preparation for the bouts that evening. The big fight night was billed as 'London vs. Las Vegas' and with a 400 strong crowd, which included former world champions **Roger Mayweather, Cornelius Boza Edwards** and Ireland's own **Wayne McCullough**, the atmosphere was electric. London supported the boxers in the blue corner, and Las Vegas cheered on the boxers in red. Unfortunately, Nevada boxing politics ruled that no British judges would be allowed, but I was happy to take my place, as an assistant second, in the London corner. The first bout was a unanimous victory for Finchley ABC, however the next seven bouts would all be victories for the Nevada ABC, with a few disputed decisions along the way. After an interval, Finchley ABC bounced back with another unanimous victory, and this started a marvellous fight back for the Londoners, only to be robbed of overall victory by yet more controversial decisions in favour of Nevada ABC. The final result of 10 - 7 to the State of Nevada Boxing Club was still a fantastic achievement for Finchley and District ABC, with coaches and parents proud of the fantastic display they witnessed in the ring. Best boxer was awarded to 15 year old **Michael Ford** of Finchley ABC, who completely outclassed **Dominic Chavez**, nephew of the legendary **Julio Cesar Chavez** of Mexico. Best Finchley novice boxer went to **Tommy Holohan**, who was presented with a 7 Sig Regt Boxing Team sweatshirt.

Many thanks to 7 Sig Regt, and the Army Sports Control Board for supporting me in this experience of a lifetime. At present, four boxers from Finchley and District ABC are contemplating a career in the Armed Forces. In April this year, two Royal Signals boxers competed in the Army Novice Boxing Championships, held at the Army Boxing Centre, Aldershot. **Cpl Tony Booth** of 600 Sig Tp reached the Super Heavyweight Final, and **LCpl Nathan Dorrian** of 3(UK) ADSR reached the Light-Middleweight semi-final. For further information on Royal Signals boxing, contact **Sgt Rosendale** on Krefeld Mil x2380.

Sgt Rosendale with World Championship Referee,
Richard Steele

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO **Lt Col D. P. Meyer**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D. L. Palmer**

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)
Sqn Comd **Maj Rob Meinerzhagen**
Sqn SSM **WO2 (SSM) Dave Watson**

The Squadron has had an immensely busy time throughout May, notably beginning with the deployment of LEWT on Operation Palliser. The Teams headed up by **WO2 (Supvr Radio) Jim Speirs** and **SSgt Steve Brown,** deployed on 7 May at extremely short notice. **Sgt Mathews** recently arrived to the Squadron had to get five inoculations all at one time before he deployed. After a strip down of landrovers, some rapid packing and check zero of weapons, the teams were waved off by the CO. The teams are due back soon with some other names in the frame should the Operation continue.

Following that, the two-week Exercise Whale Spear III continued despite the cut in numbers. The Squadron looks forward now to Ex Eagles Strike which takes place in Scotland and will involve the entire Squadron. This will be Maj MZ's last exercise with the Squadron, so perhaps we will be able to get him a jump with 16 Air Asslt Bde as a goodbye present. Lastly, after a highly successful and challenging Squadron Battlecamp, congratulations go to **LCpl Hickenbotham** and **Sig Lloyd** for winning the prizes for best performance in those ranks.

Visit the Museum website
www.royalsignals.army.org.uk/museum/

14 Sig Regt (EW) Spearhead
minutes before deployment to Sierre Leone
Back (L-R): SSgt Wilson, WO2 Speirs, Cpl Nichols, SSgt Brown
Front (L-R): Cpl Wright, LCpl Neil, Sgt Burton, LCpl Dowel

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Ath Mayo**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Neil Sorley**

Welcome into the SQMS Dept to **Cpl** 'SP' **Ferrer** posted into the Regiment from 3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn and to **Sig Becky Connor** on attachment from the QM(T) Dept. Well done to the SQMS **Sgt Titus Reene** for slipping off the board and picking up his Staff Sergeant. A very well deserved promotion for all his hard work, congratulations from the Troop. SHQ Tp has been very busy over the last couple of months. Firstly with the Squadron Battle Camp in sunny Sennybridge which lived up to its reputation, throwing all sorts of weather at us from bright sun shine to blizzards making conditions demanding. The Exercise went very well from a Troop perspective with a great deal of quality training achieved. Exercise Whale Herd 111 took place both in the Bramley and Dartmoor training areas. The first week consisted primarily of air portability training, which was a good experience for those who had not worked with helicopters before. The Dartmoor phase of the Exercise had its usual wet and dry days. The **SSM Dave Watson** sited the guard post in a ditch making the full use of cam and concealment only to discover later it was a river bed when the post was washed away along with the guard. A wet suit and snorkel has now been added to the guard box. Endex was called and the majority of us together with some keen volunteers, not from camp, paid a visit to RNAS Yeovilton so we could practise helicopter ditching drills. Apart from a few exceptions, notably **SSM Dave** 'Man From Atlantis' **Watson,** we had a very enjoyable time. **SSgt** 'Don't do water' **Sofley** was noted for his absence when he remembered that he had a pressing engagement with a Calor Gas Bottle and returned only to find the 'dunker tank' over. Never mind - maybe next time?

640 SIGNAL TROOP (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)
Tp Ops WO **WO2 (Supvr R) Nigel Watton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Frank Flaherty**

640 Sig Tp would like to say, 'G'day mate,' to **Sgt** 'Coops' **Cooper** Royal Australian Signals, who has joined us for a summer tour of six months at 'SUNNY BRAWDY'. Hello to **Sig Pete Evans** fresh meat from Blandford. Welcome back to **LCpl** 'Gaz' **Roscoe** and **Sgt Dave Scanlan** returning from tour in Kosovo and end of tour leave. Also welcome back to **Cpl Andy Nichols** from Sierra Leone who had a lucky escape when **SSgt** 'Biscuit' **Brown** nearly shot him in the foot as he thought his boot was a Cobra. Welcome back to **Sig** 'Carpet' **Matzke** who has successfully passed his Royal Signals Leadership Course in Blandford. After the course he was that chuffed with himself that he decided to take his ONE WAY hire car via Manchester for the weekend just to avoid paying at the Severn Bridge to get into Wales (who wouldn't avoid paying to get into Wales?). Also a welcome back to **Cpl Paul Pettman** who is joining our Troop AGAIN after a slack five months in Romeo Tp. We would like to say goodbye to the following; **Capt** 'Mr Soft' **White** posted to 4 Armd Bde, **SSgt** 'JX' **Walker** to 16 AABde (the place will be a lot quieter without him), **Cpl** 'Simmo' **Simpson** to 19 Mech Bde, **LCpl** 'Mr John' **Doughty** and **LCpl** 'Mr Matt' **Gerrard** who have been posted to civvi street. After a very successful battle-camp in 'Sunnybridge err Sennybridge' and an Easter break the Troop got off to quite a good start (well some more than others). At the Regimental Athletics Day. **Sig** 'Dee' **Bradley** did extremely well coming first in the javelin, first in the 400 meters and second in the 400 meter hurdles, she then got picked to go to Blandford for the Morrison Cup and successfully came second in the 400 meters, second in the javelin and participated in winning the women's tug of war.

One of the main highlights of the month was Ex Whale Herd. After battle-camp and athletics we had just enough time to prepare our vehicles ready for the eleven-day Air Mobility and Comms Exercise. Just to make the Exercise that little bit more enjoyable the LEWT team and a chosen member of the Troop **(Cpl Andy Nichols)** deserted us for the sunnier climate of Sierra Leone along with various well maintained and prepared exercise equipment. Thanks lads.

During the first week of the Exercise **LCpls** 'Gaz' **Roscoe,** 'Ritchie' **Cranswick** and **Sig** 'Dee' **Bradley** were re-deployed to sunny Brawdy to establish a rear link with the Troop in Sierra Leone. (How else would they keep up with the climax to the football season?) The second week of the Exercise **SSgt Frank Flaherty** organised a Heli-dunking escapade to enable the troops to have the chance of becoming modern day Houdinis. The greatest escapologist emerged as **Cpl** 'Don't panic' **Byrne** who managed to start off fifth in line but finish off in second place by using the good old English spirit of every man for himself **Sig** 'I'm not so' **Keen** was the only member of the Troop who got all the kit on, got himself psyched up and decided that after seeing **Cpl Pete Byrne** and the SSM, who suddenly froze leaving the OC Sqn who was sitting next to him drowning, decided that he didn't really fancy getting wet. While we were all enjoying ourselves on Ex Whale Herd other certain members of the Troop **Sgt Dave Scanlan, Sgt** 'Coops' **Cooper, SSgt** 'AV' **Grundy, Lt** 'Wanna be 640 Troop' **Mayo, Sig** 'Woody' **Woodrow** and **Sig** 'But, But' **Taylor** were in the drinking dens of Amsterdam for two weeks liaising with their NATO colleagues.

ROMEO TROOP (ELECTRONIC WAREFARE)
Tp Comd **Lt H. J. Scott**
OPSWO **SSgt (Supvr R) D. White**

The Squadron has had a pretty hectic life recently with Spearhead deploying to Sierra Leone and deciding the manning for Kosovo to support 42 Cdo Bde, which needless to say has had devastating effect to the manning especially for Ex Whale Herd 03/00 (08-21 May). The Exercise started slowly due to the manning problems but soon livened up with the rigging up of land rovers and deployment drills in Chinooks. During the Exercise there was a little birthday celebration for the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Allan** who got caught hanging around by the LAD. Further to this the Squadron went to Yeovil to do the helidunking drills, which was even more fun for the SSM (when he was thrown in!).

A warm welcome back to **SSgt (Supvr R) John Winn,** wife **Pippa** and family from Chicksands as the new OPSWO and going this month are **Sig Dai Jones** promoted and posted to 280 Sig Sqn St Tropez and **Cpl** 'Chaz' **Caley** who is away seeing the world for three months with the Royal Navy. **Cpl Paul Pettman** who has ventured all the way to 640 Sig Tp (who share the same hangar). Welcome back and congratulations to **SSgt Paul Rowlands** who has just been promoted and passed his Supervisor Radio course at Chicksands, he will be a sad loss and we are sure an asset to 15 Sig Regt. Welcome back also to **LCpl** 'Eddie' **Edwards** who has just returned from sunbathing in Sierra Leone, also congratulations to **LCpl Chris John** on the birth of his baby Boyo (there's lovely)!! One last congratulation to **Sig Tony Crutchley** and **LCpl Nicky McLelland** on their match made in heaven. The Troop is now looking forward to the Waddington Air Show and exercising with 16 AABde on Ex Eagles Strike, that will be a nice drive from AMC to West Freugh in the Beady Eyes!!

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)
Sqn Comd **Maj Hodges**
Sqn SSM **WO2 (SSM) Griffiths**

Hello to the new **SSgt (FofS)** 'Monty' **Farrow** and farewell to the old now **WO2 (FofS)** 'Ski' **Sharpe** who is off to Gibraltar for a break from the excessive Brawdy weather. Hello also to **SSgt (Supvr Radio) Timmiss** who joins the increasing senior strength of Whiskey Tp. The Squadron managed to squeeze Ex Mouflons' Crown Jewels in between the round of signing for the new equipment and PACEXes. The Exercise was a day of paint-ball at a local venue. 50 rounds of fluorescent paint didn't seem to go far with the tactics of.... shoot first and aim later. The laying down of withering weights of fire in the direction of the enemy ensured that nobody completed the day with clean coveralls. **Sgt** 'Spartan' **Barber** took a delightful head-shot full in the goggles as just repayment for abandoning the 2IC, **Capt** 'Ned Kelly' **Ingram** in a well-prepared defensive position. In another incident demonstrating that a day without doctrine is a day wasted, **Maj Justin Hodges** led the 'Preselli Charge.' His team tried to make a break for the cone only to fall fowl of a 'Hasty; one man; linear ambush' from **Cpl Venables.** Once again the 2IC, **Capt Frank Drebbin,** found himself in a vicious fire fight with his arch rival **SSgt Jez Clarke** at a distance of four feet. The two trees being used for cover were so close that in the event of a truce each party could have lent over and shook hands .... but this was a fight to the death. After some Bar-B-Que action it was a re-location to the Bell Vue near the patch to continue the motion.

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)
Sqn Comd **Maj Drinkall**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Richardson**
HEADQUARTERS TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Hawes**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Hughes**

A warm welcome from the Troop goes to the new Squadron OC, **Maj David Drinkall.** fresh out of Blandford as part of the Command Group instruction team and immediate congratulations on the birth of a baby daughter. Yet more congratulation go to **SSgt** 'Shuggy' **Hughes** and his wife on the birth of their baby girl and to **LCpl Nikkie Crutchley** (nee **McLelland**) on promotion and marriage to **Sig Tony Crutchley** from 226 Sig Sqn. It has been another busy period for the Troop following the return from Kenya with the Odette system finally making an appearance some ten months late and the Squadron summer exercises in turmoil as the Squadron has been warned off for two Medicine Man deployments to BATUS. The MT as usual are complaining about lack of manpower. If they spent less time playing darts it probably wouldn't be a problem! It's farewell time for one of the Troop stalwarts, **Cpl** 'Where's my golf clubs?' **Stanley-Jones** with a hyphen. Goodbye and good luck on your posting to sunnier pastures up in York. Welcome to **Cpl Chris Coward** across from the QM's and into the Q Dept to bolster **SSgt Glen Kitchen's** depleted crew. The nomadic Tech workshops also say a fond farewell to **Cpl** 'Grev-fox' **Turner** and **Sig** 'Otis' **Reading** who are off back to TM Tp. It has now been five months since the Techs have had a workshop and they are asking if anyone out there knows of where they could get one.

VICTOR TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Ashman** Royal Australian Signals
Tp SSgt **SSgt Newton-Roberts**

There have been a number of changes within the Troop with members leaving and others arriving. Those that have left recently to civvy street include **Sgt** 'Brads' **Bradbury, Cpl Zoe Wainwright** and **LCpl Rvan Perry**. We wish them well for life on the outside. We also welcome onto the Troop **Lt Hamish Ashman** who has joined us on Ex Long Look and **LCpls Dodd** and **Green**. Good luck to them all.

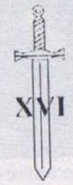
Since returning from Kenya the focus of work on the Troop has been based around the arrival of the Odette equipment. It took a while for it to be checked and accounted for but those lucky enough to be chosen, from a cast of not very many, have now signed for it and locked it away. The next obstacle the Troop has to overcome is to learn how to use it!! Over the next few weeks there are a number of courses and exercises that should put that right.....We hope!

The Troop has recently been committed to a number of different exercises. In particular Troop personnel have been deployed to Blandford, Salisbury Plain, Catterick, Poole and Germany. This trend is set to continue over the next couple of months with Canada looming in September and October. Some of the linguists have even had the pleasure of doing a language course in Scarborough being put up in a four star hotel for the duration.

TANGO TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Waddell**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Mulligan**

Post Kenya has been a hectic but relatively uneventful time for the Troop. We're undertaking the introduction of the Odette System. this has taken (and seems that it will take) forever. A new system. means a new role and some reorganisation was necessary. To that end Victor Tp are finding their assets increasing and the ever hard working. pressurised and under paid Tango Tp (not that the author is biased at all) are finding them selves even busier. The Troop are now beginning to prepare for deployment to Suffield, Canada, on Ex Ironhawk. In the middle of all this we say, goodbye to **LCpl** 'Big' **Dave Terron** who's gone across the water and **Sig Haley Wythes** who leaves us for Germany. Welcome to **LCpl Steve Jones** and his family - from God's own country in Catterick. Also to **Sig** 'Head in the clouds' **Clarke** straight from the factory at Blandford, just remember the pair of you that 14 Sig Regt is here to be enjoyed! Just received from our friends at Truprint is proof that not all officers are lazy and idle - just most of them... **Lt** 'Tigger' **Coleman** and **Lt** 'Cuff-Man' **Waddell** discussing Adventure Training issues whilst in Kenya.

Lt 'Cuff-Man' Waddell
discussing important issues with Lt 'Tigger' Coleman



XVI 16 SIGNAL REGIMENT

REGIMENTAL SHOOTING – *by LCpl Counter*

For this year's Corps SAAM the Regimental Shooting Team spent two weeks training in UK prior to the competition. After a fortnight in the wind and rain we were finally ready for the competition. There were enough of us to form three teams and our hopes were pinned on the 'A' Team', led by **SSgt Andy Dixon.** Once at the competition things went well, and after seven or eight shoots we were feeling confident. Our hopes were fulfilled and our team came first as well as collecting several other prizes: **Cpl Davies** won best 'B Class Shot' and **Sig Williams** demonstrated her shooting prowess and was nominated as 'Best Female Shot'. **SSgt Dixon** and **Sig Moore** won the Roupel Cup and Pistol Team Shoot - if we mentioned the rest we would be showing off! Following our success at the Corps SAAM we went to the UKSC(G) SAAM with high hopes. Teams from 230 Sig Sqn and 255 Sig Sqn, led by **2Lts Sarah Pittaway** and **Jo Stokoe,** along with 252 Sig Sqn's team, led by **SSgt Dixon,** competed against 15 other teams for the top spot. Having attended a week-long training package on the Hythe and Lydd Ranges our shooting had improved enormously. **SSgt Dixon,** as one of the Army's Top 100 acted as coach and put us through hundreds of zeroing shoots, APWTs and Fire Team Assessment shoots. The final team selection took place and we entered three teams and several individuals. All three teams did well, but one or two had a bad week. **Sgt Tony Lynch** and **Cpl** 'Yos' **Durrant** won the LSW Team Competition and 255 Sig Sqn came away with several prizes as well as runners up in the Falling Plate.

BATTLEFIELD TOUR TO ARNHEM

A Battlefield Tour was held in April for the Officers and Warrant Officers of the Regiment to study Operation Market Garden. The operation in 1944 was an audacious plan devised by **Montgomery** to break German resistance by a series of airborne landings to clear a corridor for the advance of his Second Army through Holland. The site for the landings was in the vicinity of the Dutch town of Arnhem. The tour included a visit to the Museum near Arnhem, which gave us the opportunity to study the battle in detail before undertaking a guided tour of many of the battlefield sites. Following a visit to the famous bridge over which so many 1st Airborne Division soldiers fought and died, we paid a poignant visit to the nearby cemetery where the vast number of dead, many unidentified, were finally laid to rest. The day was finished off with the obligatory viewing of the all-star-film 'A Bridge Too Far' on the journey home.

EXERCISE FAST TRACK – JUNIOR COMMANDERS' COURSE
by Sgt Andy Haylor

After many weeks of preparation by the Regimental Training Wing 27 students deployed to ATA Haltern on Ex Fast Track – the Commanding Officer's Junior Commanders Course. The course was designed to develop and test leadership skills of soldiers and JNCOS in a tactical setting. Individual military skills were brushed up and section drills rehearsed prior to the final assessment phase and inevitable platoon attack. Thanks to the Training Wing Warrant Officer, **SSM Chris Ward,** and his insistence that everyone joined in early morning 'physical jerks' he somehow managed to reduce the course to 19 students! Rumour has it that his basic instructional technique could have been suspect! (QMSI to investigate). The weather was just what was needed with torrential rain and gale force winds – it couldn't have been better planned. It was lucky that **Sgt Bri Turner** had vacated his basher before a nearby tree decided to rearrange his bed space! All students did particularly well to finish the course, admitted that they had learnt a lot, and some even said they enjoyed it. A special mention goes to Top Student - **Sig Chloe Cowen,** 230 Sig Sqn and **Sig Edwards,** HQ Sqn, who won the 'Best Endeavour' Award – Well done! The 'end-of-course' Regimental Dinner, organised by **Sgt John Hoskins,** was a sound success. Mr Vice, **LCpl Hasse** spent the whole evening laughing at his own jokes but it was up to **Cpl John Morley** to improve the tone of the evening with his non-stop military funnies. All in all, the course was a success and the Regimental Training Wing are eagerly looking forward to welcoming more budding JNCOs on the next course which is on.....

SUPPORT TROOP - 230 SQUADRON
Tp Comd **Lt Knightly Brown**
Tp SSgt **SSgt McNeill**

The Troop has been busy over the past few weeks with Exercise Green Gambit and the CO's Cadre Course. Support Tp had the largest representation on the course, and congratulations must go to **Sig Cowen** who was presented the prize for Top Student. New arrivals to the troop include **Sig Smithson** and **Sig Taylor** and farewells go to **Sig Wynn** and **Cpl Curley. Cpl King** is off to ATR Bassingborn after his Skill at Arms course. The Troop participated in the Leicester Trophy athletics, a gloriously hot day in May as preparation for the Morrison Cup. The Mens' team did well, however the 230 Sig Sqn female team won their competition. We have also had **2Lt Pittaway** on attachment before her Troop Commanders Course at Blandford. Apparently she organised a very 'educational' cultural trip to Cologne – but

Support Troop – 230 Squadron and friend after Troop equitation lessons!

no one has seen the photos! Other activities included a Troop Riding afternoon at the JHQ Rheindahlen stables which involved basic introduction to horse riding with most riders trotting by the end of the afternoon.

TN 016
Tp Comd **Lt Ollie Dinnis**

A busy couple of months for TN016, with Ex Green Gambit, finishing second in the Leicester Trophy Athletics Tournament, followed by 1st then 2nd Line Inspections, and finally preparing for Ex Arrcade Spartan. The prospect of a weeks adventure training in July, followed by summer leave, gives us something to look forward to though. Leaving us for pastures new were **Cpl Brian Wilkinson**, **LCpl Steve Welsh, LCpl Danny Jones** and **Sig 'D' Knight**. New arrivals have appeared in the shape of **Sgt Dave Taylor** from RSS, closely followed by **Sigs Madine, Nowell**, and **Briscoe** all fresh from the factory and ready for re-programming.

SUPPORT TROOP - 255 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Tp Comd **Lt Emma Bruce**
Tp SSgt **SSgt G. Roberts**

The Troop would like to welcome its new Troop Commander **Lt Jo Stokoe** who is visiting on attachment before completing her Troop Commanders Course and returning (hopefully!) to take command of the Troop in November. The Troop is also pleased to welcome **Cpl Andy King** who has been posted from sunny Scotland - at least the weather will be better here! The Leicester Trophy Competitions have brought out all the natural sportsmen in the Troop - and most of the 'not-quite so natural ones' too! Congratulations go to **Cpl** 'Barney' **Reville** and **Sig Scott** on their individual events and going on to represent the Regiment at the Morrison Cup in Blandford. Special mention must be also given to **Sgt** 'Mus' **Musgrove** for his outstanding performance on the 100m hurdles - it is fair to say he left the other competitors standing! Continuing on the sporting theme, theSquadron's silver cabinet has been given a boost by **Sgt Brian Turner** and **Sgt Paul Taylor's** golfing successes. **Sgt Turner** won the Army Match Play Plate and was selected to play in the Inter Services Golf competition in June. **Sgt Taylor** won the Scratch Competition at the R SIGNALS Corps Spring Meeting, and together they won the Greensomes Championships 2000 - well done!

255 SIGNAL SQUADRON - EXERCISE RACCOON BACKSTOP
by 2Lt James Mason

Ex Raccoon Backstop was a two-week adventurous training exercise in the Harz Mountains organised by **2Lt James Mason**. It enabled two groups to take part in a weeks' activities consisting of mountain biking, trekking and a slightly different form of orienteering organised by **Sgt Paul** 'I don't want to give them blisters, really' **Taylor**. Torfhaus Lodge provided us with ideal self-catering accommodation from which to explore the local area. **SSgt Guy** 'Master Chef' **Roberts** cooked gourmet meals from around the world and **Sgt Dean** 'Mad Mac' **MacKenzie** took us on some hair raising down hill rides before getting us all to jump ten meters off a bridge into Lake Oker. The at times arduous mountain biking, coupled with a moment of map reading madness by **2Lt James Mason**, resulted in some very saddle sore soldiers, but at the same time a sense of achievement at what we had accomplished. **Cpl Tony** ' Have I got this map up the right way?' **Seville** took us on some interesting walks where the likes of **LCpl Alley** 'Let's run up that hill' **Richardson** made things a bit more challenging. **Cpl Mark** 'Where's the next petrol station?' **Blears** and **Cpl Kev** 'I don't know' **Smith** provided amusement by running out of fuel twohours drive from the Lodge. There were some long lunch breaks during which **LCpl** 'Nat' **Kemp** and **Sig Kerry Sims** managed to 'top up' their tans. In addition to the adventurous training there was also plenty of time for R&R, and the local pool with its slide, jacuzzis and sauna provided the perfect remedy to aching muscles! Despite being fairly quiet the local town of Braunlage provided us with our evening entertainment and we managed to find plenty to do. A good time was had by all.

255 Squadron 'resting in the Harz

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col Mike Lithgow MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Al Higgins**

SUPPORT SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj R. H. Gladwin**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Young**

QM's DEPARTMENT
QM(A) **Maj C. Greig**
QM(T) **Capt D. A. Wright**

As usual, it's been a very busy period for both the dept's, with the onset of Ops Turner and Palliser the landline has been 'Red Hot'. Welcome to **Maj** 'Chaz' **Greig**, newly arrived into the QM(A) hot seat via the OC Sp Sqn and QM(T) chairs. He has been ably joined by the dynamic duo of RQMS(A) **WO2** 'John' **Paterson** and his new sidekick **SSgt** 'Phil' **Green**, who has jumped ship from 258 Sig Sqn! On the Technical side it's a warm welcome to the new QM(T), **Capt Dougie** 'The Corps' Brilliant' **Wright**. To show he's not forgotten a big hello to **Sig** 'Gaz' **Green** out at the 30 Sigs det in Kosovo. Shame about 'Sheffield Wednesday'. Congratulations must go to the RQMS(T), **WO2** 'Andy' **Campbell** and **Sig** 'Gemma' **Worrall** on their participation and completion of the gruelling Lanyard Trophy. No mean 'feet'. On the shop floor, ongoing commitments to Op's Palatine, Agricola and Palliser keeps everybody busy and on their toes, even the two 'crod' seniors, **Sgts** 'Gaz' **Davey** and **Eddie** 'Calmess himself' **Gajny** who have to stand in when 90% of the Department are playing Regimental Football! Finally a big congratulations goes to **LCpl** 'Jenny' **Hine** on her recent marriage.

REGIMENTAL TRAINING WING
EXERCISE ARDUOUS CYGNET

Early on Sunday, 19 March, saw 24 eager students deploy to Sennybridge Training Camp for Ex Arduous Cygnet, the Commanding Officer's Cadre Course. The Exercise included **Pte Leare**, 1 Devon and Dorsets attending the course for assessment prior to transfer to the Army Physical Training Corps. Completed over two weeks the Exercise consisted of an in-camp training period, covering subjects such as tactics, orders, leadership skills, command tasks, physical training and navigation

Ex Arduous Cygnet
(Back row): Sigs Climpson, Parta, Cpl Coils, Sig Indra, Marsden
(Front row) Sigs Mooney, Khagendra,Danbar

culminating in a four day exercise on the Brecon Beacons, particularly bleak at this time of year. The Exercise was physically demanding although **Cpl Bri Wilson**, 2 Section DS, managed to get 13 hours uninterrupted sleep and was spotted being carried in his maggot by 2 Section on the 'bug out' phase. **Sig Andy Armitage** proved to be top student and was subsequently promoted to Lance Corporal by the CO, **Lt Col Mike Lithgow MBE,** who was so impressed with the students' enthusiasm that he decided to increase the subsequent courses to three weeks duration. The course was also the swan-song of **SSgt Ian Thorburn**, who is posted to 7 Sig Regt after three years as Regimental Military Training SNCO. Best of luck to him and his long-suffering wife **Vicky**!

Ex Arduous Cygnet
(Back row) Sigs Climpson, Mooney, Cpl Coils, Sigs Marsden, Parta, Khagendra, Danbar
(Middle row) Sigs Indra, Spinks, Kumar, Powell, Suresh, Black
(Front row) Sigs Gibney, Niven, Thwaites, Yoxall, Santosh, Surya, Krishna

EXERCISE SWAN PURSUIT

The Regimental field firing exercise, Ex Swan Pursuit took place between 4-12 May. A force of 12 permanent range team and 45 firers, (somewhat depleted due to operational commitments) were accommodated at St Martins Plain Camp, Shorncliffe Garrison. Two weeks of ranges, starting with Stage 1–3 APWT through to Stage 5 Live Section Attack followed at the excellent counter insurgency range complexes at Lydd and Hythe. The PRT were joined by **Sgt** 'Jake' **Jacobs**, Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers on Ex Long Look who provided invaluable assistance when it came to weapons such as the Heckler and Koch G3 and the M16 Armalite rifles. Congratulations to **Sgt Surya** of 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn, the best shot overall and also to **Cfn Paul Buttery**, the best battle shot on the exercise. Special thanks are also due to **Capt Ian Cooper** REME, who despite being nominated OC Exercise, at short notice, executed his duties in his normal understated manner, often with less than five hours sleep a night.

MOTOR TRANSPORT SECTION
MTO **Capt G. Johnson**
MT SSgt **SSgt Nanda**

Another busy period for Regimental MT and a turn around in manpower that has seen us all scratching our heads and saying, 'Where's everybody gone?' Farewell then to our old boss **WO2 Al Keen**, who has gone to join 256 Sig Sqn as SSM. He thought that a handover/takeover during Ex Argon Mercury in Ghana would be a terrific introduction to his new job and off he went to get his kit and sun tan oil packed! Keep your head down and your body armour on **Al** and watch out for the RUF! Thanks for everything you've done for us all, particularly your moving leaving speech! Joining **Al**, is **LCpl Tony Comery**, who is going to sort out the generators of 256 Sqn. Once again **Tony**, thanks for all your hard work in the Regt MT, duty driver handover/takeovers just aren't going to be the same. A big hello goes to **Cpl** 'Big Vern' **Crichley**, hope you and your family settle in OK, and enjoy your tour at Bramcote. Who knows, you might get to far flung places like Lynham and Brize Norton during your tour. Also welcome to **LCpl** 'What's the frequency Kenneth' **McCall**, from NI and **LCpl Thomas Fife** from RAF Digby. Of course there is also a welcome to **Capt Gaz Johnson** and his family as he assumes the appointment of MTO/Sqn 2IC. We hope you all enjoy your time with the Regiment.

EXERCISE GRAND PRIX

LCpl 'Sicknote' **Aitchson** and **Sig Neil Grainger** recently deployed to Kenya in support of 1 Bn King's Battle Group. Attached for six weeks, they were to form part of their MT for deployment as drivers, and for routine administration tasks within the Battalion. During the deployment, they both managed to get away from their busy schedules in order to participate in some of the adventurous training in some pretty spectacular scenery. The opportunity to participate in white water rafting and canoeing was snapped up by them both until **LCpl Aitchison's** rear end became familiar with what is politely known as tropical diseases – the trots! He recovered in time to climb Mount Longernaught, a 9,997ft extinct volcano. Sadly **Sig Neil Grainger** was unable to walk around the top of the crater, as he was too busy sun-bathing. He has not managed to convince 'Aitch' that he didn't have the same tropical diseases as him though! Not content with extinct volcanoes and death-defying rafting, both took part in various water sports and joined a safari in the Kenyan National Park. Coming from Newcastle, **Sig Grainger** was familiar with wildlife and was not overly impressed. He was even less impressed to find on his return to Bramcote he was required for duty driver his first day back. The deployment was thoroughly worthwhile and gave an opportunity to some of the unsung heroes of Support Squadron, who would otherwise only get to hear about the overseas jaunts that the other Squadrons take for granted over a glass of beer in the NAAFI. The trip was only made possible by the sacrifice of the other members of the Troop who filled the gaps on the duty rosters and carried out their duties in the hope that it will be their turn next time. Let us have more of these please!

LIMA TROOP
Tp Comd **2LT B. W. M. Morris**
Tp SSgt **SSgt C. D. Wrath**

Lima Tp, formed up at Bramcote in September 1999, when 220 Sig Sqn, 21 Sig Regt moved back to Colerne and changed role. The Troop is presently made up of 28 Tele-Mechs with a primary role of supporting Joint Task Force Headquarters (JTFHQ) and in a secondary role to be available for deployment anywhere in the world that the troops services may be required. Since formation, Troop personnel have deployed to Bosnia, Kosovo, Egypt, Belize, Ghana and a small detachment is currently in Sierra Leone as part of Op Palliser. The Troop is now firmly established within Bramcote and has recently moved into new office accommodation much to the disgust of the Station LAD who no longer have a store for their tyres. Lima Tp seems to be something of a novelty within the Regiment at present, as few people have come across Tele-Mechs before and are under the impression that we are the 'Mr Fixits' of the Corp. In addition to our normal requests to carry out telephone moves and installations, we are now qualified as performing stage erectors, carpet layers and ostlers. Routine in the Troop is generally hectic with many personnel preparing for deployments. However **Sig** 'Jesse' **James** has found the going tough and has opted for a stint in the Regimental stables before his discharge, in order to get away from the mood swings caused by **SSgt Craig Wrath's** continued attempts to quit smoking. Welcome back to **Sig Johnny** 'The Whinger' **Miller** Casevac'd from Ghana. We know you really wanted to go to Sierra Leone! The Troop would like to welcome the following new arrivals, **2Lt Blaydon Morris, Sigs Powell, Dawson** and **Jones** all straight from the factory, **Cpl** 'Ski' **Grabowski** from 16 Sig Regt and **LCpl Lee Bearfield** from sunny Cyprus. Finally, congratulations go out to **Lt Morris** for his success at the Corps Skill at Arms meet for winning the best young officer (Rifle) shoot, not bad seeing as he was only pinged for the competition two days prior to the start date. Congratulations also go out to **SSgt Craig Wrath** who has started to smoke again.

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj J. W. Cooper**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Tivey**

ALPHA TROOP
Troop Comd **Flt Lt Paul Pearce/2Lt M-L Lucas**
Troop SSgt **Sgt Gaz Shuck**

In the last few months A Tp has been busy. Members of the Troop enjoyed an enjoyable experience on Arduous Cygnet (Cadre Course) in February, which took place in, the occasionally sunny, Sennybridge (miracles do happen). Seven members of the Troop under the command of **Flt Lt Paul** 'Lobster' **Pearce**, travelled out to MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida to take part in the Joint Forces Ex Cobb Ring. Since then

we have been kept busy both participating in and supporting Op Palliser in Sierra Leone. We welcome **SSgt** 'Paul' **Storey** to the Troop from 1 Mech and say farewell to **LCpl** 'Spib' **Gibney** who leave for Northern Ireland.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt John Dagless**
Tp SSgt **SSgt McNair**

Seven members of Bravo Tp deployed as part of the spearhead on Op Barwood in support of 33 Sqn RAF (Puma) under the command of **Lt John** 'Cirrus the Virus' **Dagless**. The role was to provide in theatre communications and comms back to the UK via INMARSAT data transfers. The crew consisted of **Cpl Mark** 'Yeoman' **Allen, L Cpl** 'Scott 'Am I entitled to more money?'' **Cooper, LCpl** 'Sick-bag' **Bishnu, Sig Derek** 'Fan Fingers' **Davis, Sig Tom** 'War Hero' **Beerling** and last but not least **Sig Dan** 'How's your car door?' **Shore**. We were also given support from 21 Sig Regt (AS) who sent one man forward to Mozambique and with the others helping out on shift between safaris at the rear link det in South Africa along with **LCpl** 'War Dodger' **Cooper**. The Operation was a great success lasting for three weeks and aided by RFA Fort George with Sea Kings. Currently the majority of B Tare deployed on Op Palliser in Sierra Leone again under the command of **Lt** 'Rash' **Dagless**. We welcome **LCpl** 'Sam' **Gontier** from 16 Sig Regt and say good-bye to **Sig Lyndon Clarke** who leaves the Corps for a prosperous career within McDonalds Fast Food outlets.

CHARLIE TROOP

During the last six weeks Charlie Tp has been very busy. Firstly congratulations to **SSgt** 'Phil' **Joyce** and **Lt Lucy** 'Page two' **Pim** on their promotions – the Troop are still awaiting their beers please. As JTFHQ Tp we have recently deployed with the staff from PJHQ to Ghana for Ex Argon Mercury. As we were due to start the Exercise, we were deployed through Senegal in Daker to Lungi and Freetown in Sierra Leone on Op Palliser. Before leaving Ghana we said farewell to **SSgt Des** 'Hertz and mega Hertz' **Holroyd** who was posted to 16 Sig Regt and **WO2 (SSM)** 'Golf handicap' **Tivey** who joins 1 Armd Bde as their RSM in Kosovo.

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. E. Swindells**
SSM **WO2 M. Webb**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS' NEWS

A couple of issues ago the 2IC, **Capt** 'Hoppie' **Hopcraft**, made the error of predicting a 'nice relaxing year'. Just as the pace in the Squadron rose he deserted the Squadron and HM Forces and ran off to Civilian Street. We all wish him all the best for the future. There have been further changes at the helm of the Squadron – we bade farewell and good luck to **WO2 (FofS) Sue Spencer** (off to Aldershot) and **SSgt (SQMS) Phil Green** (off to Regt QMs). With all losses, there are always gains - we warmly welcome **WO2 (FofS) Bill Young** (from 250 (GSS) Sig Sqn), **SSgt (SQMS) Mark Browitt** (from HQ Sqn) and the new Sqn 2IC who is being returned from Kosovo to dry out.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Chris Smith**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Billy Kidd**

After preparing the Tp for Op Bell, our rapid deployment to Antigua should an evacuation be necessary, we were 'stood down' and Troop training, ITDs and Sqn Battlecamp became priorities. Unfortunately, Troop adventure training was put on immediate hold as, no sooner had we settled into a 'routine', the Troop found itself on Spearhead - at what is a very busy time for the Regiment. The Troop then worked around the clock in preparing VSC 501 Quince (which has never seen such a rapid turnaround) and it's myriad of evolving tails and equipment. As this goes to print a 12-man team from the Troop is preparing to go to Sierra Leone on Op Basilica. Indeed the Troop OC and four men are already out there, ably assisted by the Squadron Yeoman, **WO2** 'Who ate all the pies?' **Knight**. We would like to shout a huge 'Well done' to **LCpl Green** who represented the Troop at the Regimental Boxing and is now currently looking after Troop funds - no connection there! The Troop has also been involved in leading the Squadron to victory in the Inter-Squadron athletics and swimming. We would like to say a fond farewell to **Cpl Om** who has left us for 250 Sig Sqn. The rest of our farewells go to our highly trained civvies: **LCpls** 'Mr' **Hepworth,** 'Mr' **Wilkes** and **Sig** 'Mr' **Taylor** who we wish all the best for the future on the other side of the fence.

ECHO TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Emma** 'Big Fish' **Rae**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Doc 'Utilize" **Halliday**

RESERVE PARTY

Most of the rear party has now deployed from Bramcote to the Balkans leaving an eerie silence on camp. Only a few select people remain behind, these include **Cpl Pete** 'F Tp Cpl' **Watson**; **Sig Celia Black**; **Sig** 'Swamp Finder' **MacLean**, who nearly drowned on a river crossing on Lanyard Trophy training; and **Sig** 'Gavina' **Williams** has just returned from Ex Swan Pursuit.

MOST3 IBEX

Finally it arrived – the long awaited move of HQ MNB (C) in Pristina from the University to the TFA at VJ Bks. The 1 Ma, 2000, saw the beginning of the cut-over of circuits from MOST3 Ibex at the University site to MOST4 Kangaroo at VJ Barracks. The Ibex crew, **Cpl Linds** 'Troop photographer' **Howson**, **LCpl Lee** 'Picol' **Nicol** and **Sig** 'Simmo' **Simmons**, manned the University COMMCEN until the final circuit was cut across. With assistance from **Cpl Ian** 'Cush' **Cushing** and **Sig Steve** 'Lambie' **Lamb**, the crew carried out a very labour intensive task of packing up MOST3 Ibex, COMMCEN, and the 30 Sig Regt Empire. After one last cigarette, even the 'chest poking plynth' was demolished - a sad day for all. The crew then relocated all the kit (lock, stock and barrel!) to the TFA in order to turnaround the kit; this took a few days of fun in the sun and a few entertaining nights at the '501 Club (Fwd)'. We would have had a sign but the light-fingered crew of 21 Sig Regt based at the APOD, led by **SSgt Phil Render**, steal anything and everything with a Swan on – we put this down to jealousy. Unfortunately, all good things come to an end and MOST3 Ibex with crew returned to Bramcote – a sad day for some and joyful for others!

MOST4 KANGAROO

The remainder of the MOST IV Kangaroo crew deployed mid-April to HQ MNB (C) to join their glorious leader **Cpl Fred Hazard** and Det Tech, **Cpl Paddy Irwin**. The crew now includes: **LCpl Stu** 'Belly' **Engleby, Sig Martin** 'Whinger' **Hannam, Sigs** 'I've been mentioned under two Dets and will buy the beers' **Lamb, Paul Howells,** 'Skippy' **Sellers,** 'Rose' **West, Mark Howland** and **Gav Dowling.** Our mission was to install, test and commission MOST IV Kangaroo into the new TFA site and take over the running of the theatre's COMMCEN. As D-Day (ie: the day the Brigade staff decided to deploy into the new HQ) approached the crewmembers exchanged a few nervous glances. However, D-Day came and went in a rather uneventful manner - much to the relief of all. The crew has now settled down to its daily routine of stamping paper and wrecking havoc upon 7 Armd Bde's daily running of things! Anyway, we couldn't finish without giving a thumbs up to the outstanding behaviour of all Troop members over the last month.

501 RED

The 'Teeth Arms' Det would like to say 'thanks and goodbye' to some of the crew: firstly, **Sig Lee Simmons** who temporally replaced **Sig Andy** 'You've changed' **Doherty**; **Sig Lee** 'I want three free beers and another card' **Bruin**; and finally **LCpl** 'Bruce Lee' **Hem**, who was replaced by **Sig Rob** 'Olaf' **Hall**. Whilst at the University (old HQ MNB (C) site) the det exercised with the Armd Bde HQ on Conplan Critical Effort. To keep up with the armour we transformed one of the GS LRs into a Syscon wagon to reduce our NTM times. At the end of the Exercise, some of the det thought it would be fun to cam up the local populas. This gave us the perfect photo opportunity for the 'Considerate Soldier 2000', however, we are sure some of their motives were not so honest (come and look at my puppies comes into mind). The move to the new HQ MNB (C) (TFA – VJ Bks) went relatively smoothly and we deployed into the field to engineer our new IER. During this period we worked hard by day and enjoyed a few quiet card games by night. Some members of the Troop showed their true colors over this period, in particular: **Cpls Locky** 'The Gusher' **Whitelock**; **Paddy** 'The Dribbler' **Irwin** and **LCpl Aaron** 'The Sprayer' **Donnelly**. Unfortunately not all of the crew were present for the good times, **Cpl Dave** 'I don't believe in bull?' **Carter** was on R&R and **Sig Matt** 'you've changed too' **King** was working elsewhere.

MOST3 CAT

It's been just over three months since we took over MOST Cat in mid-February and Sarajevo is just coming to terms with our arrival. MOST Cat, along with the rest of HQ SFOR, are currently preparing to move camp from Ilidza to Butmir. Our move is being organized by the Det Comd, **Cpl Jeff** 'Special' **Ford** who is now getting some special loving whilst on R&R. **LCpl Rup** 'Daddy to be' **Gurung** has been busy sorting the technical details for the move. In his spare time he has been knocking up some Gurkha cuisine and BBQs for various leaving parties. He is also currently revising for his 2-1 Entrance Exam. **Sig Mark** 'Handy man' **Vinten** has been working hard preparing the new location at Butmir. He has also proved to be a bit of a carpenter, his latest 'works of art' includes four 8ft security light stands and a gate for the det compound. Then there is **LCpl Caz** 'Keep on running' **Burrows** who is on the local Britfor charity committee and has been utilizing her PTI skills to help organize the latest charity event - a football competition which raised 500DM for the local children's hospital. She has also just completed her 2-1 Entrance Exam in Banja Luka. Finally there is, **Sig Adam** 'I'm in love' **Toner** who has been making the most of the 30 degrees temperature here in Sarajevo by catching the rays whilst writing love letters to his girlfriend. In summary, the tour has gone very well so far, and in true 30 Sig Regt tradition, in between all the running around getting the det ready for the move, the crew have found time to keep up good social relations.

501 PURPLE

'The finest 501 det in the world has continued to be very busy during its tour in FRY.' writes the Det 2IC, **LCpl John** 'Kebab' **Lawrence**. There has been a number of manpower changes: we've bade 'farewell' **LCpls MJ** 'Muddyfunkstar' **Holt**, **Jamie** 'Sinner/Smallpox' **Slade** and **Sig Dion** 'Cherry' **Fotheringham**, and said 'hello' to **LCpl Hem** and **Sig Graham** 'Gwen' **Clutten**. Throughout all this, there has been no halt in our level of commitments – we have receed and exercised in Sarajevo, GV, MG, Drvar and Sisava to name but a few. This has included a near-death experience on Route Clog with **Sgt Al** 'Big Gay' **Barker** and **LCpl** 'Jonkebab' **Lawrence** and a distinct lack of brakes! In addition, the 501 Det itself has been the bain of the LAD being VOR'd more times than 'a big bag of VORy things'. There have been accusations that the problem is caused by the combined weight of **Cpl Tony Gallagher** and **LCpl John Lawrence** which is estimated at about 32 stone. The hand-over period from 12 Mech

Continued on Page 365

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT

Millennium Party

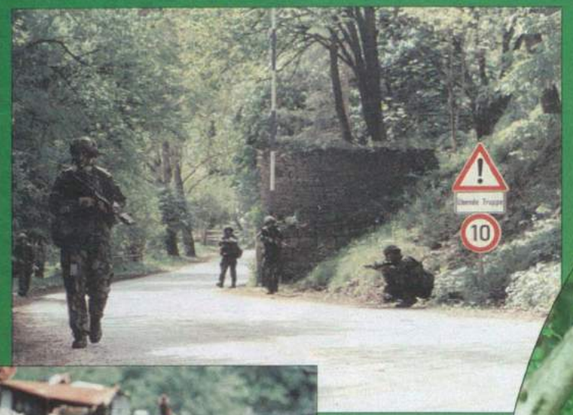
Sgt D. Copley Champion-at-Arms Corps SAAM

EXERCISE GREEN GAMBIT
16 SIGNAL REGIMENT

EXERCISE GREEN GAMBIT

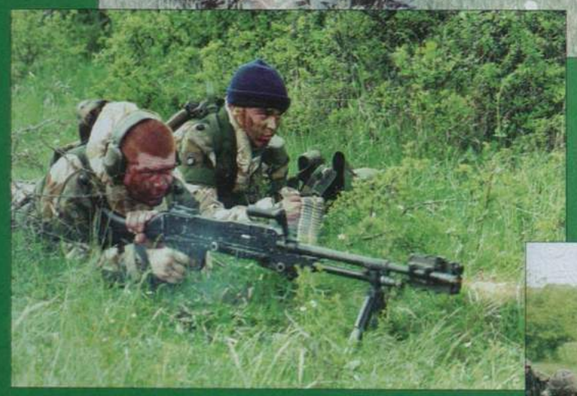
In May 120 soldiers from the Regiment were put through their paces in the German OBUA village of Hammelburg during their annual battle skills exercise – Green Gambit. This was the first time that British troops had exercised in the area for ten years. Following a training phase tactical communication sites were established and defended within an urban environment, fending off everything from a friendly and not so friendly civilian population to sustained attacks from enemy troops and chemical weapons. The training was enhanced by the use of the improved Small Arms Weapons Effects Simulators (SAWES) which were worn by every soldier. This had little effect for **LCpl Bickford** who spent a large part of his time in the extensive sewage system! **Lt Simon Gladwin's** claim to fame was being shot while emerging from a portaloo! Casualty cards were carried by all soldiers detailing the wound received and first aid to be carried out. Even 'dead' casualties had to be evacuated from the fighting. The final phase of the exercise started with a simulated chemical attack on the village. A tactical withdrawal, anti ambush drills and vehicle decontamination completed an excellent week's training. A final mention to **Cpl Shepherd** who demonstrated his own technique of house clearance – 'I take no prisoners'!

PHOTOs



Advance!

Deploy!



Contact!

Assault!

FIBUA

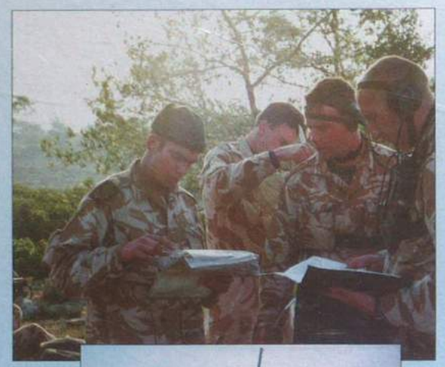
Defence

Debrief

Sorted

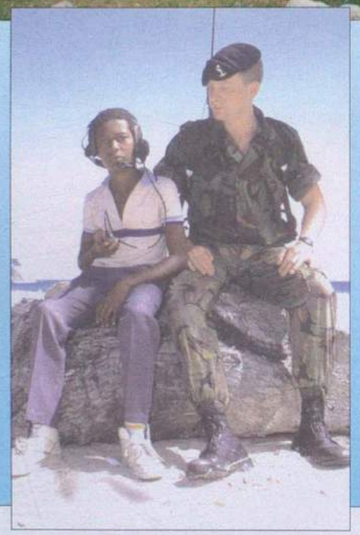
HERE AND THERE

Concentration



Relaxation

7 Sig Regt on Adv Trg



Sig James on Ex Trinidad Concomex with 30 Sig Regt

Minor Units Soccer Champions - ATR Bassingbourn

Cpls Jenny Fitzgerald and Tracey Everett enjoying an Exercise with Sussex ACF

Continued from Page 360

Bde to 4 Bde is now approaching and the det is standing by for the usual series of 'new toy' exercises associated with this event. We will say a fond farewell to the lads and lasses from 2 Sig Regt and 228 Sqn whilst we continue to stag on until ...? On the sporting side of life, the det remains unchallenged as 'BLMF world volleyball champions' and is making a vital contribution to the rugby team. Unfortunately, the team will be without **Cpl Gav** 'Iceman' **Wallace** who has an ankle injury. We are also putting in a strong side for the 'BLMF sunbathing championship' but with **LCpl Jamie Slade** out of theatre, our chances are somewhat diminished. In summary, life is good.

FOXTROT TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt** 'Mogs' **Southern**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Stu Fidler**

HAILS AND FAREWELLS

This month we are saying a lot of goodbyes. Best wishes for the future go to **Cpl** 'Ted' **Heath** who is moving with his wife to pastures new and very far away in New Zealand. **Cpl Scotty Johnson, Sig Sarah Thorn** and **Sig Mick Allen** who are being returned safe and sound to civvy street. **LCpl Faye Wood** who departed to spend the next year across the water at JCU, **LCpl Dickie Lane**, who has finally gone to 21 Sig Regt (AS) and finally, last but not least, **Sig** 'H' **Harrison** who is going to the tropical climate of N. Yorkshire at 19 Mech Bde.

EXERCISE SWAN PURSUIT – *by Sig Spinks*

On Tuesday, 2 May, members from all corners of the Regiment were flung together to attend the annual ranges battle-camp down in Shorncliffe. The first day started with typical range day weather, it was freezing! All attending completed their weapon handling test and zeroing then it was time for the fun to begin. The days were split into three sections on different ranges using a wide variety of weapons which included G3, LMG, SLR, GPMG, 9mm Browning, M16, LSW and, of course, the good old faithful SA80. Training was also undertaken on the AK47, SMG, UZI, SKS, Scorpion, Dragonoff sniper rifle and many more to name but a few. During the two weeks we fired on many ranges including IBSR, CQBR and culminating in a live firing section attack. A very good team of DS ensured that safety was never a worry (unless you were in **Sig Jim** 'SUSAT' **King's** Section!).

250 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj R. P. Wilson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Chandrabahadur Gurung**

FINAL FAREWELL TO
GURKHA MAJOR QUEEN'S GURKHA SIGNALS
MAJ (QGO) GOVINDE GURUNG - *by LCpl Kumar Limbu*

On 20 March, 2000, the QG Signals paraded in Bramcote Barracks to tow out **Maj(QGO) Govinde Gurung** in the traditional way. The GM Sahib arrived at a pre-arranged spot outside the gymnasium at 1345hrs. There, tow rows of mixed ranks were waiting with garlands and a bouquet of flowers. One by one, GM Sahib took the garlands and flowers with friendly chats. Then he climbed up the back of the decorated vehicle and stood there. He was then towed away by SNCOs and Officers lead by Comd QG Signals, **Lt Col M. Lithgow MBE** and the GM des, **Capt(QGO) Nabindrabikram Gurung** and the Pipes and Drums. All available members of the Regiment were standing on either side of the road from the gymnasium to the guardroom.

In front of the guardroom, the GM Sahib inspected the Guard of Honour with the didis/bahinis, children and of course some interested British families looking on. After that **Capt(QGO) Navindrabikram Gurung** was officially commissioned as the new GM QG Signals. Cameras from all angles were seen flashing to catch the glimpse of a very sad day. **Mrs Sabitri Gurung**, wife of **Maj(QGO) Govinde Gurung**, displayed her talent with bravery to break the deep silence by dancing and singing with mixed emotions, a song called '..... pheri bheta hola ki nahola', encouraging other didis/bahinis to sing along for the last time. At 1425hrs GM Sahib's car rolled out of the camp towards Heathrow airport.

We wish GM Sahib and his pariwar all the best for the future.

'Gurkha Major, Maj (QGO) Govinde Gurung MVO is towed out by the Regimental personnel

A NEW TRADE FOR QG SIGNALS - *by Cpl Bharat Shrestha*

The Royal Signals has made changes in the trade structure to keep up with the modernisation in the communication system. Within this, Area System Operator is one of them. A second squadron, 246 Gurkha Signal Squadron is being formed in the QG Signals. It has its own role and different communication equipment to work with. To carry out the new job efficiently ten NCOs were sent to the Royal School of Signals at Blandford for a new course. The course ran from 13 September 1999 to 16 March 2000. We were the first ones to do this Area Systems Operators' Course in the Royal Signals and be awarded Class One on the subject. Everyone in the course is delighted and looking forward to working in our new squadron (246 Gurkha Signal Squadron) at York.

EXERCISE CYGNET REEF 1–19 APRIL - *by SSgt Lawrence*

Ex Cygnet Reef is part of a series of Cygnet exercises to test out of area operations at Troop level. Whiskey Tp was fortunate enough to be chosen from a cast of three to recce and complete the Exercise. It was a 522Z, 501 and 322Z communications exercise.

It started on Friday when we trundled off to South Cerny to start that horrible job of getting to RAF Lyneham, ie: not getting half your kit on! We departed to Belize via Iceland, Canada and Coco beach, Florida for some interesting stopovers. On arrival in a very hot sweaty Belize, we set up our equipment on the Rugby pitch, which immediately had everybody up in arms. The next three days were spent getting comms in for both 522Z, old and temperamental and the 501 dropped in straight away. After that we had afternoons off to wallow in the cultural side off Belize. Altun Ha was well received, but I believe that Belize zoo was not so good. The boys I hasten to add spent the evenings down at the famous Raul's Rose Garden. A salubrious house of ill repute that apparently you can't come to Belize and not go there. So when the OC, **Maj Wilson** arrived he was duly escorted there by **Capt Toze** and **SSgt Lawrence**!

With the Exercise well under way, the jungle phase started. Fourteen lucky soldiers were sent into the jungle to survive for three days. This was an entertaining three days and proved quite difficult for some of our Signallers. **Sig Harrison** felt that he was on a starvation diet and ate the kuna maggot for sustenance. One scrawny chicken between seven hungry people does not go far. **Sig Min** even threw every part of the chicken in to help YUK! Plenty of war stories are still circulating about the snakes and general flora and fauna spotted. Having survived this traumatic experience the Troop then went sea fishing, this was turned into a competition to see who could catch the biggest fish. **LCpl Pooley** won with a whopping 17filbs skip jack tuna. **Cpl Bhupendra**, our chef, barbecued all the fish caught. A final R&R day was spent sailing around the cayes on the sailfish boat which was excellent. Everybody went swimming with the sharks and manta rays. Here **SSgt Lawrence** was made to get in first, cheers boys..... Everybody enjoyed the break and getting very sun tanned. We finally packed up and had a good three days back via Charleston, Boston and Gander. We arrived back to be impounded by Customs, what a return back to UK!

The Section Commander demonstrating to his Section on how to cook in the jungle environment

SIDNEY TRAILWALKER 2000
by Lt(QGO) Buddhi Bahadur Gurung

Trailwalker first originated from Hong Kong in 1981 as a military training exercise for the Queen's Gurkha Signals Regiment under the command of **Maj** (now Brigadier) **S. M. A. Lee OBE**. Teams of four competed over the 100km Maclehose Trail covering the distance in less than 48 hours each year. Over the years millions of dollars have been raised for the Gurkha Welfare Trust through this greatest race 'Trailwalker'. Since the move of the Brigade from Hong Kong, Trailwalker has since been conducted in the UK for the past three years and raised thousands of pounds towards the Gurkha Welfare Trust. This year's Trailwalker was held in Sydney Australia during the period of 26-28 May 2000. On invitation from the Community Aid Abroad, Oxfam Australia, the organiser, a team of six soldiers from the Queen's Gurkha Signals were selected to participate in the event.

On 19 May 2000, the team, led by **Lt(QGO) Buddhi** headed off to Sydney to compete in the event. After the long tiring 22 hours flight, the team arrived in Sydney and was greeted by the staff from the British Consulate General. After the short brief on Sydney itself and programs ahead, we were driven to our accommodations blocks at Randwick Barracks. The next morning we were called for the photo call followed by

three days of route recce along the trail.

On 26 May, at around 0830hrs we arrived at the start point, where TV crews from Ch 7, Ch9, Ch10 and staffs from Sydney Radio were awaiting for our arrival to interview us. The TV crews followed our team right until the start of the race. The event attracted 147 teams and included a team from Hong Kong and two teams from ex-British Gurkhas working in Australia. All teams seemed eager to tackle the arduous 100kms Sydney trail and break the last year's course record of 15 hours and 5 minutes set by our team. The race started at 1000hrs prompt on 26 May 2000, the weather turned out to be sunny and clear throughout the event. Our team set a reasonable pace and led the race by five minutes up to Checkpoint 4, followed by a pack of teams close by. As the race progressed, our team started speeding up and gained a steady gap against the second team. **Sig Uttam** had an injury on his knee arriving at Checkpoint 7, however, due to his motivation, commitment and challenge he did not let the team down. The team crossed the finishing line at Brooklyn (Parsley Bay Car Park) just after mid-night as the winners of Sydney Trailwalker 2000, setting a new time of 14 hours 28 minutes and 44 seconds.

This excellent performance was followed by three days well deserved R&R to explore Sydney. We had a day trip to Sydney Olympic Park, which is almost ready to host the Olympic Games 2000. A day was set a side after a kind invitation from the ex-British Gurkhas for a BBQ. All the buros were very keen to learn about the changes and news of the Brigade. **Lt Buddhi** presented a Regimental plaque to the Gurkha Community Australia at the end of the BBQ. We visited the heart of the city, like the Harbour Bridge, Opera House, Darling Harbour etc. On 1 June it was time for us to say good bye to Sydney and we flew back to United Kingdom. We hope to do the same again next year.

Jai Queens' Gurkha Signals.

Sig Bharat leading the team towards Checkpoint 1

31st (CITY OF LONDON) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

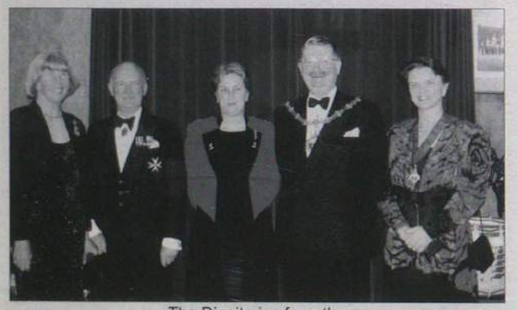
CO **Lt Col L. F. Harrison TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Gibson**

REIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

This was another hectic period for RHQ as it welcomed the new Adjt **Capt Colin Vaudin** fresh from JCSC. He was thrown immediately into the deep end when the TM and RSM departed to Canada on Adventurous training. Full details of the Adventurous Training in the next copy of *The WIRE*.

MAJOR MAKING DINNER

The traditional Regimental Dinner Night to mark the beginning of the Mayoral Year took place at Southfields on 25 May 2000. The Regiment invites all the newly elected Mayors from the Regimental Boroughs to an evening of fine wine, food and conversation. Not only does this put the Regiment firmly on the map it ensures that reciprocal dinners follow throughout the year. This year all five Mayors and their supporting Mayoresses attended. The Boroughs represented were Kensington and Chelsea, Wandsworth, Fulham and Hammersmith, Croydon and Eastbourne. The evening was also attended by several Deputy Lieutenants, the Master of the Worshipful Company of Innholders, and the MP for Eastbourne.



The Dignitaries from the
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
(L-R): Lady Elizabeth, MVO,
and Sir Michael Craig-Cooper MVO, CBE, TD, DL
and Lt Col L. F. Harrison TD, The Mayor and Mayoress

41 (PLK) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Lankester**
SSM **WO2 Watson**

The Squadron took part in three warm up exercises for September's Annual Camp. Ex London Walk, Ex London Trot and Ex London Gallop were designed to ensure that all personnel were fully briefed and prepared for deployment on this year's camp. On the first of these Exercises the Squadron deployed to Pirbright and Bramley Training Areas to practise harbouring up, establishing comms and defence of a comms site. I'm not quite sure which heading getting the ERV bogged down in soggy ground came under, but we practised that as well! The best bit about this weekend was that all Squadrons got to put in a recce and an attack on the other Squadron, and **Lt Debbie Speakman**, **Sgt Brian Traynor**, **LCpl ?? Ellis**, and **Sig** 'Bomber' **Harris** particularly seemed to enjoy bumping 83 Sqn in the dead of night. Did we wake you up lads? For Ex London Trot the Squadron deployed to Colerne, where we established an example of the type of the comms site we will be using to provide comms for Bde HQ at camp. Our CO, **Lt Col Linda Harrison**, presented the equipment and means that we will be using to provide comms to Brigade main and Brigade set up, to the Brigade staff, and our Squadron OC, **Maj Toby Lankester** addressed all the CO's in the Brigade on our plans for camp.

The third in the series, ex London Gallop was a message handling

Lt Beth Pollard pretending to understand the working of the ULS

exercise, which took place at the TAC. Operators were tested on their skills handling a number of messages, and those involved certainly felt that the weekend proved very useful.

The Squadron attended the Annual Princess Louise of Kensington Association dinner at the Duke of York Barracks in May of this year. This was the first time the dinner had been held in the TAVRA HQ Mess, due to the fact that we are no longer able to use Mercury House, our previous venue, but this fact did not seem to affect the turnout. As always, this dinner is a good chance to meet up with old faces, and past members of the Squadron, and the old stories were soon being told again. The Regimental Second in Command, **Maj William Brown** gave a speech on the state of the Regiment with an emphasis on 41 Squadron. It was the first time our new Adjutant, **Capt Colin Vaudin**, had met anyone from the Squadron, so we hope we made a good impression! May was a busy month for the Squadron. As well as Ex London Trot, we spent a weekend involved in a 100% stores check, and a weekend of PRE prep. Our 'stores' weekend was our first opportunity to impress the new QM, **Capt Krishna Gurung**, and I hope he came away from it convinced that we had all that we should have had. It was also the first time our OC, **Maj Toby Lankester** had inspected our kit, and us so we hope that we also gave him some confidence in our abilities.

PRE prep weekends always need a bit of lightening up, and this year's evening entertainment certainly did that. **LCpl Julia May** organised a BBQ (not sure if this was held inside or outside the drill hall, there was so much smoke it was difficult to see), whilst **Sgt Nick Tuck** provided the entertainment on the drinks front. Chilli, olives, cherries *and* eggs in the same cocktail? After you, **Sgt Tuck**! We were briefly visited by **Sig Phil Davy**, back from Bosnia on R & R. He has been doing his bit to ensure that everyone based around Banja Luka has seen his PLK stable belt and the PLK colours. Anyone reading this in Banja Luka who has seen strange red and grey stickers appearing out of nowhere, they're down to **Sig Davy**! Keep up the good work **Phil**!

The CO, **Lt Col Linda Harrison** offered some of the Regiment the chance to invite their employers to the Colonel's Review of Trooping the Colour at the beginning of June. **Lt Beth Pollard** accepted this offer, and took her employer, **Mr Maurice Pagella** of Eurotel Telecom Ltd, and his wife, **Gillian** to Whitehall for this event. **Lt Pollard** is the first TA soldier to be employed by Eurotel, and this proved an excellent opportunity to develop closer links between her company and the TA. Members of the Squadron also participated in the annual TAVRA recruiting stand at Biggin Hill Air show in June. This is always a good weekend for us to get out and about in the area to promote the Squadron, so we took a LANWARD and an FFR to display.

Congratulations are due to **WO2 Robin Watson**, **Sgt Michelle Caspersz**, and **Sgt Brian Traynor** who were awarded their Territory Army Efficiency Medal on Saturday. **Sgt Nick Tuck** is also due to be awarded the medal, but was unfortunately unable to attend Saturday's parade, and so will have to wait a while longer for his! We welcome four new recruits into the squadron. **Cfn Lee Stockley** is currently training with our REME attachment, and we welcome **Sig Daniel Stevens**, **Sig Russell Banks**, and **Sig Guy Scott-Douglas** as new squadron members to the Royal Corps of Signals. All have successfully passed their initial recruit training, and will be heading off to Blandford soon. We wish them luck on their recruits courses.

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Streete**
SSM **WO2 Godden**

FREEDOM OF EASTBOURNE

After what seems an age, 56 Sig Sqn was awarded the Freedom of the Borough, one of the highest accolades that can be presented to an organisation. The event was held at Eastbourne Town Hall, where the council laid on a fine meal. This was enjoyed by the whole Squadron who turned out for the occasion. The CO, RSM and various other military and non-military personnel who have connections with 56 also attended. Following the meal, the Mayoress made the presentation and speeches were given. The evening will be followed up by a 'Freedom Parade' through the town, although a final date is yet to be confirmed. All in all it was an enjoyable night which was continued back at the TAC. In addition, it was a fitting tribute to **Maj Brian Howe** whose posting as OC ended the following month.

CHANGE OF COMMAND

1 June 2000 saw **Maj Brian Howe** hand over command to **Maj Sarah Streete. Maj Howe** had been a member of the Squadron for seven years, and served as both 2IC and OC. He bought a wealth of experience to the Squadron and was a loyal member. He will certainly be remembered for 'spoons', a ritual that only he knows the true meaning, but one that ensures we never went on exercise without one! Upon addressing the Squadron **Maj Streete** laid out her objectives to ensure that the Squadron remained the best in the regiment. Her policies have been embraced by the Squadron members, who are already striving to improve upon the high standards already set, as Annual Camp draws ever nearer. The change of command also saw **Capt Tony Potter** take the reins as Squadron 2IC.

SQUADRON COMMANDER'S DINING OUT

Sussex by the Sea could be heard echoing along the sea front as the Officers and Seniors of 56 Sig Sqn, along with partners, said farewell to **Maj Howe.** This in addition to the high quality dinner provided by **WO2** 'Big Fred' **Bramble** and **Sgt Bob Shevels** ensured that **Maj Howe** got the appropriate send off. The evening was wound up with the presentation of parting gifts including an Action Man figure supplied by **Sgt Tim Odam**. Following this it was off to the bar where the frivolities continued until long after the sun came up, in true 56 style.

Departing OC, Maj Brian Howe
in full fighting order for his dining out

PERSONNEL

The Squadron has recently seen **Lt. Kieran** 'Wombat' **Francis** leave the confines of the Sussex coast and head out to the Balkans for a six-month tour (some people will do anything to get out of Camp). We all wish him well and are eagerly awaiting that letter he promised us. Closer to home **LCpl Jo Butler** has recently been promoted to a full Corporal after the completion of her Class 1 Trade course, well done **Jo. Cpl Andy Harding** also did the Class 1 Trade course and is now beginning to use his new skills.

EXECUTIVE STRETCH

Once again this event turned out to be as popular as ever with Regiments from all over the London District providing support teams. The first day in the field found **LCpl Paul Renaud** gaining an adoptive mother whilst other members of the executive team were looking for his fingers on the first aid stand. That was until they got bumped, by **WO2 (SSM) Kevin Godden** and **Sig King** who must have been really scary, as the team playing executives decided that the casualties were of insignificance as they ran away into the woods for cover. The second day was not quite so dramatic as the executive teams took part in competition stands. **OCdt Rob Wood** led the communications command task stand aided by **LCpl Eric Gardyne** who both took great delight in watching tired executive teams, come to terms with a mass of tangled don ten.

PHOTOPLOD 2000

40 miles over the South Downs with no training? No problem, especially for the two old boys **SSgt (SQMS) John Atherton** and **SSgt (PSI) Willie Loch** who started out in the support team and ended up walking all but one leg. The team - captained enthusiastically by **OCdt Wood** came in second for the second year running out of 23 teams. All members dug in hard as the hills took their toll upon bodies that were already tired such as **Cpl Andy Harding** who came straight off his Class 1 trade course exercise to compete, and **Sig Trish O'Sullivan** who had steroid injections to ease pain in her foot. Once again **LCpl Joe Reader** proved that she was every bit a PTI as she trooped over the terrain swearing that she will never do it again. As the day wore on from its midnight start, the team was in need of sustenance, which was aptly provided by **Maj Sarah Streete** at each checkpoint. In addition to this, the sunrise breakfast was provided for all walkers and supporters by **WO2 Bramble** and **Sgt Steve Howell.** This injection of food was welcome and took full effect as **OCdt Wood** and **SSgt Atherton** ran the last four miles over the Seven (very ugly and big) Sisters. The end of the day was met by a meal for all the teams at a local hotel, where **Capt Ian Murray** received an award for being the first man over the line, even if he did fall down a rabbit hole. Also attending was IC Coms, **SSgt Martin Cooper,** without him and his team from the Squadron and the Cadets, the event could not have happened.

83 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Julian Carmichael**
SSM **WOII (SSM) Stevenson**

EXERCISE BELGIUM BLISTER 1-5 JUNE

On the evening of Wednesday 31 May the Ypres marching teams assembled at RHQ Southfields prior to a very early start to catch the ferry from Dover. The team was composed of the OC **Maj Julian Carmichael**, **Cpl Sid Ahluwalia, Sig Burgess, Sig Jardine, Sig Lowe** and **Sig Gomez** (all 83 Sqn) with **Sgt Crowhurst** and **Sgt Oliver** from HQ Sqn. The objective was to participate in the 100km march and to conduct our own battlefield tour. We made our way immediately to Vimy Ridge where Canadian tour guides explained the battlefield and showed us the tunnels. We left and arrived at our accommodation, which was tented, and in a Belgian Logistics Battalion location. The German Army had arrived early (as per usual) and had occupied the allotted accommodation. Our sleeping area was metres away from what was known as 'Shrapnels Corner' and our first evening was spent in Ypres quality controlling the local white beers.

Friday kicked off with a 30km tab which produced some blisters. **Sig Burgess** had spectacular blisters and was rewarded with lots of sympathy from the OC. There was a brief conversation which started, 'I don't think I'll be up tomorrow, Sir,' and ended with '.....off'. Apparently blisters only hurt for the first twenty minutes; **Sig Burgess** went through a time warp and suffered a brief sense of humour failure, but was cheered up by newly recruited and qualified **Sig Gomez** who was doing cartwheels and skipping along in the (also) blistering sunshine. Just as **Sig Burgess** was recovering from post blister stress syndrome, the OC was in service dress and leading the Squadron on the Menin Gate Parade. The streets in Ypres are cobbled, apparently blisters only hurt for the first twenty minutes! 31 Sig Regt laid wreaths at the German cemetery in Langemarck, the Belgium war memorial and the Menin Gate. It was very moving to hear four trumpeters play the last post in the evening sunshine as it echoed under the arches of the huge Menin Gate. The Burgermeister invited the team back to the cloth hall in Ypres where we were forced to drink free beer. Saturday was spent marching in the sunshine, **Sig Burgess** was reduced to flip flops and a pith helmet and **Sgt Oliver** had also forgotten his IA's on sense of humour failure.

The motley crew were then enthusiastically bounced around various battlefield sites including the command bunker at Hill 40 Croonaert Wood where Hitler was a runner. The bunker took a direct hit and Hitler should not have survived: quite thought provoking. The team was shown the chapel at Messines where Hitler was taken wounded and the evening was spent in Plugstreet at a restaurant which was situated opposite the Berkshire memorial. The food and wine was excellent and the patron, a

friend of the OC's known as **Claude** (allegedly a former lion tamer whose second name is Bottom) proved to be an excellent chief. Sunday was another beautiful day marching amongst the poppies and visiting Essex Farm Dressing Station where **John McCrae** wrote 'In Flanders Field' and visiting a preserved Belgian French systems known as the Trenches of Death. A wreath was laid at a PLK memorial near Ploegsteert. The evening finished at a Kangaroo farm which happened to have a bar (the OC does know some strange people) and OBUA building entry techniques were practised, much to the amazement of the customers and two heavily armed Belgian policemen. We all went to bed too late and got up too early and arrived safely back in RHQ by Monday morning.

OFFICIAL OPENING OF TAC WHITE CITY AND MEDAL PRESENTATIONS

Lt Col L. F. Harrison TD R Signals, CO, 31 Sig Regt (V) welcomed guests at the re-opening Ceremony and Medals Parade to mark the occasion of the move of 83 (L) Sig Sqn (V) to White City TAC. As the guests arrived they were served with refreshments and hosted by the Squadron OC, **Maj Julian Carmichael** with the aide of the Regimental Officers. In the Opening Ceremony **Cllr R. Browne MBE**, opened the new garages and said a few words of welcome. The medals were then presented by **Maj Gen J. D. Stokoe CB CBE. Sgt Traynor** was presented the Efficiency Medal (Territorial), **Maj D. Crawley RAChD, WO2 (RQMS(V)) Clarke, WO2 (SSM) Watson** and **Cpl E. Presley** were presented with a clasp to Efficiency Medal (Territorial), **Sgt Oliver** was presented with his 2nd Clasp to Efficiency Medal, and **Ssgt Smith, Ssgt Peart** and **Sgt Caspersz** were presented with Volunteer Reserve Service Medal

SQUADRON UPDATES

The Squadron would like to congratulate **LCpl Farquharson-Roberts** on his recent promotion. We wish him every success with his new roles and responsibilities. A warm welcome is extended to our newest members. **Lt Paul Ukpai** has moved across from HQ SQN (we hope he left his HQ issued slippers behind). **2Lt Lee McEvoy** has just passed his TACC and has landed himself in the capable hands of **SGT Matt Cahill** of 'C' Tp (you'll have to fight for desk space **Lee**). **SSgt Jackson** has also moved across to the Squadron and is lending a helping hand to the newly appointed OC of B Tp, **2Lt Mike Zazzi**. B Tp's senoir **Sgt Dave Alleyne** is currently serving in Kosovo. We hope he has a good tour and look forward to his return. Congratulations to **Sig Hunt** and **Sig Bullivant** who recently completed their RSRC returning with four out of the six awards. **Sig Hunt** was presented with 'Best Academics' and 'Top student' whereas **Sig Bullivant** was awarded 'Best field student' and 'Best shot'. Well Done Yet Again 83 Sqn. We're making a habit of this!

TERRITORIAL ARMY COMMISSIONING COURSE 002

Thoughts from 2Lt Lee McEvoy

What can I say?- I passed the course. Did I enjoy it? - I wasn't quite sure at first, but as I look back I realise that it was a once in a lifetime experience, that I miss the people, and to some extent, the lifestyle. Would I recommend TACC to prospective TA officers? - only if you want a commission enough - the directing staff will ensure that you ask yourself the question during the three weeks they 'look after you'..... The highlights of my time at Sandhurst all seem to be towards the end of the course - I will always remember the passing-out parade in front of Old College Sandhurst. The final exercise was a challenge, mainly to keep the troops awake after two hours sleep. The stretcher race was, in hindsight, highly enjoyable (perhaps that was the sweet taste of victory). The best memories of all relate to the people in my platoon - we were a mixed bag of Infantry and the Corps and, as you would expect, had differing skills, experiences and fitness levels. We worked together to help weak members through their difficulties, whether that was carrying kit, working on PracTac or map reading - we were officer cadets after all. After all the trials and tribulations, 33 of us passed out of Sandhurst on Saturday 3 June - I hope the Corps is ready for four new officers.

32nd (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col J. K. McKee MBE**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Hilborn**
SVWO	**WO1 McVey**

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Roddy Sutherland**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Anderson**

LIGHT AID DETACHMENT

The Regiment would like to congratulate **Pte Donna** 'Kebab' **Buntine** who recently completed her B3 Drivers course at 5 Trg Regt, Grantham, home of the RLC TA. While on the course she was part of the pilot scheme of course work to gain a City and Guilds in Commercial Driving, which involved extra work and exams. This extra work proved worthwhile and she passed all the exams required to gain the qualification. The City and Guilds certificate was presented to her by **Brig Evans** at the TA Open day at Grantham on 25 March 2000. During the presentation **Pte Buntine** was informed that she is unique as she is the only female in the armed forces to have received this qualification – well done!

Pte Buntine showing off her city & Guilds Certificate

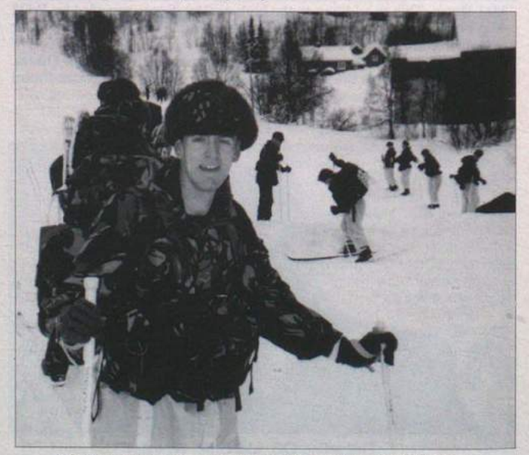
51 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

Sqn Comd	**Maj Morna Strachan**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Davey Crocket**

FROM -20 TO +20 - OPPORTUNITIES IN THE TA

by LCpl 'Cabbie' Henderson

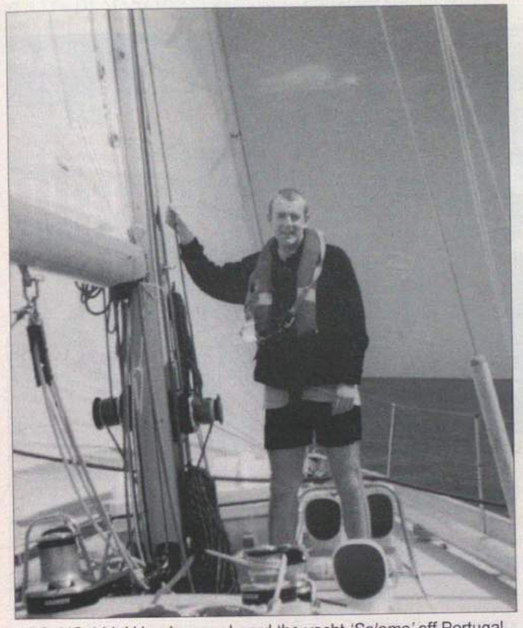
I was fortunate to secure an attachment to 249 Sig Sqn (AMFL) for Arctic Warfare Training and exercises in Norway. I was introduced into the system at Bulford, which consisted of pre Arctic training and lots of PT. After deploying to Norway, the pace was increased and we completed the novice ski and survival courses. Being recommended for Military Ski Instructor was the icing on the cake for me (a previous trip to Austria courtesy of the T.A. definitely came in useful). As the training intensified we found ourselves preparing for the final exercise – Ex Joint Winter where all the months of training came together. This proved to be an experience not to be missed, a truly 'purple' exercise, with elements from various NATO countries participating.



LCpl Henderson on exercise in Norway with 249 Sig Sqn

At 'endex' I returned to Scotland, said hello and goodbye to the Squadron, and was off again four days later, this time to slightly warmer climes – namely two weeks sail training during Ex Century Sail, aboard HMSTC *Sabre* – hey I know it's tough but someone has to do it.

Sailing out of Villamoura marina, Portugal, I had time to reflect on how many changes and experiences a person can squeeze into his life in such a short time, watching spectacular displays of the Northern Lights and less than a week later watching a school of dolphins playing chicken with the bow of the yacht, this was recruiting poster stuff and even the most cynical amongst us has to admit that a cabbie from Aberdeen got his fair share of adventure!



LCpl 'Cabbie' Henderson aboard the yacht *'Salome'* off Portugal

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

We have loaned two of our stalwarts to Blandford – your gain is our loss as **Cpl Rory** 'BCGH' **Milne** and **Sgt Bob Tervit** are posted as instructors on a short service deal. Our photograph shows **Sgt Tervit**, **Sig** 'Mini-Me' **Johnston** and **LCpl Alison** 'lonely dons fan' **Mackay** asking 'Scotty' to beam them out of the Elgin Exercise Area. This exercise was preceded by the most torrential downpour of rain in living memory and it has to be said, it put certain members of the Squadron off, however, when the great day came we had glorious sunshine all weekend, so remember that next time, you big Jessie. Our thanks go to the Elgin Troop for their hard work and dedication to make a really good, fun, interesting weekend.

Sgt Tervit, Sig Johnston and LCpl Alison McKay

SOCIAL SCENE

51 Sqn still drives the social scene in Gordon Barracks and we are looking forward to **Sgt** 'Bud' **Burnetts** Western night with keen anticipation, if there is one thing we are not short of it's cowboys.

As the author of 51 Sig Sqn *WIRE* notes I would like to indulge myself (**Capt John** 'broken leg at Blandford' **Mackie**) and say goodbye to all my good friends as I leave the TA in July 2000. It has been a superb life and I cannot endorse it too strongly to anyone. The biggest change I have observed during my career has been the increase in opportunity for people to experience life outside their TA centre. I have included an article from one of our young Lance Corporals (see –20 to + 20) that typifies the prospects open to all.

52 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd	**Maj Donald Gordon**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Swan**

THE KING IS DEAD, LONG LIVE THE KING

1 April, 2000, saw the dawning of a new, and some say long awaited, era in the history of 52 Sig Sqn. There have been some landmark moments in the history of 52 Sig Sqn, the Boer War, Battle of Ypres, crossing the Rhine and the move from the Jardine Street, home of the Squadron for over one hundred years, but these pale into insignificance with the inauguration of the new Sqn OC, **Maj Donald** 'Where's ya trousers?' **Gordon**. Some say it is significant that the OC was promoted and installed as Sqn OC on the first April Fool's Day of the new millennium, an event that has been welcomed like the birth of a messiah, but this is just the petty bickering of the jealous (have you guessed the author's identity yet?). **Maj Gordon** takes over from **Maj Roddy** 'Ginger Princess' **Sutherland** who has decided to relinquish the Saltire of Courage (52 (Lowland) Brigade Flash) and don the brown overcoat of shame, by taking command of HQ Sqn. We wish him well in his new post and pray that all that sleep he will get at Echelon will not prevent him from getting to the bar on time.

INAUGURAL 2 DIVSAAM

The inaugural 2 DIVSAAM took place at Barry Buddon Ranges over the weekend 5-7 May, 2000, with 32 Sig Regt (V) making a significant contribution with a total of five teams entered. This outstanding contribution was down to, in no small part, 52 Sig Sqn who provided the overall team captain, **Maj Donald Gordon**, his vice captain, **WO2 (SSM) Karen Swan**, two squadron teams and had personnel in two of the other Regimental Sqn teams. The competition was not without its glory as **Cpl Henry** 'Dodger' **Rodgers**, 52 Sig Sqn, won the Other Arms LSW shoot – well done **Cpl Rodgers**.

EXERCISE GORDON'S FIRST

Ex Gordon's First was a Squadron training weekend held over the weekend of 13-14 May 2000. The aim of the weekend was to train Escape & Evasion and survival techniques. The weekend began with the soldiers receiving a brief on the exercise scenario before being dragged away to be stripped of everything including their dignity. They were then interrogated by a team of SNCOs led by **WO2 (SSM) Karen** 'No Mercy' **Swan** who thought that the Spanish Inquisitions were a wishy-washy waste of time. The majority of the soldiers, although under extreme pressure, managed to resist the interrogation with only **Cpl Henry** 'It was McGovern! He's the boss!' **Rodgers** succumbing to the evil machinations of the Sergeants' Mess Crazy Gang. The soldiers 'escaped' and made their own way to Dechmont Ranges for the instructional phase of the exercise where they were educated in a variety of subjects including water gathering and purification, improvised ovens and shelter construction amongst others. One set-back was the lack of rabbits for the butchering lesson, as the range warden had failed to bag any the previous evening. The Sergeants' Mess Crazy Gang's normally hard, evil façade cracked with horror as the OC suggested that they '…take a tenner and pop down to the pet shop and get a couple of rabbits and a guinea pig.' They declined! The rest of the evening was taken up with command tasks and home improvements on our improvised shelters. That night saw a navigation exercise using hand drawn maps. Suggestions that the maps were not produced by the SNCOs as they were not drawn in crayon were met with growls of anger by the Crazy Gang. The night navigation was a success with Stand Two being the easiest to find as **Sgt Dougie** 'Ebenezer was a wastrel' **MacDonald** smoked endless cigarettes that had been confiscated that very morning from the soldiers during interrogation.

LCpl Anthea Purvis digs for gold (RMR Endurance Course)

Sunday morning saw the Squadron head off to Largs, the Scottish Riviera, to tackle the RMR Endurance course, which ensured that everyone was muddy and wet before returning to East Kilbride and freedom. The weekend was rounded off with a BBQ when those soldiers that had participated in the exercise were joined by a number of the ladies from the Squadron who had run in the Glasgow Women's 10km race. Congratulations go to **WO2 (SSM) Karen Swan**, ex-**SSgt Jean** 'What's a map?' **Thompson, Sig Elaine** 'I'm in the mood for dancing' **Woods** and **Sig Audrey** 'There's nothing wrong with my car' **Sheridan** for completing the race. The BBQ was a great success with **Maj Donald** 'One more bottle then I'm off' **Gordon** sweeping all before him in an impromptu basketball competition.

With the lessons of Ex Grey Garage still in mind the Squadron deployed to Barry Buddon as part of the Regimental Training Weekend. As the operators honed their skills in the sandy wastes of the training area great plans were afoot back in the camp. As part of the Regimental preparation for Annual Camp, a brainstorming session organised by the Commanding Officer saw the Squadrons 'flesh out' their various tasks at Annual Camp. 61 Sqn have arguably the most important task as we have responsibility for the RCP. During the brainstorming the OC, **Major Brian** 'Shankers' **Shankland** sucked thoughtfully on his pencil while the **SSM Terry** 'Health & Safety' **McGowan** longingly looked forward to tasking officers for guard and pan bashing.

52 Sqn Wet T-Shirt Contest (RMR Endurance Course)

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The Squadron say a sad farewell to **Sgt Lynden Box**, the tech PSI, who has been posted back to the regular army and the two and a half day week. We hope that there are enough jocks in 15 Sig Regt for you to enjoy the friendly banter that was every day life in the Squadron. We welcome in his place **Sgt Chris Kelly**, a jock, back to the chosen land and hope that he has an enjoyable and successful tour with us. We also say farewell to **SSgt Jean** 'I cannae see without my glasses' **Thompson** who has decided to retire from the TA due to work commitments after many years loyal service not only to the Squadron but also to the Pewter Pot pub. Finally we say good-bye to **Sgt Dougie McDonald, LCpl Adrian Augusto** and **LCpl Scott** 'Buzz Lightyear' **McGill** who have also relinquished the Saltire in favour of an easy life in HQ Sqn. We hope that the dental work required to remove your front teeth in order that you are ugly enough to join HQ Sqn is not too painful.

61 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd **Maj Brain Shankland**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) McGowan**

DRIVER TRAINING

April was a mixture of driver training and ITDs, the former being a highly successful weekend organised by **Sgt Roy** 'First Parade' **Taylor** and **SSgt** 'Netty' **McGinley**. The action packed weekend saw **Sgt Taylor** do his best Jeremy Clarkson impersonation in a Landrover and then watch in varying degrees of awe and surprise, as the participants tried to match his driving efforts. On the return to barracks, **Sgt Andy** 'The Naked Chef' **Crawford** decided to throw in some ad-hoc recovery techniques by 'breaking down' in his Landrover.

The Squadron ITDs weekend was surprisingly well attended considering that Bounties had only just been paid the month before, proof indeed that Squadron members are imbued with a strong sense of fiscal prudence. All but Range activities were covered, with **SSgt Rowena Clarke**, **Sgt Stallard** and **Cpl Glen Davidson** providing the required expertise.

EXERCISE GREY GARAGE

The 'frenzy' of May training started with NCRS training in the now famous 'Ex Grey Garage' in Chesser Crescent. As ever **YofS Jeff** 'Nearly an Officer' **Jephcote** had overall responsibility for the weekend. Reports suggest that he has yet to rebut allegations that he plans to become an NCRS Consultant, with desires on selling his skills to the market.

EXERCISE WEST LOWLAND HIKE ('WLH')

As sure as night follows day, the Squadron provides support for WLH. This is an event with which the Squadron has been associated for the best part of 30 years. This year's event was, as usual, nothing but a success. True to tradition the 'Orange Avenger' made his appearance on the Saturday evening. This is an annual instructional period by **Sgt Taylor** for the youth of the Boys Brigade who are given an insight into what disguises may be obtained from a sleeping bag, rolled up newspaper and a black balaclava.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Like the Squadron, its members have been far from inactive. Congratulations go out to **LCpls** 'Shoe' **Traynor** and **Borland** for passing MOI and RSDCC, respectively. Back in March, **Sgt Crawford** and **LCpls Woods** and **McDowall** provided assistance in the CORPSAAM, and more at the sharp end. **LCpls Borland**, **Florence** and **Costello** competed in the TA SAAM. Congratulations to **Netty McGinley** on her promotion to SSgt and also for the award of the Lord Lieutenant's certificate. Just reward for her longstanding commitment to the Squadron.

In the same month **LCpl** 'Betty' **Robertson** brought a Nordic theme to Squadron activities by participating both in Ex Snow Lion in Aviemore and Ex Snow Queen in Germany. She has now been nominated as the Squadron skiing expert with specialist skills in 'Apres Ski'. In the middle of May, **Lt** 'Sans Pantalons' **Donegan** found out just how good our NATO allies are at shooting as he participated in the NATO Officers Shoot at Barry Buddon. Rather unwisely, **Maj Brian** 'Mayhem' **Murray** was left in charge of the Grenade Throwing Stand. To date there have been no reported casualties.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Congratulations and farewell go hand in hand for **Sgt Stallard**, who is promoted to Staff Sergeant on posting to 3 Div in July. **Sgt Stallard** has been a loyal servant to the Squadron for nearly three years, providing invaluable assistance both in communications and military training. Thanks for your four star help and we wish you all the best for the future.

A big hello to **2Lt Graham** 'I know VHF as well' **Gaw**, who joins us from EUOTC. **2Lt Gaw** brings a much-needed youthful zest to the Squadron Officers Mess and he is also a freelance Webmaster; his skills can be seen at our web site: www.tasignals.co.uk (link space available at very reasonable prices).

Reports of a large Stork flying over Chesser Crescent were confirmed when **Capt Stuart** 'Mad Dog' **Middleton** brought his beautiful baby girl into the Squadron in mid-May. Our best wishes go out to **Stuart**, wife and baby **Rebecca. Stuart** is looking forward to the next NCRS exercise so he can catch up on lost sleep during the night shift.

Are you reading your own copy of *The WIRE?*
If not, why not make 2000 the year that YOU start to subscribe?

33 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

42 (CITY OF MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd **Maj M. O. Cummings TD**
SSM **WO2 G. Ward**

The highlight of this reporting period was an expedition to the Rocky Mountains organised by **Capt Dave Titheridge,** the Squadron 2IC. Nine members of the Squadron made up the party of fifteen from the Regiment who carried out Winter Adventurous Training during the period 22 March – 06 April 2000.

The Exercise took place in the area of Sunshine Village, which is a skiing area about 10kms from the resort of Banff in Alberta. The party flew from Manchester to Calgary on a nine hour flight and were based at Trails End Camp. Trails End Camp is an R&R centre traditionally frequented by Battle Groups staging through BATUS to the Medicine Hat training area. It is located an hours drive from Calgary on the West coast of Alberta. The camp is available for Winter and Summer expeditions and has fantastic facilities set in a stunning location. There are direct flights to Calgary from London as well as from Manchester and any unit requiring more information about the facility should contact **Capt Dave Titheridge** on 0161 257-3377 (Fax: 0161 248-8774)

Trails End Camp
(L-R): SSgt Paul Corrie, LCpl Andy Connell,
SSgt 'Rooster' Coburn, OCdt Danny Fenwick, LCpl Stu Green,
Sgt Tim Mounfield, Sgt Steve Smith, Cpl Brent Jefferson,
SSgt Di Winrow, Capt Dave Titheridge, LCpl Harry Griffiths,
Sgt Jack Wyllie, Cpl Jim Bland, Sig Gaynor Hull,
WO2 'Phil the spill' Daniels

Capt Dave Titheridge, and LCpl Andy Connell
on top of Look Out Mountain
'Do Ops really want a relay up here?'

EXERCISE TARTAN HUSKY 2000 - *by Sig Bill Staples*

Gucci kit and rolled oats packed, March 2000 saw a select few from 33 Sig Regt (V) depart these fair isles for two weeks of skitastic action in Alberta, Canada. The 15 members of 33 Sig Regt (V) made history by being the first TA Unit to utilise the Trails End Camp, BATUS in Alberta. Canada. Having recce'd the camp for future use, the Cavalry may well fear that yet another of their exclusive retreats has been invaded by undesirables.

As Tartan Husky was a serious exercise and not, repeat not, a holiday **Capt Dave Titheridge** executed a prompt tactical detour upon arrival in Canada. After all it is a barren featureless desert out there ('Other Side Sir'). Finally arriving at literally Trails End the scenery was outstanding. The camp, located at the foot of the stunning Canadian Rockies put Snowdon into context. However, we had more to do than just admire the views. The aim of the Exercise was to take those who had previously only built a snowman up to Basic Ski Proficiency and let the Milk Tray delivery types qualify at Ski Tour Proficiency level. Much of what was to be learnt was off piste and everyone was learning something new. The Regiment is now well on its way to having its own TA ski instructors. Split into two groups the experienced skiers piste-off to get used to the touring skis and enjoy the fantastic slopes of Sunshine Village whilst the beginners practised the joys of snow plough slopes and turns on the green slopes. **LCpl** 'Downhill Phil' **Jennings** demonstrated why military runways have nets, the unit is currently considering investing in second hand Jaguar parachutes for next year's novice skiers. By the third day the intermediate group were throwing themselves down black runs and the beginners even attacking blue runs although with a fair amount of trepidation. The evening involved a short trip into Banff to sample the local cuisine. Having demolished a small heard of local livestock, **SSgt Ian** 'Rooster' **Coburn** kept our NBC skills sharp for the remainder of the Exercise. With the basics of downhill skiing under our collective belts the instructors spurred us onward and upwards to ski touring. For the next five days our classroom was to be the vast ranges of the Rocky Mountains. After a few practice runs off the bitterly cold Lookout Mountain with the added weight packs, we practised some of the basic safety drills that are essential before we left the safety of the resort boundaries. This involved being able to search for people using avalanche beacons and snow probes. Much of this part of the training concentrated on recognising the considerable dangers of avalanches outside the ski resort boundaries and involved digging a number of snow pits to test the stability of the snow.

The weather was fantastic and the sky was a clean blue colour, rarely seen in the UK. The sun was blazing and caught it's first victims that day with **LCpl Andy Connell** and **OCdt Daniel Fenwick** learning that using anything less than factor 4,000 sunscreen was a schoolboy error. They would over the following days progress from beetroot heads to leprous fiends. In the next few days, though, the telltale racoon style sunburn pattern, from wearing goggles, began to show on everyone. A highlight of the trip was **SSgt Ian** 'Rooster' **Coburn** who introduced his teddy bear to the group, teddy was always found in the vicinity when 'Rooster, was digging himself out of a snowdrift having just descended into it in an ungainly manner. The final two days included a night out in the snow where we had to dig our own accommodation. Having found a huge snowdrift we set about digging (never know when you will need that entrenching tool) and after a few hours our new homes were ready. To dry us off after all that exertion the instructors took us to climb a summit close to Chez 33. The sun was setting and gave us a stunning view but we ended up more freeze dried than anything else. The scale of the snow holes varied from a snow cupboard to snow palaces but we had neglected to bring seal skins and Eskimo builders so they were somewhat lacking in the comfort department. **Jim Bland** and **Andy Connell** were unaware that they were expected to share their accommodation with 'Rooster's' now estranged teddy. Was it too much to expect a room made entirely of snow to be warm? Apparently so.

As dawn broke on our final day in the field the bears attacked…. (it could have happened OK!). After 'stand to' we demolished our homes and left no trace of our residence. Futile attempts were made to snap some flexibility into our clothes that had frozen solid in the night. With just one more peak to ascend and some avalanche safety tests to complete, R&R was getting closer so the pace noticeably increased. For the final few says, we relaxed in a hotel in Banff with its own heated outdoor pool located close to the centre of some kind of civilisation indicated by the presence of a Macodonald's and a Hard Rock Café. Those who had irrepressibly caught the skiing bug carried on skiing whilst **LCpl** 'H' **Griffiths, LCpl Jim Bland** and **Sgt** 'Spider' **Smith** went skidooing. Others explored Canadian cultural issues around Banff. It was an entertaining end to what had been a demanding and challenging Exercise for everyone and thanks to the staff at Trails End Camp, staying in the middle of nowhere was enjoyable. All of a sudden skiing in Aviemore will never be the same again. Next time we might nail ski's on the det's, hire some Husky's and bring the kit with us.

EXERCISE SUMMER EAGLE/PRONTO CALL 2

The main comms events over the last two months were Ex Summer Eagle (15/16 April 2000) and the Regimental PACEX (20/21 May 2000). Summer Eagle was a Comd 11 Sig Bde CPX designed to practise the Brigade's Ptarmigan management teams. The OC 42 Sqn was tasked to co-ordinate an Exercise for those Regimental personnel not involved directly with the CPX. This took place at the Altcar Training Area and involved setting up a normal comms complex but with the added task of running an RRR link from Altcar to Belfast. The relay chain was to start at Winter Hill near Bolton and end in the Stranraer Area. Our new SPSI, **SSgt Sam Faulds**, was despatched at a day's notice to find suitable comms locations on the West Coast. Undaunted, he spent a week completing the job only to have the link shelved in the end. But, as they

say, time spent on reconnaissance is seldom wasted, and the sites he found may come in handy one day. The Regimental PACEX took place in Swynnerton Training Camp and was the work up to ensure that equipment was ready for deployment on Ex Arrcade Falcon 2000. During this weekend the Squadron vehicles were thoroughly checked and all equipment tested. Also, MATRIX tests were carried out along with continental driver training in preparation for the Annual Camp in Germany.

EXERCISE ARRCADE FALCON 2000

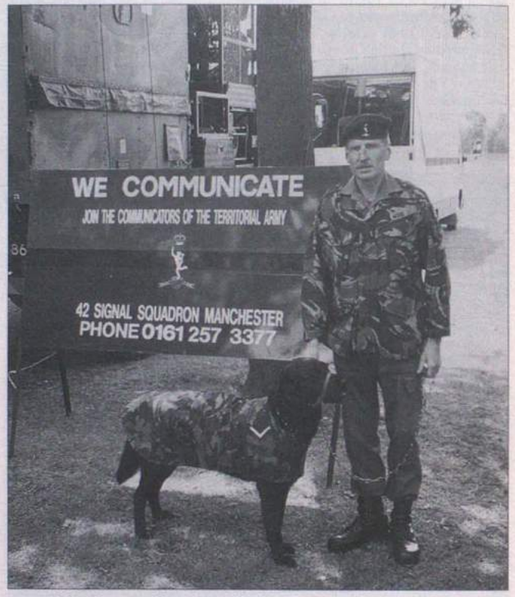
As we go to press, there are only a couple of days left before the Squadron rolls out of the gates of the TA Centre on its way to The Channel ports. This is a big moment for our 2IC, **Capt Dave Titheridge**, as he is in command of the Squadron due to the unavailability of the Squadron Commander, **Maj Mica Cummings**. Ex Arrcade Falcon is Chief G6 ARRC's annual comms FTX to be conducted during the period 10-24 June 2000. The Exercise takes place in Nordrhein – Westfalen in Germany and involves the deployment of 1 and 11 (UK) Sig Bdes. The movers have excelled themselves this year to make sure that The Channel crossing is as interesting as possible. A novel plan sees the Regiment loading its vehicles on to the North Sea Ferry at Hull and then jumping on coaches to travel via The Channel Tunnel to be reunited with the vehicles at Flushing. The coaches will break their journey at Napier Barracks in Folkestone to allow for some sightseeing in Kent, hosted by 1 Para! Hopefully, reunited with the correct vehicles, the Regiment will then proceed to the Brigade concentration area at Ayreshire Barracks in Moenchengladbach. Once PACEX and battle preparation procedures are carried out the Regiment will deploy to its field locations. Later in the Exercise there will be the opportunity to practice not only comms skills but military skills when the Regimental assets concentrate on the Sennelager and Paderborn areas to carry out total training.

BALKAN COMMERCIALISATION PROJECT

Two members of the Squadron travelled down to Christchurch to take part in trials being carried out by British Aerospace Electronic Systems concerned with commercialisation of CIS facilities in the Balkans. **Sgt Paul Duffin**, ably assisted by **Cpl Dave Cyrtis**, volunteered to participate in the project over a two week period at the beginning of May. The task was to see if 16/24 KVA generators were suitable to provide emergency power for the trials in the case of mains power failure. This involved interfacing power from one of the Squadron's generators with civilian communications equipment and dealing with any power related problems that occurred. Existing single phase power cables had to be modified and other problems overcome to make the trials a success. Despite setbacks, the job was completed, and both soldiers found the trip an interesting and welcome change from their usual role within the Squadron. They also had the added pleasure of chatting with Comd 11 Sig Bde, **Brig Jonathan Cook**, during his visit to inspect the project.

FAREWELL TO SSGT GEORGE WOOD

SSgt George Arthur Wood has recently retired after 24 years service with 42 Sig Sqn (V) during which he was awarded his TA Efficiency Medal with 1st and 2nd clasps. George will be sadly missed as he was one of the Squadron's real characters and was held in high regard by all members of this Squadron. A native of Wythenshawe in Manchester, **George** was a ferocious MT Sergeant for many years and ran his department with relentless efficiency. One of his proudest boasts was that he was summoned by a Squadron Commander, who is long gone, and congratulated on the state of the Squadron MT. The Squadron Commander told him, 'I know that you are doing a good job in the MT because I can't find anyone in the Squadron who admits to being a friend of yours.' **George** moved on from there on promotion to take over the Squadron Recruiting Team. He soon became a familiar sight in and around Manchester attending recruiting venues with his faithful dog Blackie by his side. Blackie was such a draw that he was promoted to Lance Corporal for his smart turnout and attention to duty. Born with the 'gift of the gab' **George** was a very successful recruiter and will be a difficult man to replace. One of his main claims to fame was that in 24 years he had never missed a camp and had always been awarded his CPO's efficiency certificate, which is a record to be proud of. **George** is now well past his sell by date and the Squadron has run out of excuses to put in his special overage enlistment proforma to sign him on for yet another year. However, he is a member of the Manchester Branch of the Royal Signals Association and we hope to see him again at Squadron socials and occasions such as Remembrance Sunday Parades. We should like to express our gratitude to **George** through the medium of *The WIRE*, and to thank him for all his sterling service with the Squadron and for all that he has done to secure the future of the Squadron for generations to come.



SSgt George Wood and his dog, honorary LCpl Blackie, manning the Squadron recruiting stand

34 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO	**Lt Col D. A. Hargreaves**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) N. Yarwood**

NEWS FROM THE MANSION

As you are all aware, from the previous entries within this magazine, you will remember that the CO has been commanding another regiment somewhere in the FRY. Anyway the up shot is that we all have had a splendid time under the leadership of **Maj Allan Grindrod TD**. From all in the Regiment we would like to say a heart felt thanks to **Maj Grindrod** for guiding us through this last six months and to **Lt Col Hargreaves** glad to see you back in one piece. Only one departure from RHQ and that was the 'COMMISSIONING' of **WO2 (YofS) John Walesby** into the AGC(SPS). **YofS Walesby** asked to say a big thank you to the Corps for the helping hand in assisting his easy passage to the AGC. We would like to say a big welcome to the new YofS, however, we can't! The YofS was posted to Headley Court and we haven't seen him for 70+ days. As for the rest of the mansion:

George (Trg Maj) – Still cycling.
Les (QM) – Still on holiday.
Dave (Adjt) – Still not there.
Norman (RSM) – Still in Scotland.
Richie (RQMS) – Still winding CO's up asking them to release Corps football players.
Steve (FofS) – Still acting YofS, on promotion.
Stuart (Trg SPSI) – Still the blue ginger Jock.
The notable achievement by the mansion is that they remain unbeaten in the weekly football fixture against all comers.

Back Row (L-R): Richie Bell, John Walesby, George Whyman
Front Row (L-R): Bob Brehenny, Steve Young, Norman Yarwood, Dave Wilson, Mark Emmerson

BUTTERWICK CHILDRENS HOSPICE CHARITY ASSAULT COURSE

Enthusiasm and team spirit came to the fore as civilian teams put themselves through their paces to complete a charity assault course. Thirteen teams of ten entered the competition, which was held on the old 8 Sig Regt assault course in Catterick. The winning team was of people on probation, in a time of under five minutes. The event raised over £4000 and only proved to be a success due to the hard work of **SSgt Stu Mckinnon** and a staff of everyone! The Regiment has already been approached to organise next year's event which the newly appointed Regimental Press Officer, **Lt Ruth Middleton-Powell,** will look forward to promoting.

LANDYARD TROPHY – *by Sgt Judy Adcock*

The Team:-

2Lt Keith Williams	**SSgt (FofS) Steve Moore**
SSgt Gary Jowers	**Sgt Judy Adcock**
Sgt Patto Patterson	**Cpl Jerry Carr**
LCpl Terry Collict	**LCpl Becky Williamson**
LCpl Aran Wimpenny	**Sig Peter Sutcliffe**

It was hoped to enter two teams from the Regiment, one male and one female, however, due to very busy Regimental training programme, car crashes and pregnancy the above mixed team was entered. **2Lt Keith Williams** co-ordinated all the training that also included a weekend recce to Dartmoor. On the day there were 31 teams, we were told, of which four were female and four TA. We taped our feet up the night before and packed our Bergen's and marched up and down to make sure they were comfortable. Though some of the men in the team had done the event before none of the girls had done quite this distance and certainly not carrying any weight to speak of. Sleep was at a premium as we arose at 0145hrs, on the advice of the team leader, to beat the breakfast queues. We got off to an excellent start with **2Lt Keith Williams** deciding that he knew better than the TAC signs and promptly got the team lost on the way to the start line. At the start line last minute preparations saw a mad dash to the portaloos! The air horn sounded and we were off. 31 teams striding up the Tors all with something to prove. Checkpoints 1, 2 and 3 passed easily enough but after that, things changed. Our 'easy to find' Checkpoint 4 had vanished into the mist, and us, very nearly, with it. After a nervous half hour we finally realised we were actually about 20 metres from the checkpoint, thanks to some stunning map reading by **SSgt Gary Jowers** and **SSgt (FofS) Steve Moore**. At Checkpoint 5 we met our admin party of **Lt Ruth M-P** and **Cpl** 'Ollie' **Oliver.** Checkpoint 6 was the food stop! Good job we had our own. Nuff said! The route to Checkpoint 7 was short but had the biggest hill in NATO in between and then a quick hop to Checkpoint 8. Between Checkpoints 8 and 11 my body was in great pain so the only memory is that of **LCpl Becky Williamson** having the most evil blisters. Anyway after a few horse pills she was back to normal! At Checkpoint 11 we met up with the admin party again to be told the winners had finished. The legs between Checkpoints 12 and 13 we long but largely uneventful. However, due to some excellent route research between Checkpoints 14 and 15, we managed to push ahead of four other teams. After 16hrs23mins we had finished with a full team.

The award ceremony was a real shock. We were one of only five teams to finish with all who started and we had won the TA event. A big thank you to **2Lt Keith** 'Adonis' **Williams** for all his efforts in driving the team forward and the admin team for much needed words of encouragement when most needed.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Capt Alan Watts**
SSM	**WO2 Kev Turrington**

The Squadron would like to say a fond farewell to **SSgt Steve** 'the marriage' **Goodyear** who leaves the army at the end of 22 years service. **Steve** take care and you are always welcome back. A war welcome to **SSgt Ralph** 'the bite' **Hutton** who joins us from 33 Sig Regt. Welcome to the Squadron and get your teeth stuck into the challenges that lie ahead.

EXERCISE FINAL EXIT – *SSgt (Now WO2) Si Land*

This was organised by **SSgt Steve Goodyear** and was a navigation/leadership exercise with a difference. Members of the Squadron were paired off and had to complete a number of 'tasks' throughout the North East. Teams returned at the end of the event with parts of steam engines and coal from the North York Moors railway in Pickering, sticks of rock from Whitley Bay and Whitby, a rare brew from Ripon Cathedral and all manner of unspeakable items. Notable mentions must go to **Cfn Fitzgerald** who got himself on to Darlington local radio, Alpha 103.2, and **SSgt (FofS) Si Land** and **LCpl Julie Morrison** who made the North East's Century Radio sports programme. The latter pair being the overall winners. A big thank you to **SSgt Steve Goodyear** for planning challenging enjoyable training throughout his time in the Squadron. Congratulations to **Sgt Lance Cairns** on his promotion to Staff Sergeant.

49 (WEST RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Cod	**Capt Richard Lenton**
SSM	**WO2 Al James**

The Squadron has been in good hands since **Maj David Sixsmith** departed for Bosnia. We wish him a safe speedy return and thank **Capt Richard Lenton** for his efforts at the helm. The Squadron heard one Saturday morning that one of its subalterns had killed a BMW. While driving home, **Lt Ruth** 'I know I'm always right' **Middleton-Powell** drove her beloved BMW compact into a ditch. Rolled it a couple of times before leaving it resting on its roof. The police said that the car was pronounced dead at the scene by the mechanics and that they would be taking **Miss M-P** into custody for the murder of said BMW Compact once she had recovered from her broken back. On a serious note, 'Don't get fast cars that you can not handle!' **Ruth** has made a full recovery, to the delight of all, and is now enjoying a period of less strenuous training to ensure a trouble free future.

Congratulations go to **SSgt Keith Holdstock** on his promotion to WO2 and being appointed SSM and **Sgt Dave Carr** on his promotion to Staff Sergeant. A special message must go to **SSgt (FofS) Steve Moore** who has watched all his Forenames' course get promotion before he. Not once did he phone the Adjt to cry in his beer about not been selected! However, the cunning plan was not to tell him of his promotion until eight weeks after the board sat. This is now done so a very belated congratulations to **Steve** on his well earned promotion to WO2 and we wish him and his family the best of fortune with 4 Armd Bde.

A sad farewell is said to **Sgt Barney Phillips** who is leaving the Corps after 22 glorious years. Good luck and drop in whenever you are in the area.

Sgt Frank Mason – Turning the clock back

TA PHASE 2 RECRUIT COURSE – *by Sig Sally Buck*

After weeks of preparation, apprehension and waiting, my TA Phase 2 recruit's course finally arrived. Rushing around trying to make sure that I had not forgotten anything was frustrating. I had heard many stories about the course held at Blandford and none of them were pleasant. The prospect of two weeks of being shouted at was also something I was not particularly looking forward to. Needless to say I was a little worried!

Week 1 - Being a student of Spanish and Media at Trinity and All Saints University in Leeds the transition from civilian life to two weeks of a military lifestyle was a bit of a culture shock at first. Travelling down with **Sig Ross Pemble** and **Sgt Gary Openshaw** I spent the journey wondering what on earth I was letting myself in for. **Sig Pemble** was in high spirits and looking forward to the course. Was he mad? I soon felt a little more relaxed though when we discovered that **Pemble** had forgotten his beret. Oops! The first group I met on the course was the gang from 40 Sig Regt in Northern Ireland. The first week was a funfair of room inspections followed by long days of lessons such as weapons training, NBC, hygiene in the field and map reading. We also went out on our first exercise of the course towards the end of the first week. For me, the exercises were the most enjoyable. Although we discovered that many of us need to control our imaginations as the amount of people who tried challenging imaginary ghost-like enemies was amazing. At this point I would like to thank my basha partner **Sig Ian Covey** for helping me keep my sanity when I came under pressure as section commander. Night patrol was fun but we needed to teach **Sig** 'skull' **Doherty** of 40 Sig Regt that when told to blend in with the trees he shouldn't take it so literally as he took on a nasty habit of adopting tree-like poses. One thing I did find amazing was how close strangers could become when they are thrown together for two weeks in those types of situations. By the end of the first week I felt as though I had known the other recruits for years.

Week 2 - seemed to fly by. By this time many people were ready to go home. A number of people injured themselves on the first PT lesson, therefore were unable to go on the second exercise so there were a few miserable faces as we prepared for our second night out in the field. Blood was pouring, sweat was dripping and my tears were plentiful that night as we braved the frosts out on Salisbury Plain. Patrols were fun and the firefight was something else. Rounds were fired, smoke was screening but what happened to the 30-metre safety distance for the thunder flashes?

Battle Field First Aid was also on the agenda in the second week. Some people failed their assessment as their actions would have actually killed their casualty! We also had the chance to shoot on the SAT range though I must remember to actually look through the weapon sights correctly. Well it had been a long tiring course. My favourite part of the course came in the second week, the Gas Chamber! It provides a perfect opportunity to rid yourself of any fluids you no longer require as they stream out through your eyes and nose. Your lungs also feel quite clear and refreshed as you cough up any unwanted phlegm!

Conclusion - On arrival back home after completing the course, I found it hard to switch off. I couldn't shake off this feeling that I should be bulling boots or ironing. My advice to any recruits going on their TA recruits course is to work hard but try and keep your and others' spirits high. It is hard but if you can laugh about the mistakes made and can work as a team then you are well on the way to being a winner!

745 SIGNAL TROOP – HULL

Congratulations go to **Sig Victoria Wedgwood-Jones** on completion of Ex Bright leader with Sheffield Officer Training Corps. The Exercise aims to teach young potential officers leadership and command skills with a view to them, eventually seeking a commission. **Sig W-J** was joint first on her course. **Sigs Pelly Pemble** and **Shirley Courtney** have recently completed their 2-week Phase 2 Recruits training at Blandford and have now rejoined the Troop. **Sig** 'Monkey Boy' **Coyle** and **Sig** 'Twinkie' **Twidle** have completed their Regimental Phase 1 Recruit Training. Congratulations to **LCpl Angus Wreathall** and **Sig John Stead** who completed their RMC course in style, both obtaining excellent reports.

50 (NORTHUMBRIAN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Graham Jennings**
SSM **WO2 Steve Tinkler**

EXERCISE FFARWELL HOFFUS (EX FOND FAREWELL)
BIRTWISTLE TROPHY COMPETITION– *by Sig Sonia Hall*

The Regimental annual military skills competition took place at Warcop Camp. With instruction that from now onwards we would be a family, the preparations began in earnest to prove that 50 Sqn would win something other than the RSIT trophy. We arrived at Warcop on the Friday evening expecting a decent night's sleep. Wrong! I was selected to take part in the Night Patrol before Saturday's events of march and shoot, section in defence, NBC, orienteering, command tasks, weapon handling, SAT and the assault course. How I wish that I'd volunteered for the overtime at work. Highlights of the weekend were **Sgt Mickey Jemmy's** ability to break a vital piece of equipment during the command task! My own infatuation in carrying bungees and **Sgt Ross Blairs'** ability to abseil with only one hand on the rope after a particular nasty burn to his palm.Other team members were **Sigs Iggy Patterson, Keith Elsdon, Jim Stevenson, Graham Black, LCpl Neil Watkin** and **Cpls Cliff Readshaw** and **John Whiteman**. Saturday's events were rounded off with a curry supper and Inter-Squadron Football.

The competition was very tight throughout with only one point separating the top three teams. I was convinced that the turn of the year had broken the spell of bad luck that 50 Sqn has encountered in previous competitions. Alas, once again 49 Sqn proved victor with a total of 47 points followed by HQ Sqn and ourselves with 46 points. Again the Regiment was fortunate as **Maj Gen Birtwistle** attended to present the prizes in person. An inspiring man who was warmly greeted by old and new friends alike. Looking back over the weekend I can honestly say that this was one of the most exhausting weekends that I had ever attended, however, due to the good sportsmanship and overall competitiveness it was undoubtedly one of the best. I would like to thank all personnel within 50 Squadron for your support, wit and humour in times of tiredness and desperation, as without it I truly would not have enjoyed the event nearly so much.

Birtwistle Competition
(L-R): Adjt, OC 50, OC HQ

90 (NORTH RIDING) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Ian Hall**
SSM **WO2 Ian Ward**

EXERCISE BELGIUM DEFENDER

The Exercise is an International Military Skills Competition run by the Reserve Forces Association and hosted in each of the different member countries. 90 Squadron sent two teams, one male (**WO2 Huntington, Sgt Mason, Cpl Carr** and **LCpl Belt**) and one female (**LCpl Wilkinson, LCpl Williamson, Sig Bibby** and **Sig Savin**). Both teams acquitted themselves to the highest of standards and were commended for their performance and efforts.

THREE PEAKS

A small squad of six recently completed the three peaks challenge. **WO2 Ian Ward, SSgt Mark Emmerson, Sgt Patto Patterson, LCpl Becky Williamson** and **Sig Machela Savin** began the climb up Snowden at 0600hrs an the Saturday and finished the descent of Ben Nevis at 1500 on the Sunday. The team was exceptionally lucky with the weather, which undoubtedly helped to this most excellent performance.

LONG DISTANCE RUNNERS

90 Squadron was well represented in the TA half marathon recently with **Sgt** 'Patto' **Paterson** and **LCpl Neville Kitching** bagging the first two places. The Squadron also entered 'Patto' and **Neville** along with **SSgt Gary Jowers** in the TA Cross-Country Championship. **Sgt Patterson** winning with **LCpl Kitchen** coming third.

FINALLY

The last snap shot with the RSM, **WO1 Norman Yarwood**.

Maj Gen Birtwistle chatting with troops with the then Acting CO, Maj Allan Grindrod, enjoying the RSMs 'Camp' stance!

PUBLISH IT IN THE WIRE

The Editor is always pleased to receive interesting articles and action packed photos

35 (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

XXXV

CO **Lt Col S. J. Potter TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) P. Marshall**

I GUESS THAT'S WHY THEY CALL IT 'THE RUNS'
by Hell Tum John

After an extraordinarily busy week leading up to the Regiment's first annual camp to Germany in three years I find myself in the unusual situation of having to compose *WIRE* Notes during the journey and I am conscious of the unpleasant fact that I am perilously close to the deadline set by the Editor. I find I have contracted salmonella after a routine eats and drinks stop, which has led to a sustained and merciless attack of diarrhoea. I have now resigned myself to the fact that I am going to have to throw myself at his mercy. I hope when he learns of my plight that he treats my desperate situation with compassion and understanding and even offers me a few words of comfort. As I write I can't even bear to look at any sign that says Ausfahrt. At this point I would like to dispel any suggestion that it had anything to do with the eggs at Goojerat Barracks. Through my discomfort, which by the way attracted few words of sympathy from both the Adjt and RSM - yes I concede raising the subject at lunch was not the most appropriate time, but what the heck these winged messengers must have experienced similar situations on dozens of occasions. As I was saying; through my discomfort I was acutely aware that a devious and cunning plan to deceive our potential adversaries was, in my humble presence, being executed and tested against a fictitious enemy. This cunning plan involved detaching troops (some of whom even went by completely different routes) from their vehicles by using a combination of freight and passenger ferries just to confuse the enemy. The Training Major, **Maj Tudor Hill** could be seen at the ticket-desk attempting to thwart this dastardly plan but alas the freight-boat was full and he couldn't afford the ticket cost anyway! I am sure this particular mobilisation plan will be subject to review. We also had the dubious pleasure of sharing our HSS Ferry with Euro 2000 Fans who managed to take up every available comfortable seat as well as creating a nuisance, which only added to our woes.

However, the Regiment behaved impeccably and, as expected, all members acted as true ambassadors for their country, a fact not lost on customs officials and the local population on disembarking. A small group from the Regiment did, however, use their initiative by purchasing a £6 ticket that allowed access to the panoramic deck complete with luxury seats including free coffee and tea. This clever little group included **Capts Mark Whittingham** and **John Middler, Lt** 'Skip' **Whalley.** They were joined by **SSgt Mark Rosenworth, SSgt Andy Wilkins** and **Sgt Steve College,** who mysteriously cannot produce the evidence of any ticket purchased, 'The door was open Guv,' springs to mind. We did, however, achieve our objective of reinforcing the GASTRIC (or was it GASTIC) frontier even if we were just a little late and tired, but more about this in the Annual Camp edition of *The WIRE*.

Before I go I have to bare my soul and admit to an error committed during my delicate plight, I found myself confiding in who I thought was a rather dignified and distinguished looking field officer outside Brigade Main HQ who looked very friendly and approachable. Amongst other things I found myself confessing to him that I was hoping to evade the Brigade Comd to avoid explaining why as Regimental PR Officer and unit photographer - throwing in just for good measure my responsibilities as visitors co-ord and DAMCON - why I was only wearing light clothing and a beret rather than full tactical combat kit. Then I just happened to glance down at his rank slide and found myself addressing the new Brigade Deputy Commander. Trying to diplomatically extract myself from this situation, a thought crossed my mind - I hadn't actually said which unit I was from or who I was. Momentarily a tactical withdrawal was on the cards but I thought better of it and believe that I actually introduced myself! Now I find myself placed at both the mercy of the Editor of *The WIRE* and the Brigade Deputy Commander- cest la vie.

HIGHS AND LOWS

The Regiment's challenge teams have experienced mixed fortunes during the last two months especially in their efforts to achieve success at various Orienteering competitions and Race the Sun. The Regiment in particular has a reputation to be envied on the orienteering front and continues to be well represented in all competitions and has recently claimed a fair degree of success in both the Divisional and LAND championships. In the 5 Div minor units competition held at Queen Elizabeth Park on 12 April the Regular team seized the runner up award having been narrowly beaten by 7 Regt AAC by five minutes. Meanwhile, the TA Male and Female team from 89 Sqn unfortunately lost their hold on the 5 Div Championship Trophy and could only secure runners up in the competition held in the Forest of Dean on 16 April. This disappointment was quickly turned into a celebration however, when **SSgt Dave Arnot,** in his physical prime at the grand age of 53, was declared the 5 Div TA Male Champion thus wiping out the much younger opposition.

The LAND championships was held at Sennybridge over the weekend 19/20 May. Shock and unexpected results were the order of the weekend with the underdogs of HQ Sqn by a magnificent, sustained and skilled team effort snatched the TA Ladies Cup from a tough opposition and deserve special congratulations despite the eviction of the opposing teams for missing markers. **2Lt Janet Lawrence** is also to be congratulated on achieving runner up to the TA Ladies Champion. Disastrously and adding to their misfortunes in the Div championships 89 Sqn found themselves disqualified because an inconsolable **Cpl Tony Griffiths,** who just happens to be the Regimental Champion, missed just one punch. At that stage 89 Sqn were leading the nearest opposition by 90 minutes and we extend our commiseration's. How the mighty have fallen, but we are confident they will return with a vengeance.

Despite our preparation and splendid organisation by **Sgt Mark Evans** our efforts towards achieving some form of success during Race the Sun failed to materialise. We had a strong and capable team but the competition which was held in the York area on 25 May was particularly fierce and competitive this year as well as gruelling. It has to be said that this team effort can only described as a glorious failure simply because of the sheer guts and determination displayed by all team members throughout the race against the toughest opposition seen for many years. Thankfully the entry fee of £300.00 will be wisely invested in many worthwhile charities.

NONE BUT THE BRAVE

It is a pleasure to see 95 Sqn taking prominent position in this edition of *The WIRE* and it is particularly pleasing to continue the report of the involvement of **SSgt Phil Weaver** and **Cpl Richard Jones** five years ago in a very brave rescue attempt in which they risked their lives. In November 1995 **Phil** and **Richard** pulled **Sig Jamie Walker** from a burning land-rover and saved his life and did not even consider their own personal safety. The accident happened when they were part of a Squadron Packet en route to Germany via the AI 4. Most will recall that the Land Rover they were travelling in burst into flames after a seven tonne goods vehicle hit it from behind. For this brave action they have already received two commendations and now they have received international recognition for their bravery. At a special and surprise ceremony held in the TA Centre on Tuesday 23 May they were presented with the European Award of Highway Comradeship by the CO, **Lt Col Stephen Potter.** This prestigious award is the highest of its kind in Europe and will hold a special significance to its recipients who continue to play down their very brave and dramatic role in rescuing **Jamie Walker. Sig Walker** now hopes to join the Royal Navy and we wish him every success and sincerely hope he achieves his ambition. This is clearly one heart warming story of human endeavour and fortitude that fortunately is not going to go away and will be remembered for many years.

One more bravery award to add to the collection!

SPOT ON TARGET

The Regimental Shooting Team under the expert guidance of **SSgt Richard Brown** has raised the Regimental military skills profile beyond all of our imagination. The fact that the team is mainly composed of members of 95 Sqn is not lost on the rest of the Regiment and it is accepted that they can claim and enjoy their successes for the benefit of all members of the Squadron, be justifiably proud of their efforts and celebrate it as a joint Regimental and Squadron victory. A celebration that no one would even attempt to deny. Excellent shooting skills were displayed at the Corps SAAM held over the period 7-9 April with the Regiment achieving an outstanding second place overall. There was no stopping the team at this event and individual members achieved unimaginable success - **SSgt Phil Weaver** after a magnificent shooting display secured the LSW Trophy and **LCpl Phil Williarns** beat off the opposition to take the Association Cup. This excellent team also came third in the Pistol Shoot. Still celebrating and recovering from their earlier success at the Corps SAAM the team then made a concentrated assault on the 143 Bde SAAM when the Regimental Team took fourth place, beaten only by 2 Coys of the West Midland Regiment and BUOTC (by a marginal one point). This again was a magnificent feat worthy of rejoicing over many weeks if only for placing the Regiment and 95 Sqn firmly on the shooting map and a worthy but feared adversary for the many teams throughout the West Midlands. During the course of the contest three members of 95 Sqn gained the honour and distinction of wearing the Army Marksman Badge for the next twelve months and they are pictured together with the CO. Very well done to all team members and their coach. It is to be hoped and expected that next year will see even more glory for 95 Sqn and the Regiment.

NEW BLOOD

Happily it always gives the Regiment a sense of fulfilment to be able to report on the successful completion of a Recruit Course in every edition of *The WIRE*. If we are able to do this then it is a good sign that we are maintaining our recruiting efforts and adding to both the strength and efficiency of the Regiment. Our concern and commitment to recruiting can be highlighted in the revelation that our last course pass off and induction was held over a Bank Holiday weekend on Saturday 27 May, which also saw many members of the Regiment preparing for Annual Camp, thereby giving new recruits a clear message regarding personal commitment and attendance. This course was well represented by every Squadron, all of whom gained some new blood. As usual the CO, **Lt Col Stephen Potter,** was the inspecting officer and he presented the award of Best Recruit to **Sig Heather Trimm** of 58 Sqn and a special announcement was also made by the CO to congratulate **Sig David Proffitt** of 89 Sqn for achieving the status of being the most improved recruit. **Sig Proffitt** is a welcome addition to the TA family as he joins his brother, recently promoted to Corporal, who is also serving with 89 Sqn. This adds to the numerous same family members serving throughout the Regiment.

The CO presenting the award of Best Recruit to Sig Heather Trimm

PERMANENT STAFF ROUND-UP

The turbulent posting system that affects the permanent staff is something that we are now well accustomed to. Nonetheless it still leaves a feeling of sadness when just as the permanent staff have fully integrated into their role within the Regiment it is time to move on but we have now become well adjusted to the continuous changes that take place every two or three years. Recently we have said farewell to **SSgt (FofS) Andy Gilpin** and family, and a particular sad farewell to **SSgts Carl Smales, Jim Stephen, Derek Adams** and **Oz Linden** all of whom leave the Regular Army on retirement after many years on devoted and exemplary service. We wish them all the best of look and good fortune in that vast organisation called 'civvie street' and hope that their extensive trade, management and leadership skills will soon be recognised by astute employers. Sadly many more permanent staff will follow them in the coming month but thankfully only on posting. We have however, welcomed many new faces in **SSgt Les Singleton,** who joins the Regiment as the new armourer, **SSgt Barney Balmforth,** the new SPSI of 58 Sqn, **SSgt (FofS) Steve Brown** to RHQ, **SSgt Roy Carter,** the new SPSI of 95 Sqn, **SSgt Dave Owen** to 48 Sqn and finally **Sgt Dave Wildish** to Mike Tp. We extend a warm welcome to all new arrivals and their families and wish them a happy and rewarding tour with the Regiment. The permanent staff news round concludes with the presentation of the LS&GC Medal to **SSgt Andy Gilpin** and **WO2 (YofS) Phil Tonks** for achieving 15 years exemplary service. On Tuesday 18 April Comd 11 Sig Bde, **Brig Jonathan Cook** presented the award to both recipients at a special ceremony held in the Sergeants' Mess at Canley. Following the award he enlightened a rather enraptured audience on the history of the LS&GC that was laced with a little sorrow that the gratuity that went with it ended many years ago. Following the presentation the Brigade Commander presented **SSgt Dave Arnot** his Corps Orienteering Colours - a richly deserved award to the Regiment's most prolific orienteerer.

The Course Photo

The Brigade Commander with medal recipients

36th (EASTERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col W. Brown TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D. T. Eaglesham**

REGIMENTAL BACKGROUND

The Regiment can trace its history as far back as the reign of Queen Elizabeth 1 of England (around the same time that the current TM enlisted) who issued instructions for the muster of a regular City of London Militia in 1559. One of these bands, after many changes through the centuries, became an Engineer unit prior to becoming a Signals Regiment in 1920. Signal Regiments from East London and East Anglia served with distinction in World War II and 36th (Eastern) Signal Regiment (Volunteers) was formed in 1967 from three of these disbanded Regiments. The Regiment, in its present guise, is composed of the following elements. HQ Squadron and RHQ are based in Ilford, 44 (Cinque Ports) Signal Squadron is sited in Grays and Southend, 45 (Essex) Signal Squadron is situated in Colchester and Warley and last, though certainly not least, 54 (East Anglia) Signal Squadron which has Troops in Cambridge, Norwich and Bedford.

LORD LIEUTENANT'S CERTIFICATE OF MERITORIOUS SERVICE - WO1 (SVWO) MICK GRIMSHAW

WO1 Mick Grimshaw receives his certificate from the Lord Lieutenant, Field Marshall Sir John Chapple

At a recent ceremony held at the Duke of Yorks Barracks, Chelsea, **WO1 Mick Grimshaw** was presented with the 'Lord Lieutenant for Greater London's Certificate of Meritorious Service' by **Field Marshall Sir John Chapple**. Very few of these awards are presented each year, and they recognise the outstanding contribution made by the recipient, above and beyond that normally expected from someone of their rank and length of service. The citation for the award highlighted **WO1 Grimshaw's** quite exceptional enthusiasm, dedication and energy, and recognised the fact that since he joined the Regiment he has always led by example in a number of key posts. As well as holding the appointment of Senior Volunteer Warrant Officer, **WO1 Grimshaw** also commands the Regiment's Radio Troop based at Ilford and Southend. Older readers of *The WIRE* (and Chelsea Pensioners) may recognise **Mick** from his regular service, during which time he attained the rank of WO2. They may be assured to know that he has lost none of his ready wit, immaculate hair styling or the natural, indeed uncanny, instinct to disappear when it's his turn to buy the beer. Our sincere congratulations go out to **Mick**, and his wife **Sue**, for this richly deserved honour.

NATIONAL TA OPEN DAY - 25 MARCH 2000

The Regiment opened the doors of its TAC's to the public for the national TA open day on 25 March. A massive event, it was co-ordinated by the TAVRA (now RFCA) in order to publicise the role, and outline the benefits to individuals, of the Territorial Army. The total attendance at 350 centres across the country reached 57,383, which resulted in nearly 5,000 serious enquiries about a career in the Reserve Forces. All four Squadrons within the Regiment participated, and the following report from Colchester, in tandem with the notes from HQ Sqn, should serve to capture the flavour of events throughout UK.

45 (ESSEX) SIGNAL SQUADRON (COLCHESTER)

The open day proved to be very hectic for those members of 45 Sqn assigned to 'PR' duty. The PSAO, **Capt Rod Allen**, and **Sgt (PSI) Nigel Back** had worked extremely hard during the week leading up to the event, and all the TA personnel who attended on the day played their part to the full. All their effort has appeared to pay off, as 35 of the 300 members of the public who walked through the gates expressed a strong interest in joining 45 Sqn. Several VIP's supported the event, including the **Mayor of Colchester** and the two local Members of Parliament, the **Rt Hon B. Russell MP** and the **Rt Hon B. Jenkin MP**. Stands such as the indoor range and the Radio Tent proved to be particularly popular, with even the **Rt Hon B. Jenkin MP** willing to try his hand at a PRC 349, though the transducer headset didn't do much for his hairstyle!

Two competitions, one national and one local, ran in tandem on the day and were open to all members of the public (though not to the CO and RSM, much to their dismay). The local raffle, organised by 45 Sqn and awarded to five lucky winners, offered a sports bag, a certificate and a day out with the TA. The winner's day started gently enough with target practice on the indoor firing range, but **Sgt Nigel Back** soon had them transported to Friday Woods where they experienced different methods of survival training, made some improvised shelters and were taught a variety of trapping skills. The excitement mounted with some cross-country driver training, before a basic assault course rounded off a busy but fulfilling couple of hours.

STOP PRESS: As a result of this 'day out', 45 Sig Sqn has now increased its manpower by two new recruits!

Sgt Nigel Back shows competition winner Mr (now Signaller)Graeme Biggins the finer points of Army Life (photo is courtesy of the East Anglian Times, Evening Star & Associated Newspapers)

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON - ILFORD
Sqn Comd **Maj P. J. Minshall**
SSM **WO2 A. C. Wells**

Episode 2: (Or the continuing saga of Ilford Folk). Headquarters Squadron has continued to make progress with its transition to a lean mean fighting machine, however most is by using mirrors and double bluff, some one has fixed the RMO's Scales. What have we been up to since Episode 1. Well, we had the TA National Open Day, where we threw our doors open to the local community, the idea being that they would come in and meet us and be impressed enough with what they saw to queue up and join. Realism soon set in, however, when the first people through the gates were a young mother with three young children coming to see the soldiers shooting people, closely followed by an elderly lady and her 'mother. This enabled the PSAO (who is no spring chicken himself) to actually welcome some one below and above the age limits and explain why the Army Equal Opportunities policy did not stretch far enough to accommodate them. The open day was supported by our local branch of SSAFA, and **Maj (Ret'd) Barry Greenwood** of the Royal Signal Association (East London) Branch attended in his alter-ego as a former REME soldier to help out the LAD - divided loyalties indeed!!

Maj (Retd) Barry Greenwood demonstrates that he still wields a mean spanner to LCpl Gill Baynes AGC (LAD Clerk)
(Photo courtesy of the Ilford Recorder)

The outcome of the event was 11 positive enquires taken, of which one has since joined and another three will join in the near future. This coupled with unit efforts has enhanced the Sqn strength in our drive to achieve full recruiting.

Maj Peter Minshall greets the former LCpl Peter Arkell who he had not met for some 25 years
(Photo courtesy of the Ilford Recorder)

Ricky (with baseball cap) down the arches surrounded by several menacing East Enders – and WO2 (SSM) Tony Wells!
(Photo courtesy of the Ilford Recorder)

Another interesting aspect of the open day was the 'surprise guest', a la Cilla Black, who arrived at the front gate. A gentleman came in and shook **Maj Peter Minshall** by the hand (and to the soles of his boots); the former Lance Corporal, now Mr, **Peter Arkell** had been the then **LCpl Minshalls** detachment commander some 25 years ago. This immediately brought out some interesting stories of 'camps past', most of which for some reason the OC wanted to be kept quiet. Unfortunately for him, **Peter** has been recruited for the Royal Signals Association and all will soon be revealed. The winner of the Ilford Open Day competition was **Mr Ricky Spencer** (Well, it was his mother actually, but lets not quibble) and his prize was a weekend out with the Squadron during Ex Starburst III, more of which later.

The routine of life, as in any busy R SIGNALS Regiment, continues with Brigade Exercises in March and April, PRE in May, followed by RSIT in June. We look forward to more of the same with Ex Mars Marathon and the Regimental Military Skills Tournament, The Mountvoy Trophy in July as the prelude to our first UK Camp in three years at Castle Martin in South Wales. Arrivals and departures have thankfully been few in this period. We wish a warm welcome to **Cpl Alan Roberts AGC** into the RAO and RRTT - as an Ex-Cavalryman (now AGC) he is reassured by the presence of people around who occasionally wear spurs (but only in the privacy of their own home). Another auspicious arrival to the Squadron and Regiment is **Maj John Jenkins** RAMC - after a 15 year gap, we suddenly have a Medical Officer which will be a shock to the system of AMS/RAMC personnel scattered around the Regiment. He is definitely unique - a fit (ex-para) RMO who, in his mid forties, is still running marathons very quickly; stretcher races will take on a whole new meaning. Another resurrection from the ranks of the retired is **Sgt Les Eldridge** - Ex-39 Sig Regt (V), he has rejoined the TA at quite an advanced age to become the new SQMS (V) for the Squadron, a key post which he has filled extremely well from the outset. Perhaps the QM will now be a little happier. Another change to the Regimental and Squadron Orbat is **Maj John Nixon**, the old RAO (V), who has been transformed to become the new NRPS RAO. Regimental Administration will never be the same, we are already polishing our soccer boots and laying out the pitches on the grassed recreation area to the rear of the TAC.

EXERCISE SUMMER EAGLE – 14-16 APRIL 2000

Ex Summer Eagle is Commander 11 Sig Bde's annual CPX, designed to provide key unit personnel with an environment in which to practise and refine their command and control skills. The aim of the exercise was to practice the planning and C2 of an integrated Ptarmigan/Euromux network in order to develop the procedural expertise of 11 Sig Bde units. Elements of the Regiment deployed to Donnington, Altcar and Colchester with pencils sharpened, senses of humour honed and teddy bear slingshots ready, just in case. The Exercise proved invaluable in testing the Regiments C2 under CPX conditions and, although the period was extremely busy for the Commander, he still found time during a lull in battle to visit the furthest outpost of the Brigade (i.e. us!) at Colchester, which was much appreciated by all concerned.

EXERCISE STARBURST III – 14-16 APRIL 2000

Run concurrently with Ex Summer Eagle, Ex Starburst III was a military training exercise held on Stanford Training Area aimed at all remaining Regimental personnel. The theme of this year's weekend revolved around defence of a comms site, cam and concealment and low level tactics, with some interesting background activities thrown in for good measure. The exercise was to prove particularly interesting for **Ricky Spencer**, the young man who had won the HQ Sqn TA Open Day prize; he will certainly not forget the experience for some time to come. Saturday's training, which involved TEWT's and BL's on the camouflage and defence of a comms site, was conducted during fairly inclement weather which made the attitude of virtually all the soldiers concerned, TA and Regular, even more admirable. Many valuable lessons were learned, not least of which was the importance of Mr Gortex's marvellous invention. Sunday dawned bright and fair and the Regiment started the mornings training, consisting of three round robin stands, in high spirits. **Sgt John Kelly's** 'admin in the field' lesson proved to be of benefit to all concerned, whilst **Sgt Nigel** 'Three times in one issue – you know the score' **Back's** 'survival' stand was lapped up by all the budding Regimental Rambos (though not by the vegetarians). The high point (no pun intended) of the weekend for the majority of the soldiers, though, was definitely the opportunity to go for a cabby in **WO1 Bill Morris's** Gazelle, all the way from 666 Sqn AAC (V) in Netheravon. The training element of the flight was to confirm, from the air, the cam and concealment lessons learned over the weekend by comparing pre-prepared good and bad examples. The methods that Bill used to achieve this aim, however, proved to be most 'invigorating' to all concerned and I'm sure that several soldiers dined out on the experience during the weeks that followed. Our thanks go to **WO1 Morris** for his extremely wilco attitude and supreme flying skills. One interesting coincidence that occurred over this period was when **SSgt (SPSI) Gaz Sullivan** spotted one of his relatives whilst airborne (and nearly upside down), though none of us could quite work out what his Mother was doing on STANTA and why he should shout so loudly to/for her!

LAD (V) REME - EXERCISE ENDURING HELP 13/14 MAY 2000
Scribe: SSgt Dale

TEAM	CREW
ASM Roy Duffin	**Sgt Lee Grey**
AQMS Drew Johnston	**Cfn Steve Nichol**
SSgt Tony Dale (Capt)	
Sig Vinney Wotton	

Exercise aims were to:

a. Improve cross-country riding skills in the Military.
b. Test the endurance of both the rider and the motorcycle over harsh terrain.
c. Raise money for Children's and Military causes.

This annual sponsored 24hr cross-country motor cycle exercise has become a part of 36 Sig Regt (V) LAD's calendar. The event, as the name suggests, is run over a 24-hr period covering an 8.5km cross-country circuit. The team consists of four riders (which is open to interpretation!!!) who take it in turns to ride the one issued Army motor cycle around the circuit. We had a very competent pit crew who were there to keep not only the bike going but also team riders, and our thanks go to them.

The exercise pledged over £23,500 for both Childline and worthy Military causes. As a team we managed to raise over £200, and we thank all those who kindly sponsored us. We managed to finish a credible 29th out of 89, which for a team that ride just once a year we were very pleased with. The Exercise was cut short this year due to the unfortunate and untimely death of one of the competitors. As I write the cause of death is still unknown, but suffice it to say that all our condolences go out to his family and friends.

We managed to achieve all the aims that we set ourselves, albeit at the expense of a few bumps and bruises. The Exercise is open to anyone, and we fully intend to field another team of riders who think that it's a push over for next year's event; undoubtedly, they will be proved wrong again!

SSgt (SPSI) Dale returning with a modified set of handle bars

37 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col P. J. Grogan**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Fisher**

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

The CO, Lt Col 'My Ball, My Ball' **P. J. Grogan** has returned to work with a leg in plaster after a dangerous tackle while playing football with his sons. With Euro 2000 soon occurring his soccer skills will be severely missed by the country. The QM (V), **Capt John Byrne** has returned to the Regiment after surviving a tour in Kosovo. However, the suntan must be removed and a more suitable UK standard is to be worn in the future. The drive continues towards the Brigade Exercise. Detailed planning is underway of the Regimental Training Exercises in preparation for the annual camp. However, this is made more difficult as the Training Major is currently floating around the Solent in the Corps Regatta. More to follow. Congratulations go to **Capt Mel Cooper** and the Regimental shooting team who swept the board at the recent 5 Div Championship.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj J. Riley**
SSM **WO2 J. Krikorian**

The 5 Div Orienteering Championships were held in the Forest of Dean on Sunday 16 April 2000. The Regimental Team was out huffing and puffing through the trees, albeit small in numbers, led by **SSgt Fred Hughes** as usual. The competing teams were fewer this year, but the weather was fine and sunny, the ground was good to soft and the spirit competitive. The male team had some old stalwarts like **WO2 (SSM) Joe Krikorian** competing on the 'A' Course alongside newcomers like **Sgt Phil Hall**. **Joe** finished seventh individual overall, leaving **Phil** to continue looking for a couple of elusive markers. The female team, led by **Fred**, did exceptionally well. **SSgt Lucy Sewell** (67 Sqn) was placed third individual TA female champion, **Cpl Claire Brain** finished with a personal best time and **Sgt Sue Machin** made her debut appearance on the 'D' Course alongside **Sgts Roz Thwaites** and **Julie Brooks** (67 Sqn). The day was won by NI UOTC, with second place going to 89 Sig Sqn and 37 Sig Regt taking third position. Well done to all involved.

96 SIGNAL SQADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj R. Bowden**
SSM **WO2 C. Taylor**

It must be something in the air at the moment as 96 Sig Sqn (V) seems to have got the wedding bug! First it was the turn of **Capt Jonathan Farmer** who took the plunge on 1 April… Our congratulations go to both **Jonathan** and **Sue** whilst the latter almost certainly also deserves our sincere sympathy and understanding! Whilst I managed to attend the wedding in Wisbech I unfortunately found myself unable to attend the evening party; thereby missing the drunken entertainment that ensued with rather senior gentlemen being escorted to hotels by members of the Cambridgeshire constabulary… On behalf of the Squadron we wish both **Sue** and **Jonathan** all the best for the future.

By the time this goes to press it will be the turn of two other members of the Squadron to get married - this time to each other! **SSgt Julie Brookes** and **LCpl Steve Tuck** will finally take the plunge at Coventry on 3 June. **SSgt Brookes** is the Squadron Yeoman whilst **LCpl Tuck** is a member of the tea break fraternity (tech). Whilst this represents what we are certain will be the happiest day in both their lives, as the date coincides with a Regimental weekend we are hoping that the soon to be **Mrs Tuck** does not expect to be paid for this particular 'exercise'. Our best wishes for an excellent day go from all members of both the Squadron and Regiment and we look forward to seeing the photos. I can only hope that after **LCpl Tuck's** stag night adventures in Blackpool that he does not let his best man **LCpl Rob Mullins** near the parcel tape on the big day. I don't think I had better comment further upon those escapades except to say that we are waiting to see those photos as well as those of the wedding itself…

Further congratulations are due yet again for the prior mentioned future **Mrs Tuck** as she has now been promoted to Staff Sergeant. Well done **Julie**.

96 had good representation in the Regimental Team which performed so well in the recent Corps SAAM. **SSgt Convery, LCpl Wibberley, LCpl Mullins, Sig Wastell** and **Sig Clarkson** all performed extremely well to help the team towards an excellent result. Well-done people!

The now Capt and Mrs Farmer on their big day

Are you receiving your copy of The WIRE?

38 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNALS REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS
CO **Lt Col Nigel Harrison MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Steve Carr**

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Bill Evans TD**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Clive Howland**

EXERCISE WORKUP 2000

HQ Sqn conducted the first Pre-Staff Sergeants' Training Course. The course comprises of three weekends and is designed to enhance the student's knowledge on all things military. The first weekend of the course consisted of all the academic subjects covered in the Royal Signals Staff Sergeants' Course. The second weekend predominately tests and tasks, such things as producing range letters and admin orders. This caused consternation and much scratching of heads. The final weekend involved tactics and navigation in the field. After a beautiful Friday the weather deteriorated rapidly on deployment and during the small hours of Saturday morning **Sgt Paul O'Mally** led the first patrol with **Sgt Helen Mountney** as his 2IC to meet a friendly agent. Unfortunately, they were unaware of a 'mass grave' en route, **Helen** shouting, 'Look at all them bodies,' **Sgt Graham Roberts** pointing out that it was a pile of mannequins in the valley of Risdale Beck (anyone from the Catterick days will know where that is!). During this patrol the enemy commander, **Cpl Harry Harrop**, after carefully briefing his soldiers, set his ambush and waited. Of course, the wily candidates managed to outwit them and returned to meet that friendly agent, who just happened to have the kettle on. The next phase of the Exercise was the wood clearance exercise and due to a lack of human resources the SSM, **WO2 Clive Howland**, was forced to participate as the enemy. After several bayonet charges he called time on that one and emerged battered and bruised from the woods. After lunch many sets of orders were given and listened to by both cadre and candidates alike. The night navigation exercise was a success with all candidates achieving good navigational skills, although with slightly wet feet. All round a good course which, hopefully, will stand the soldiers well on their course.

BECKINGHAM RANGE WEEKEND 25-27 FEBRUARY 2000

The Squadron deployed to Beckingham for the annual wash up of military training. As usual the weekend went well with ranges, NBC, first aid, and a CFT to round off the day. The range coaching was certainly successful with all of the Sqn managing to pass their APWT with the background activities being completed in good time. Unfortunately the NBC stand found **Sgt Barry Baldwin** besieged by an angry crowd of sheep baying for his blood (that'll teach him to gas them!). Later on during the CFT the old Q, **SSgt (SQMS) Andy** 'Thumper' **Thwaites**, was found puffing away for breath and **Capt Phil Simmons** puffing away on a fag, again all passed.

The evening of the Saturday was the yearly Squadron social event where we say farewell to members of the Squadron and this year was no different. We sadly said goodbye to **Maj Linda White** who has decided that she needs to spend more time with her children. We also dined out **Mr Ted Hurt** who has completed 40 camps with the Regiment both as a TA soldier and as a civilian employee. Last but not least we say farewell to **Sgt Frank Delaney**, the Regimental Provost Sergeant who struck fear into the hearts of many a soldier, not to mention some of the patrons of the Elm Tree public house. The dinner went well with special thanks to **WO2 Medley**, the Master Chef, for staying away – the food was great – and also to **WO2 (SSM) Clive Howland** for buying all the port (Good Lad!).

A TERRITORIAL SOLDIER'S PERSPECTIVE ON BOSNIA
by Cpl Tony Jakins (Chef)

On 26 July 1999 I was deployed as part of a national mobilisation of TA and Reservist personnel. After three weeks training at the Reserves Training and Mobilisation Centre (RTMC), Chilwell, near Nottingham, on Monday 17 August 1999 we flew out of RAF Brize Norton heading for Split. After a short delay all personnel were then deployed to their respective units in Bosnia. My post was at the Banja Luka Metal Factory, Multi-National Division (South West) (BLMF MND (SW)), Banja Luka. BLMF is the home of MND (SW) and Signal Regiment, which is primarily run by the British at this time. It is based in and around a large, disused, steel rolling mill, which on first impression seems very daunting. My first thought was that it was going to be like being back in the Regular forces; I was wrong! There was certainly an element of animosity towards TA and Reservists. Initially I had several 'run ins' with both junior and senior ranks on the question of reliability and training of TA/Reservists. I am confident that having put my opinion across in such a way, I managed to change some people's attitude towards members of the reserve forces. Once the initial problems were overcome, few hassles were incurred, and everyone settled down to get on with the job.

As a chef, once you get used to a new kitchen and the systems, the job is the same wherever you work, and Bosnia is no different. On arrival I was set the task of re-working the pastry/sweet menu in the Junior Ranks Mess as well as producing pastries/sweets for 500 very hungry soldiers and Locally Employed Civilians (LECs). After approximately five weeks, due to my field experience I was deployed with the Royal Engineers' Diving Team for a 1-week diving expedition. On return from the expedition I was relocated to the BLMF Combined Mess, which is responsible for feeding senior ranks, officers and dignitaries of many nationalities. A position had arisen due to a corporal having broken his wrist during 'Chefs' Sport'. Chefs played sport every Tuesday and Thursday morning before work and we didn't believe in 'non-contact' sports, so there were always a couple of injuries. The Combined Mess was very different from the Junior Ranks Mess in the fact that whatever happened in the kitchen could be seen by the diners as it was a very open kitchen. You also had more contact with the hierarchy of the camp as everyone came down the servery because there was no steward service as there is in a normal officers' mess. Although I worked long hours, I thoroughly enjoyed my time in the Combined Mess, especially from 1 December as I was the only Corporal, which meant that I was in charge of the kitchen on a day-to-day basis. I returned to the UK in mid-January at the end of my tour, when I was demobilised.

My overall opinion of Bosnia and the TA role as a back up to the Regular Army is somewhat mixed. Bosnia, on the whole, is starting to get a foothold on controlling its own destiny, but it will still need help for some time to come - although I don't think that there will ever be harmony in a region that has known conflict of many varying types for some 4000 years. As for the TA, I think that elements of the Regular Army needs to have its attitudes changed, to realise that we are there to support them. The TA needs to be brought more into line with the Regular Army, both in equipment and training. I also feel that the Regular Army and the TA should train together more to break down any barriers and to form a solid unity instead of the sometimes lingering hint of resentment and distrust.

MEDAL AND COMMENDATION PRESENTATION

A Medal and Commendation presentation took place at Manor Top TAC, Sheffield in March this year. **Maj Gen A. H. Boyle CB**, the Regimental Honorary Colonel kindly presented the Medals and Commendation to the following personnel:

Maj Rod Lingard	-	Territorial Decoration
WO2 (RQMS) Gary Cundy	-	Clasp to the TA Efficiency Medal
SSgt Phil Horton	-	Clasp to the TA Efficiency Medal
Sgt Trish Pinches	-	Territorial Efficiency Medal
Sgt Sally Burton	-	Territorial Efficiency Medal
Sgt Gill Parker	-	Clasp to the TA Efficiency Medal
Mr Duncan Ross	-	Meritorious Service Medal
Sgt Warren Quinn	-	GOC 2 Div Commendation

The families of all recipients were present and the presentation was followed by a buffet and drinks in the WO's & Sgt's Mess.**EXERCISE**

(L-R): Sgt Quinn, Sgt Parker, SSgt Horton, WO2 Cundy, Maj Gen Boyle, Sgt Pinches, Sgt Burton, Maj Lingard, Mr Duncan Ross

NORTHERN BLUEBELL

Exercise Northern Bluebell was the Comd ES 2 Div's competitive training exercise for REME in 2 Div, over the weekend 5–7 May 2000.The competitive exercise was open to all regular, Territorial Army (TA) and University Officer Training Corps (UOTC) REME soldiers.

At the beginning of the year the OC distinctly told me that the LAD was going to concentrate all their efforts into the shooting competitions for the Millennium. After all last year's Warcop Trophy was a total walk over for the LAD. That was until the reshuffle of the 2 Div and the enlargement of its geographical area! The OC told me there was to be a change of plan for the LAD's activities. He thought it would be good idea to test the metal of the LAD against any new possible competition. The monthly training programmes were rewritten; they would have to include more revision of our key corps skills if we were going to keep our reputation alive. **Sgt Ray Boulton** and **Cpl Frank Reid** would have to start scratching their already balding heads if the LAD were to crack the two engineering projects devised by **Maj Soper**. The Tricyclops and the Formula 1 style speed lift. These two thorns in our side took up over an incredible 300 man hours, about four pints of blood, at least two physical breakdowns and some interesting arguments as everyone introduced their own ideas, often all at once. 'You don't wanna do it like that, you wanna do it like this' became the favourite saying.

The venue for Exercise Northern Bluebell 2000 was Warcop Training Camp. The weather was very unusual; the sun was shining with a light wind, most unusual for this area. Saturday started early with reveille at 05:30hrs for breakfast. The competition started at 07:00hrs with 22 teams all heading off in pairs in their team Land Rovers to locations dotted around the training area. At each location the teams were met by the stand host and briefed on what they had to achieve. The stands were all completely different varying from the standard Army Training Directive (ATD) type, NBC, First Aid, AFV recognition. To the physically demanding, assault course, command task and trailer race, to the REME orientated trade stands, recovery, local manufacture and Battle Damage Repair (BDR). Saturday evening was devoted to the Tricyclops race around Warcop Camp. The field was a mixed bunch of machines ranging from the three-wheeled cycle to the wheely bin skip to the helicopter. Our Tricyclops wasn't the fastest vehicle but it was the best engineered according to the judges and won a bottle of whisky for our troubles. The racing was a knock out competition with the first two machines going into the final. It looked like it was a dead heat between 'The Millennium Falcon' and 'The Batmobile'. Unfortunately The Batmobile had an accident on the start/finish straight, causing Batman and Robin to make a valiant but unsuccessful run around the circuit. It was an outsider that eventually took the checked flag after 'The Millennium Falcon' got into a speed wobble and mounted a kerb, demolishing its front wheels.

The Sunday was another early start with the sun shining down on the assembled teams for penultimate stand. The 2.5- mile trailer race, after which came the 3-mile bergan carry to the range for the finale and the falling plate shoot. The jockey wheel that had been repaired the previous day on the BDR stand was to be used to replace the wheel on the fl ton trailer. Would **Sgt Johnson** and **Sgt Thorpe's** BDR stand up to the punishment that was about to be inflicted on it? We were summoned to the start line in pairs to race against each other, briefed on the route and given a brain teasing question paper we had to answer on route. I'd already briefed the team that it was going to a tough race. Somehow I think they knew that. We started out fast leaving our rivals behind within the first 400m. I knew the pace was fast and the lads would soon begin to struggle. I honestly thought **Capt Simmons** was going to collapse, being a heavy smoker didn't help. On reaching the turn around point we left the trailer and began the slog back. **Cpl Elliot** began shouting out the Mensa style questions, the answers to which took a while to shout a reply as most of the team needed all the air they could take in to keep them moving forward. The shoot comprised of a 60-metre advance down the range from the seated position to the prone position and engage the ten white plates in the fastest possible time using the least ammunition. The team managed to achieve this in an amazing 21 seconds to cheers from the admin/support team of **Sgts Boulton, Morrit, Cpls Allen** and **Hall** and **Cfn Wilde**. It was then that I thought back to the OC's initial comments that the shooting competitions hadn't been going very well! Who was he kidding? I think I was duped into another hard weekend. Just what I didn't need after successfully competing in the Regiments Lanyard Trophy Team. No worries - all in a weeks work when you're a Permanent Staff Instructor (PSI) at a TA unit.

The winning TA Team and their trophies
(L-R): SSgt Longman, Cpl Reid, Capt Simmons (OC) Cpl Elliot, Sgt Johnson, Sgt Thorpe
Best TA Team, The Gillanders Trophy, The Warcop Trophy, The REME Association Challenge Trophy, Overall Runners Up

46 (CITY OF DERBY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)
Sqn Comd **Maj Bob Ward**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Jim Batchelor**

The Squadron has been busy, starting early in the year with our officers and SNCO 'Think Tank' at the Totley Adventure Training Centre in Derbyshire. Syndicates looked at a variety of problems involving Squadron life and came up with some interesting solutions. It was an ideal opportunity for our new Squadron Commander, **Maj Bob Ward**, to stamp his authority on his management team. The inevitable function at the local pub on Saturday night was enjoyed by everyone. The next day found the syndicates presenting their findings to the new Squadron Commander and much of what was presented is now incorporated into Squadron training. In March the Squadron, along with the rest of the Territorial Army, opened the TAC doors for its annual open day. The general public flooded into the TAC to look at what we do. Visitors included **Cllr Sara Bolton**, the Mayor of Derby, who took time from her busy schedule to join us for lunch. First of all, she visited the stands followed by our Operations Room where she spoke over our 'Bosnia Link' to **Sgt Darren Snow**, currently in Banja Luka. Our successful link to Bosnia gave **Cpl Leanne Snow** a chance to talk to her husband. Other Squadron members spoke to **LCpl Rob Bromwich**, also serving in Bosnia on Full-Time Reserve Service. At lunch the Mayor presented the Anderson family with a cheque for £500 which the Squadron, suitably encouraged by **SSgt Freeman**, had collected over the year. The cheque will go towards equipment to help with **Sara's** treatment.

The Mayor talks to Sgt Darren Snow before handing over to Cpl Leanne Snow for a chat with her husband

Mrs Sue Anderson with children Ami and Sara receive the cheque from the Lord Mayor of Derby, flanked by the Officer Commanding, Major Bob Ward and Staff Sergeant 'TC' Freeman

exhaustion', the Squadron technicians reputedly got the most exercise they had ever had. After the second successful move of all detachments, one seemed to be surprisingly well camouflaged. In fact, the enemy could not locate them in the exercise area. This was until the enemy realised that EXCON in the form of an exhausted and overworked (and under-appreciated) **Lt** 'Baden' **M-P** sent two detachments to the same location, which wasn't the one the enemy was at. At least the detachments were company for each other in the long cold night!

Countless attacks by the Mythical Technicians later, the exercise was called to a halt and surprisingly, no matter how difficult communications had been for each detachment during the exercise, every detachment managed to communicate with EXCON long enough to get the ENDEX instruction. An enjoyable but demanding exercise then concluded with a well deserved rest and a drink in the JRC to congratulate **Sig** 'DJ Newsounds' **Newson** on his 32nd birthday (although he still maintains he is still 29!). After this most enjoyable exercise 64 Sqn will now turn its attentions to the planning and execution of the next ABF Golf Competition, and Exercise Executive Stretch.

87 (CITY OF NOTTINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)
Sqn Comd **Maj David Tomlinson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Vicky Hardy**

As the end of the Bounty Year rapidly approached everyone was

zooming around making every effort to qualify. The Squadron went to Swynnerton Training Area recently to undertake an ITD training weekend. This went very well and was well attended, with everyone achieving his or her required BQ subjects. It just goes to prove how a thousand tax free pounds can concentrate the mind. **Cpl Ibby** 'Beast Em' **Nevill** appeared to be thoroughly enjoying herself, in the end she conducted three CFTs over the weekend. Once is a duty, twice an imposition, three times verges on a fetish. **Cpl Dion** 'PPPick a Penquin' **Brittain** has just returned from a 6-month tour of South Georgia. Welcome back! The TA Centre looks like a building site at the moment, but we are grateful to TAVRA really! As the new roof will hopefully mean a warmer building. However, the duty rumour is that the PSAO, **Capt Ken Scott** is really just weighing in the scrap lead. Reports of sightings of new golf clubs only adds to suspicion.

OPEN DAY

The Squadron took part in the TA Day on 25 March. The weather was kind to us and we had a fair number of locals come in to see exactly we do! The Chairman of Nottinghamshire County Council, **Cllr Ken Stobbart**, came to see for himself. As an ex-member of the Corps he was impressed with both the personnel and our equipment. The day did result in a number of people who are definitely interested in joining, this made the day a success! Sadly we say farewell to **Sgt Colin Pullen**, our PSI (T) who has left the Squadron to go and work in Sheffield (allegedly some work is done at Sheffield, but the jury remains out). Hope he is enjoying himself (lots of PCs to play with). Congratulations to him also on being selected for promotion to Staff Sergeant, Well done! Whatever you're doing, we suggest you keep doing it. We welcome **SSgt Phil Newman** who joins us from SHAPE. Hope he settles in quickly, before he disappears to do a stint at the centre of the universe, 'Corsham'. During the recent refurbishment, we have thought about adding a revolving door to the tech workshop, marked for 'For PSI(T) use only'! Having served with the TA before, we are sure he will slot right in with our particular brand of madness. Its' not compulsory, but it does help.

EXERCISE BLUE DAWN

On a recent CPX, **OCdt Ady** 'Puzzled of Nottingham' **Matthews** had rather a steep learning curve. Quite innocent questions started with 'What's a CEI', and generally deteriorated from there. To clear up any confusion, **Capt (Tfc) Thelma Ward** is a Traffic Officer of the Royal Corps of Signals. NOT a policewomen in the traffic division. Of course it was an easily made mistake, and I am sure we did not all mean to laugh. We promise not to tell anyone, or put this in the *Wire Notes* or anything. Life for an Officer Cadet is unfairly cruel. But who said life was fair!

39th (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col J. Crackett TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) P. Anderson**

5th (QUEEN'S OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON - BANBURY & OXFORD
Sqn Comd **Maj Rob Stone**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Philips**

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

We welcome to the Squadron Potential Signallers **Ann Edwards**, **James Cox**, **Louise Harnett**, **Mathew Luker**, **Trevor Bennett**, **James Clarke**, **Tanja Kollner**, **Adrian Parsler** and **John Turner**. We also welcome back into the fold **Sgt** 'Robbie' **Hall** who was actually seen in uniform and congratulate him on passing his Foreman's Course. We also say goodbye to **LCpl Dean Smithson** and wish him well on his Marine Commando Course. Congratulations go to the 'Girly Swot' of a PSI OPS, **SSgt Mark Simcock** on gaining a Distinction on his Edjamication Course.

RECRUIT SELECTION

Following the National Recruiting Campaign culminated by the TA Centre Open Day on 25 March 2000 the Squadron took ten potential recruits to the 'Look at Life ' Selection at Bramley over the weekend 5-7 May 2000. This being the first rain free, wind free, frost free sunny weekend of the year the recruits enjoyed the early morning training and late evening socialising.

The Long and Short of it
Recruits Mathew Luker, 6' 6" ad Louise Harnett 4' 10"

5 Sqn potential recruits at Bramley

Sig Simon Thomas receiving congratulations on his Passing Out from Col Chris Laurence TD, Deputy Commander 2 Sig Bde

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)
Sqn Comd **Maj R. Tuhey TD**
SSM **WO2 P. Packer**

EXERCISE TEN TORS – DARTMOOR

The famous Ten Tors Challenge took place over the weekend 12–14 May 2000, involving 2400 participants. This annual event now in its 41st year started for Army Cadets in 1959 and opened up to teenagers at schools and colleges the following year. The minimum age is 14 for the shortened course of 35 miles, up to 55 miles for the senior age groups over the full course. The number of entries is limited for safety reasons and an event for less able children, called the Jubilee Challenge, was launched in 1977. This event is not a race but a challenge involving a two-day trek across Dartmoor, one of the foremost events in the parks calendar. The army, whose Okehampton Training Camp is the base for organisers and

the all important starting and finishing point, handles the administration.

Our own involvement this year headed up by 57 (City and County of Bristol) Signal Squadron (Volunteers) members (and myself **WO2 Dickie Lee** as the author, a paying guest from HQ Sqn) both from Bristol, required the provision of volunteers to not only man the COMMCEN, with radio, phone and data entries as in previous years, but also the manning of three TORS and provision of a Mould back-up to the new Radio system called Dolphin Tetra. This was being trialled for the first time on such a large deployment. Our numbers totalled some 50 officers and soldiers.

The weekend started promptly at 1930hrs on the Friday night with vehicles traveling from both Bristol and Gloucester. Meeting up at Okehampton Camp for comms and admin briefings. First concerns were expressed as a result of an early mobile phone call by **Sig Emma Wells**, that the weather had already closed in on the camp and helicopters had been grounded. This was only the Friday evening, the 2I/C Sqn, **Capt** 'Bill' **Ruthven** asking 'What exit of the M5 for Okehampton?' was a little worrying. **WO2 Jane Tuck**, newly promoted to SSM, also managed to leave behind **Lt Jason Fensome**, who eventually joined us having found a spare Land Rover with **Sgt Mike White**. The driving skills of **LCpl Sam Estcourt** have to be mentioned, as I believe her Land Rover only travels in the middle lanes of the motorway.

The Tor parties were **Cpl Dave Jones, Sig Emma Wells, LCpl Alex McMurray, LCpl Steve Allen, LCpl Roger Theyer** and **Sig Alexia Holloway** who were air lifted to their locations and although heard, were not to be seen again till Sunday afternoon. The MIV crews consisted of **Sgt Mike White, LCpl Martin Dyer, LCpl Alistair MacGilp, LCpl Tony Hedges** and **LCpl Paul Wylde. LCpl Martin Davies**, our duty tech, supported them. Reveille was early at 0600hrs for the competitors and earlier still for the Squadron, well at least half of them unless they watched the start at 0700hrs up on the moor, outside the camp perimeter. The weather was 'Beautiful', clear skies and for once no mist. A welcoming speech, two buglers from the Light Infantry and Devon and Dorset's, plus a salvage from 29 Commando heralded the mass start in three directions to the distant Tors. The challenge was on.

The shifts settled into their routine quickly, receiving Progreps by phone, radio and fax as the teams progressed along their respective routes. Other tasks where given to various members of the squadron with **Lt Rod Hook** sent to liaise with the 'Fly Boys' for our annual 'flight in a chopper', now becoming a popular add on with the troops. His success meant that four of the new recruits namely **Sig Joanne Christensen, Sig Darren Saunders, Sig Chris Walker** plus **Sig Robert Laing** and **Lt Jo Howard** went airborne in a Sea King. Not bad for the recruits who had only come off their Delta Weekend the week before. Other notable incidents outside of the communicating field saw **Sig Chris Howells** eating too many pies and ending up in the medical center, **Sig** 'Spanner' **Kane** surpassing himself by liking radio, data and phone, **LCpl Dave Smith** became very keen and worked both shifts, **Cpl Steve Holley** always with his head in a magazine eventually went deaf to the phones and of course our **Sgt Mena Zamparelli** was seen modelling the new Radio Kit outside on her own (with the photographer of course). We were told it was for PR purposes, only time will tell! Sunday saw the first team finishing at 0930hrs. All teams arrived safely back by the cut off time of 1700hrs and all in all it was yet again a very successful weekend for the Squadron.

A visit by the Commanding Officer to the Data Collection Cell

71 (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT BEXLEYHEATH

CO **Lt Col C. H. Turner**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) C. D. Tait**

Welcome back to **John Aspinall** who has just returned from four months as the Camp Commandant of the Metal Factory in Banja Luka and welcome to **Trevor Keates** who takes over as QM in June. In April **Maj Eric Heritage** married **Kathy** and we wish them all the very best of luck. The 'art' of Yeomanry Dress still confounds the CO and in an attempt to reconcile this years fashion he asked the Kent and County of London Yeomanry to confirm their Summer 2000 ready-to-wear range

In this Regiment uniform is a noun not an adjective
The KCLY officers show that they really cannot dress alike.
(L-R): WO2(SSM) Stuart McHenery, Maj Hugh Robertson, Maj Simon Malik, Capt Huw Jones, 2Lt Richie Woodhams, 2Lt Alex Downing

HQ (KENT AND COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY) SQUADRON – BEXLEYHEATH
Sqn Comd **Maj Barrie Corfield**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Andy Church**

So, what's HQ Squadron been up to lately? Well, in early March we took part in the KCLY centenary Freedom of Croydon parade. Up at 0500hrs, on the coach, drive half way round the M25 and then find that the SSM's best boots are still in his office at Bexleyheath! Go back to Bexley, but finally reach the Royal Yeomanry TAC in time for breakfast, a quick rehearsal (why do the regulars need weeks to prepare for these things when we do it in minutes) and then off round Croydon. A faultless eyes right to the Mayor and then back to Bexleyheath for lunch and the PRE preparation weekend. Next we provided the Admin support for London District's TA patrol competition, the Courage Trophy. This task is usually given to a Regiment. Nevertheless our admin cell reduced our old rivals (next year's administrators) the Royal Yeomanry to a mixture of admiration and worry as to how they could do as well when it's their turn. Meanwhile, the rest of the Squadron ran around trouble shooting, providing taxis, their PA system and of course the tent erection team. This happy band proved that not only could they move a '84x12' tent when the organisers changed their minds about the layout for the prize giving, but also that they could clear it away almost as soon as the prizes had been awarded.

HELLOS & FAREWELLS

We are sorry to be losing some old faces from the Squadron over the next few weeks – **Capts Huw Jones** and **Sarah Shelton** leave us for RARO and **Capt Dave Thomson** (RMO), **SSgt Kerry Jones** and **LCpl Dave Bell** have all retired. The Squadron wishes them all good luck in the future. On the other hand we welcome our first PSO, **Capt Mike Gleeson**, formerly of the RGJ via 35 Sig Regt (V). He's settling in and now marches at the right speed although we're still trying to explain that Signallers (and Yeomanry ones at that) come in squadrons and not companies. Finally we reach early May and Ex Norfolk Haze at the STANTA NBC centre. For two days the Squadron blotted, banged and rubbed as **Sgt Jeff Masters** and the resident instructors let rip with a variety of suspicious mists, smokes and splashes. Plenty of fullers earth, a stretcher race and all on a lovely summer's day too. Then back to the accommodation for tea and to

watch the cup final which **LCpl Mark** 'Gadget man' **Butler** had thoughtfully taped for us.

Capt Huw Jones
realises that this is the last time he'll have to wear IPE. Ever!

LIGHT AID DETACHMENT REME
OC LAD **Capt Julie Kiggell**
SPSI **SSgt** 'Teflon' **Tomlinson**

EXERCISE SOUTHERN CRAFTSMAN

A team of ten from the 71 (Y) Sig Regt LAD took part in the Southern Craftsman competition, held once again at Longmoor Camp on 7/8/9 April. The team was put through its paces during a series of challenges and tasks designed to test military skills, REME trade skills, fitness and initiative. From the moment of arrival, the tests had begun with a challenge to design and build a piece of equipment that could fire golf balls – only using a few given pieces of building material. The team excelled not only by gaining a 100% score, but holding the record for firing the projectiles the furthest.

On Saturday, the teams were put through battlefield repair tasks (including Tels and a 105mm Light Gun) – all in tactical environments, a manufacture project and a recovery task. A 'Bosnia scenario' First Aid stand was won by 71 (Y) Sig Regt LAD enabling the team to use their military skills. Having completed a busy schedule on Saturday, the team's stamina, teamwork and shooting ability were tested in a 4-mile March and Shoot Competition, the course also incorporating Longmoor's famous FIBUA tunnels and a repair task thrown in for good measure!

As a result of achieving top marks in almost all of the repair tasks, the LAD won the Martin Brown Repair Trophy – one of the major prizes. The LAD team were: **Capt Kiggell, Sgt Harding, Sgt Gosling, Cpl Hursey, Cpl Aldridge, Cpl Carpenter, Cpl Pearce, LCpl Mountford, Cpl Vaughan** and **Cfn Holness.**

70 (ESSEX YEOAMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON CHELMSFORD AND HARLOW
Sqn Comd **Maj Craig Tallents**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Paul Humphreys**

The Squadron has been through a busy period over the last few months with Squadron training, PRE (under the watchful eye of **WO2 Richard Pieper** the Squadron achieved a good report), hectic social activities and a change of PSOs.

TRAINING

Starting with Squadron training. The Squadron organised Ex Rovers Return, which comprised of three communication style stands scattered over the east of England. The troops passed through stands and navigated to the next. A testing Exercise but with an element of fun.

Sig Harrison (L) and LCpl Pilcher (R)
Making a quick phone call home during Ex Rovers Return

SOCIAL

WOW!!! What a social life the Squadron has 'suffered' over the last few months. The Officers with their Annual Association Dinner at the Calvary and Guards club in London in April, followed by the Corp dinner at the Savoy in May. The SNCO's had a 'Chinese' night to welcome **RSM Douggie Tait**. Last but by no means least the soldiers of the Squadron organised a very successful Bounty Ball in April and out thanks go to **SSgt Jim Swain**, his wife **Gillian** and the committee for all their hard work.

'Smile for the Camera.' (RSM Douggie Tait (left) and
WO2 (SSM) Humphreys during the SNCO's Chinese Night

WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS

The Squadron welcomes **LCpl Kelly Cloughton** and **Sig Ross Nugent** on their safe return from a very successful Op Agricola tour. We welcome **Capt Barry James** as our new PSAO who came to us from 265 (KCLY) Sig Sqn. We wish him and his wife **Chris** a happy tour with us.

A sad day for the Squadron as we say farewell to **Capt Charlie** 'Westham' **Homewood** on his retirement from the position of PSAO which he held for nine years with great professionalism. Also we wave goodbye to **Sgt Daz Lane** our PSI (T) as he has been transferred to 265 (KCLY) Sig Sqn.

265 (KENT AND COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON - BEXLEYHEATH
Sqn Comd **Maj Hugh Robertson**
SSM **WO2 Stuart McHenery**

EXERCISE MINK GLOVE

Friday 14 April had arrived and it was time to depart for the fabled Eastmere OBUA Village at Thetford. This would be the Squadron's introduction to Urban Operations. We were joined by members of HQ Sqn for this joint Exercise. The Squadron was spoilt by the luxury of civilian coaches for the journey. On arrival it was time for a quick brief from the 2IC, **Capt Keith** 'DP' **Duffy-Penny,** then it was heads down ready for the early start next morning.

First thing after breakfast it was time for the Squadron to meet the chief of the Permanent Staff, the inimitable **WO1 K. C.** 'Casey' **Jones,** with more stories than Hans Christian Anderson, all of them entertaining and pertinent to the day's training. The Squadron sat enthralled throughout the Safety Brief and were ready for action once it had finished.

WO2 Stewart 'TAZ' McHenery describes the Chorley Grenade
as Cpl Paul'Yorkie' York and Sgt Dave 'Sparky' Pryke
look on in awe

The morning was spent learning the defensive elements of OBUA under the expert teachings of **Sgt Martin** 'Chippy' **Foy, Sgt Mike** 'The Tube' **Warrington** and **Cpl Paul** 'Yorkie' **York.** The name on most peoples lips at lunchtime appeared to be that of the Confidence Course maestro **LCpl Adrian** 'Weeble' **Keeble** who was putting everyone through their paces up roof, down roof, in window, up wall and down cellar.

Concern sets in as the Troops are entrusted with
the Chorley Grenades and primers
Note: 'Not many laughs to be seen'

A sumptuous Rat Pack lunch followed the morning's festivities to prepare all and sundry for the afternoon onslaught. It was now time for **WO2 Andy** 'Penfold' **Church** to show the Squadron his infantry past by teaching the various methods of entering a building uninvited, ably assisted by a very slick display team made up of some of the more mature members of the Squadron. This was followed by herds of practice grenade throwers, with some stunning displays seeing grenades disappear over rooftops, although it would seem that the OC was unsure if he was left or right handed.

The day's instruction soon drew to a close and the Squadron was moved to its night harbour area to prepare to put all the practice to good use on a dawn assault. At the helm for the assault was **2Lt Richie** 'Chrome' **Done Woodhams** ready and willing to show the Troops his style and panache. The orders phase was completed and all pers were suitably pumped up for the next morning's activities. At 0430hrs all assault teams were laying on the Start Line awaiting H Hour. Then all hell let loose with buildings set on fire and armoured vehicles taking hits from the simulated Arty barrage. Then the assault commenced for real with troops dashing off in all directions with many a ladder in hot pursuit. All obstacles were expertly crossed and suppressive fire laid down where appropriate, enabling a slick move into the first house, much to the frustration of **LCpl Dickie Dundas** who then became the Pl Cmdrs link man and unable to join the rest of his merry men in the assault. It could have been a clip from 'Saving Private Ryan' such was the professional job that was being done. The remainder of the assault continued without a hitch and the village was successfully brought back under our control. All enjoyed this extremely tiring weekend even though the weather could have been kinder to us.

EXERCISE STALLION SPAR 2

The weekend commencing 12 May saw the Squadron deploy on an NCRS Exercise. The objective of the Exercise was to refresh the Squadron on NCRS Det skills in the run up to a Regimental Exercise in July and Annual Camp in September. The SCP deployed to Northern Court Farm on the Cinque ports Training Area, where the Squadron O Gp was held for the Tp Comds. The Squadron was deploying a NMC together with two out stations. The skills were a little rusty at first but soon gathered momentum as the Exercise progressed.

The NMC was joined for the first time by the new Sqn chefs, **Cpl Pete** 'Johnny' **Sturman** and **Cpl Mandy** 'Fanny' **Shannon**, who managed to concoct a variety of special dishes throughout the weekend and they have promised that every night on Exercise at Annual Camp will be a theme night. We look forward to this with baited breath. The MT Sergeant will probably not want to be named as the man who bogged down the DAF containing the SCP although his face was partially saved when the FRT saviours jumped in and just drove it out. The remainder of the weekend went without a hitch. The one piece of good news that did come out of the Exercise was the trial of an additional Traffic mast which could cut the antenna erection time down by about an hour, watch this space!!!

REGIMENTAL SHOOTING TEAM NEWS
Team Captain **2Lt Woodhams**

The theme of the Team Captain's speech, at the Regimental Team dinner, back in October 1999 was that of change. Firstly changes in the Team Captaincy, having taken over from **Maj Barrie Corfield** OC HQ Sqn at the close of last season. It was always going to be a hard act to follow. **Maj Barrie Corfield's** superb efforts over the years have led to a well-stocked trophy cabinet. Finally our dear old 'Hut', the Inns of Court pavilion at Bisley will be receiving a major renovation toward the end of the season. This thanks mainly to the Worshipful Company of Drapers, plus several Ex Regimental members and the PSI's who have devoted money, time and effort into the 'Hut' that has served the team well for decades. Generally, change can be hard to cope with, yet the team members coped admirably despite 2000 proving to be a difficult year for access to quality ranges and fitting the extra-curricular training required, into busy Squadron Diaries. Certainly **Maj (Retd) Bob Hutchins** of the ATE at Pirbright has always had our best interests at heart. It has proved difficult to securing ETR and even gallery range time, bearing in mind our low priority. Difficulties for myself also who, despite a good hand over, I was really learning on the job, the management and administration role over the season. Luckily my Executive Officer**, Maj BarrieCorfield** was on hand, even when the hut drains became blocked and he and I (well actually I) was rubber glove deep in, well, never mind. On the plus side (and in no way responsible for the above) was the exceptional service provided by the team chefs, **Cpls Shannon** and **Sturman.** Every weekend has seen marvellous culinary skills displayed, often with style, such as the Burns night, where we even drafted in three pipers to toast the haggis. Six training weekends after the Team Captain's speech we were setting up camp for CORPSAAM 2000 at Ash. We entered two teams plus four individuals. This in itself was no mean feat as the penalties for incorrect team composition were severe. Certainly worth a mention are our two young soldiers, **Sig Reeve** and **Sig Purcell** of 265 (KCLY) and 68 (ICCY) Sqn's respectively. Whilst **Sig Reeve** had managed to attend an earlier training weekend, poor **Sig Purcell** was relying on skills honed as a cadet and had not long finished his recruit training package. Both soldiers displayed courage and determination to attend at short notice. They both performed well on the day and I hope to see them next season.

Past experience has taught us to never be overly concerned about the scores at the end of day one during the CORPSAAM. I was certainly feeling more relaxed after several pints of Brakspears in the team bar. Sunday brought the realisation that we had performed well, Ok, we were down on previous years but the 71 Team had more than just it's fair share of the silver from the SOinC(A). On a purely selfish note, I was proud as punch to regain the Corps Champion at Arms honour. Certainly as proud (and bloody relieved) that the first team photo with me as Team Captain was with silver and not bare! The Team is gearing up to represent the Regiment at Bisley in the Individual Championships in July (though sadly I'll be unable to attend due to pressure of a new job). As for next season, It is my aim to recruit new blood into the team and concentrate on coaching rather than merely practising the shoots. We will continue to offer support to both 36 Sig Regt (V) and 94 Sig Sqn (V) next season with the use the hut, and hope that as three teams combined, we will have a better chance of securing range space. Finally and most importantly a word of thanks to all the team members, who performed well throughout the competition.

'The Regimental Shooting Team'
Complete with the silver ware

THE TEAM LIST

71 (A) Team	**71 (B) Team**
2Lt Woodhams (265)	**Lt Downing** (265)
Cpl Charter (LAD)	**Cpl Woo** (HQ)
Cpl Morse J. (HQ)	**LCpl Williamson** (HQ)
LCpl Wilton (265)	**LCpl Foxwell**
Sig Reeve (265)	**Sig Purcell** (68)

Individuals
Maj Corfield (HQ)
WO2 (SSM) McHenery (265)
LCpl Liscoe (265)
LCpl Cox (265)

THE TROPHIES INCLUDE

APWT Cup	Winner	**2Lt Woodhams** (Indiv)
FIBUA Cup	Winner	71(Y) Sig Regt 'A' Team
Garrison Cup-Tie	Winner	71(Y) Sig Regt 'A' Team
Best Female		**Cpl Morse**
Aldershot Challenge Cup		**2Lt Woodhams**
Best B Class shot		**Sig Wilton**
Col Comdt Cup		**2Lt Woodhams**
Col Crane Cup	Winners	71(Y) Sig Regt 'A' Team
Gothorn Hardy Trophy		**2Lt Woodhams**
R Signals Singapore Trophy	Runners up	71(Y) Sig Regt 'A' Team

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

20 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

Sqn Comd **Maj I. G. Standen**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. Lawes**

ARRIVALS!

Congratulations to **RSM Lawes** and his wife **Anke** on the birth of their twin daughters, **Allison** and **Bethany**, just in time for Easter leave.

EXERCISE WELLINTON'S GAUNTLET - *by Sgt D. Bailey*

Over a three day period the Officers, Warrant Officers and SNCOs of the Squadron travelled to Belgium to visit the site of The Battle of Waterloo which took place on 18 June, 1815 (See, I was listening). The tour, which was part of an ongoing package of training and education for the unit's command team, was ably led by the OC, **Maj Iain Standen** whose subject knowledge was excellent. After the initial briefing and obligatory video it was on to the transport for the 6-hour journey to Belgium. After a further two videos on the coach, some felt that a tour was no longer necessary as the subject matter had by now been totally covered – happily all were proven wrong. On settling into our hotel the evening was spent with both new faces and old getting to know each other with a bit of good old fashioned male bonding. Unfortunately, the new OC 'A' Tp, **Lt Sofia Hughes** wasn't able to participate in all aspects of this age old ritual from Wellington's days – but times have changed and she fitted in admirably. The day of the tour began with a trip to the Waterloo Visitor's Centre for a display and film-show (aka another video!) before climbing up the steps of the Butte de Lion monument. Congratulations must go to the older members of the group for surviving the ascent, particularly **SSgt Mark Payne** (we all know about your bad back)! During the day the group moved to various stands on foot. At each stop it became apparent that within the Battle of Waterloo there were many mini-battles that brought about great acts of heroism and bravery. Thanks must go to **Maj Standen** for the obvious time spent researching and putting together a very full package.

Maj Iain Standen works himself up into a frenzy describing the battle, in the distance the Butte de Lion monument

VISITS

The unit has hosted a couple of visit of recent months. First, in March, **Lt Col Ted Flint**, Commanding Officer of I (UK) Armoured Division Headquarters and Signal Regiment visited the unit and took the opportunity of touring the unit's lines in Antwerp Barracks, visiting all departments and meeting a good cross-section of the unit.

Brig McDowall and Cpl Shuttleworth smiling nicely

Then in May, during Ex Premier Link the unit received a visit from Commander 1st Signal Brigade, **Brig David McDowall**. **Brig McDowall** had the opportunity to meet the Squadron's Officers, Warrant Officers and SNCOS over a cup of tea and a cake, before visiting Squadron personnel on the exercise. This included the BFOT the unit is training with this year whilst providing the Divisional HQ DSG, and which is proving rather a different challenge to the eight AFV436s and penthouses we are used to providing an armoured brigade headquarters!

CCF VISIT - *by Sgt Steve Mayell*

After months of discussion, organisation and planning (and the odd bit of 'if you scratch my back'), Thursday 6 April saw the arrival of 15 cadets and four officers of the St Benedict's School CCF from Ealing in West London. After the initial brief from **WO1 (RSM) Lawes** in Antwerp Barracks, the 7-day visit began under the direction **Sgt Steve Mayell** assisted by **Cpls Doick** and **Gouldbourn**.

Friday was dedicated to weapon training which in the morning was hosted by the Royal Artillery ADTAT who, unfortunately for the Royal Signals recruiting figures, produced some very impressive training aids such as shoulder launched HVM aimer trainer and Dome trainer. The cadets and their officers produced some very commendable results, the most interesting by **Lt Rimmington** with a 10cm miss of an aircraft at 2km! Keeping to the theme, the cadets then moved back into the grips of the squadron skill at arms instructors. **Sgts Steve Mayell** and **Daz Bailey** instructed on the LAW94 and the LAW94 indoor trainer and **Cpl Jay Shuttleworth** operated the SAT. Considering their limited knowledge of all the weapons, the guests again produced some excellent results.

Sig Hepworth looking down at SSgt Payne amongst the Cadets

The Squadron MT produced an excellent day of vehicle related stands under the watchful eye of **Sgt Roger Moore** and at short notice **SSgt Hank Cappleman** who ran a challenging 'trailer beast'. Funnily enough, this proved to be the only stand that was vacant during the final hour when the visitors were invited to return to their favourite events! The next time the White Helmets are recruiting, **Sig Armstrong** needs to apply as he has an awesome talent for riding the RSM's Harley Davidson! Somehow we managed to pry **SSgt Phil Whyte** (AGC) from his desk to take us all down to Wewelsberg Castle for a cultural visit. This very interesting place would have been the centre of the Hitler's world had the outcome of the war been different.

Monday found us all on the minibuses heading towards the Mohnesee Sailing Club for a spot of adventure training. A brilliant day was rounded off over a barbecue and then a trip to the Krankenhaus to visit **Senior Under Officer Alex Inacio** who had made an amendment to the shape of his forehead. **Lt Summerfield**, was seen frantically digging through his paperwork muttering, 'I'm sure I've got Inacio's signed waiver here somewhere.' Thankfully, although put through their paces, this was the only serious incident suffered by the cadets. After a very successful visit to the 1st Battalion Irish Guards in Munster, it was then the turn of the squadron hosted by OC Alpha Tp, **Lt Hughes, SSgt Payne** and **Sgt Bailey** along with a band of eager volunteers from the Troop. The cadets were shown around the AFV436's before setting up a four vehicle HQ and having the finer points of cam explained to them. They were then let loose on the radios and harness fitted to the AFV436's, and were later tested in the form of a quiz. We were also lucky enough to 'borrow' a Challenger 2 from the QRH based here in Paderborn so the cadets were in heaven crawling around on and playing with armoured vehicles all day.

Overall the cadets had a busy, varied and thoroughly enjoying week that was aimed at showing them that there's more computer power and technology in the modern Army than they expected. It was also meant to highlight the diversity of employment involving challenging and varied jobs that the Royal Signals have to offer.

ALPHA TROOP - *by Sig Hepworth*
Tp Comd **Lt S. Hughes**
Tp SSgt **SSgt M. Payne**

Alpha Tp have had a very busy few months with exercise after exercise and a week long battlecamp improving on various military skills. Congratulations go to **Cpl Morrison** who performed incredibly well on the DIVSAAM, he has now been placed for the CENTSAAM team. Sad farewells go to **Capt Rhidian Jones** who is now training the finest soldiers in the Army at ATR Bassingbourne and **LCpl Andy Nolan** who has moved on to 39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn. We wish them all the luck for the future. We welcome our new Troop Commander, **Lt Sofia Hughes** from her Troop Commanders Course; we also welcome **Sig Gareth Davies** from 3 Div, **LCpl Andy Moss** (back!) and on promotion **LCpl Tina Ainge** from Bravo Tp.

BRAVO TROOP - *by Cpl Jay Shuttleworth*
Tp Comd **Lt P. N. Randell**
Tp SSgt **SSgt J. Crabb**

Bravo Tp would like to welcome **Sig Stuart Walker** from 3 UK Div, **Sig John Walker** and **Sig Scott Kean** from Blandford. At the same time they would like to send their fond farewells to **LCpl Tony Ramwell** who has been posted to 3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn and **LCpl Lawrence** who has moved onto 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt.

EXERCISE MAILED DIAMOND - *by LCpl Doyle*

Ex Mailed Diamond was the Squadron's Adventure Training Camp held in the Hartz Mountains. The instructors were the following people, canoeing -**LCpl Nix**, Hillwalking -**LCpl Doyle**, Mountain Biking -**Sgt Corcoran** and Rock-Climbing- **Sig Calvert**.

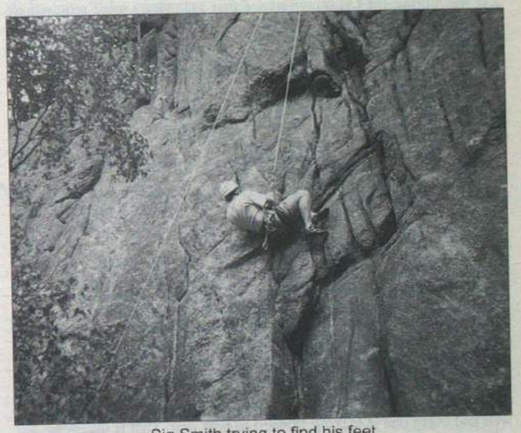
Week One began with an early o'clock start on the Sunday when the first group left our beloved Antwerp Barracks for the Hartz Mountains. **LCpl Nix** had his work cut out trying to explain that capsize drills are fun and definitely worth attempting, others in his group begged to differ! **Sgt Corcoran** decided that gently does it was the way forward for his group and made the Tour De France look like a Cycling Proficiency Test compared to the distance we cycled. Also **Sig Clare Heathcote** was still adamant that sunbathing was a far better option than having to walk up hills. That night we all had a debrief over a few cold beverages and welcomed the late arrival of **Sig Paul Calvert** our rock climbing instructor. As the week progressed we had more and more fun especially as **Sig Albiston** realised that if you actually take part in some activities it can be quite beneficial. **LCpl Crawshaw** did his fair share for PR by ensuring that he dressed up like the locals for our trip to the Brocken which by the way is an old Cold War listening post. At the summit **LCpl Crawshaw** introduced us to 'Erpsensuppe mit Wurst' which is Pea and Ham soup with sausage (very nice if you enjoy a trip to the toilet). All in all the first group had a most enjoyable experience even though most were saddle sore.

Week Two didn't get off to such a good start because the first group seemed to take the weather with them back to Sennelager. Due to a lot of rain we had to adjust to cater for it. **Sgt Corcoran** played his cards close to his chest as to what his group did when the rain came down. **LCpl Nix** and I decided that a trip to the local indoor swimming complex was a good way to hide from the rain. It was a fun day even if **Sig Dodge** couldn't handle the way that Germans dress inside a sauna! Overall the Summer Camp went very well thanks to a lot of hard work from **Sgt Corcoran** and a tremendous amount of effort from the people taking part.

SUPPORT TROOP - *by WO2 G. W. Beech*
Tp Comd **Maj M. G. P. Bohanon**
Tp SSgt **SSgt H. Capelman**

The last few weeks have given no let up for the ever busy world of the QM's Department. Once again we are preparing to move barracks, this will be the second time in ten months. We would like to congratulate **LCpl Crawshaw** on his recent marriage to **Cheryl**. Good luck to both of you in the future. We would like to welcome **LCpl Hall** and **LCpl Heydon** into our Troop and say farewell to **Sig Bishop** and **Sig Armstrong**.

MAINTENANCE TROOP - *by Sgt G. Brown*



Sig Smith trying to find his feet

Tp Comd **Capt C. P. Crowther**
Tp SSgt **SSgt M. Yates**

As per the rest of the Squadron we have been busy. Congratulations go to **Sig Pidhayehkj** for winning the LSW shoot on the DIVSAAM, also to **LCpl Smith** on his promotion and **Cpl Watmuff** on his marriage. As always the time comes to say goodbye, this time it is to **LCpl Neal** and **LCpl Manningham**. We would like to welcome **LCpl Ward** and **Sig Waring**.

4th ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (204)

Sqn Comd **Maj A. H. Campbell-Black**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D. W. Craig**

SUPPORT TROOP
QM **Capt Pete McElwee**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Paul Buckley**

At present Support Tp have been busy with the intended deployment to Bosnia at the end of May. **WO2 (RQMS)** 'Doz' **Day** and his team have spent the last few months demanding and ensuring that the Squadron will be deploying with the correct and adequate stores that will be required. **SSgt Chris Kimber** and his LAD team are busy at present ensuring that the four vehicles we are taking with us are ready for the deployment, and that the remaining vehicles are put into out of use for the period that we are in Bosnia. The MT & Power Section under the watch full eye of **Sgt Mick Pryce** are busy with servicing and power repairs, to ensure that the Squadron are able to carry out their role whist on Op Palatine. Whist the Squadron is deployed on Op Palatine, Support Tp personnel have been detached to different Troops. Support Tp will return after the deployment.

ROMEO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Ben Howarth**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Paul Buckley**

At the beginning of May and due to the deployment to Bosnia at the beginning of June a third communications Troop was formed. **Lt Ben Howarth** the new Troop Comander arrived form 7 Sig Regt ready to undertake UNTAT Training along with new members of the Troop from around the Corps. UNTAT Trg started on the 8 May in Sennelager, and this was to be the place that the Troop meet with one another. At first we started to think that it would take some time for each other to start and mingle and get to know one and all, that was until **Sig Shaun Brierley** started to amuse one and all with his cheap gags, and one or two outstanding jokes. Keep it up **Shaun** you never know we may need a part time comedian whilst on tour. **Cpl Guy Keyworth** let it be known that he was to celebrate his 23rd birthday whilst on UNTAT Training, however, the RSM, **WO1 Duggie Craig,** decided that due to **Guy's** past and to save the Squadron's name life would be much better if **Guy** was on duty. Before you all start writing to the RSM it was decided that **Cpl Nige Stiff** would do the duty for him. UNTAT Training proved to be of some use to every one - especially for **Sig Lucy Corlett**, whilst learning the best way to use an interpreter informed a civilian that she could solve the problem of clearing the mine field and looking after the farmers sheep. This was to put the sheep in the field and let them find the mines! The Troop would like to welcome all the new arrivals in to Romeo Tp and we wish you a happy and successful time with the Squadron.

ATTER SCHUTENUEREIN - *by LCpl Kurt Molden*

The Atter Schutenuerein is a traditional 'German' carnival where the people of Atter enter a shooting competition. It is at this event that the King and Queen for Atter is decided for the following year. Since 1854 the Atter Schutenuerein has taken place every year and only stopped on the outbreak of World War 2. In 1949 the festival started again, and for the past 16 years the Royal Signals based in Osnabruck has represented the Military personnel in Atter.

It was during the OC's conference that volunteers were required to represent the Squadron at the event. **2Lt Mike Parke** and **SSgt Paul Buckley** were first to volunteer especially when the OC informed the conference that there was going to be free beer. Members of the Squadron arrived in Atter only to find that the beer tent was open, after a few beers we all joined to parade and marched (walked) to the King's home. At the King's home we were given beer and good food for four hours before we paraded yet again to follow the King to the festival. Whilst marching (walking) back to the festival we were given drinks of schnapps to keep us in the flow of things. (**LCpl Dinsdale** thinks this is a good idea and the RSM should adopt this practice).

Once at the festival the King and Queen welcomed every one and it was off to the beer tent again. Whilst in the tent, and at around 7 o'clock and with the party well under way, **SSgt Paul** 'Buckers' **Buckley** who could not remember that he doesn't like dancing - danced ..... - like an idiot. **2Lt Mike** 'New boy' **Parke** forget he was in Germany and looked confused when he couldn't understand German. Well done Sir - if in doubt just smile and nod! **LCpl Dave** 'Old and wise' **Dowson** sat most of the night swaying and informing every one that he was old and that one day we will be his age. Special thanks must go to **Sig Daz Burdon** who stayed off the beer for the day and ensured that every one arrive back at camp safely. Finally **Sig Glen** 'Shy boy' **Hayes** was talking the night away by telling everyone that he fancied a young German girl and was going to chat her up after one more drink, but he never did so **LCpl Kurt** 'Blown out' **Molden** did and she left within five minutes. The day went well and every one is looking forward to next year. That is unless we are on tour some where.

PAPA TROOP – *by Sig Yates*

Tp Comd **2Lt Mike Parke**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Paul Davis**

Papa Troop's year started in February after a well-earned month off for Christmas with a Troop Exercise. This aimed to help in the preparation for the tour of Bosnia. Our main effort was to get the setting up of the main complex (BFOT) down to a 'T'. After several moves and some good effort all round this was eventually achieved. Along with myself other first timers on the Exercise were (when he finally woke up) **Staff** 'Yes I'm awake' **Paul Davis**, **Cpl** 'Crypto accounting' **Mo Pay**, **Sig** 'This is crap I wanna be a Tech' **Lucy Corlett** and **Sig** 'Are you sure that's right?' **Nicola Earle**. We then spent the next month in the bays putting our armour 'out of use' as it wasn't joining us on our six-month holiday in the Balkans. We then put them back into use, and out of use, and into use etc. – I think you get the drift.

April saw the Squadron visit Haltern Ranges with the purpose of getting all our remaining ITD's done and out of the way for the training year. After some grumbling from the lads the week got under way starting with the Ranges, most people managed to pass their APWT even **Staff** 'dead eye dick' **Davis**. Other elements of the week were the Law of Armed Conflict, Health and Safety at Work, First-Aid, NBC and Recognition lessons. It all culminated in a BCFT which of those who took part we had a 100% pass rate. After a week or so back in the bays getting on and off the bus at various moments, it was time to go on two weeks well earned Easter leave.

Back from Easter leave and it was all go again with UNTAT training down in Sennelager. This saw the breakdown of the three normal Troops Oscar, Papa and Support into their Bosnia Troops, it also saw the arrival of the augmentees from 7 Sig Regt who would be joining us for the Tour. The week went quite smoothly and swiftly until **Sig** 'Where's my gat?' **Lucy Corlett** managed to upset just about all the Squadron hierarchy by claiming to have lost her rifle. After much shouting and screaming it was found that she had in fact not managed to get her rifle out of the armoury – perfect material for a future Technician! The day also saw **Sig** 'Where's the toilet?' **Danny Tooke** have a little accident on the range in sight of the Troop OC. It didn't involve a rifle but it did involve the word projectile. Not only did it raise a good laugh, but it also meant that nobody else had to clean the toilets in preparation for the handing back of our accommodation!

This period has seen the introduction of our new Troop Comd, **2Lt** 'ex Tech' **Mike Parke**, and we also say a fond farewell and good luck to **2Lt** 'Benny' **Dave Hill** who leaves us to start a new career in the Royal Green Jackets. Welcome also to **Sig Nicola Earle** and farewell to **Sig Mark Lowes** good luck at 1 Div! It's now three weeks until we deploy and my final point is to the 7 Sig Regt personnel who are joining us on the Tour – 'You lucky, lucky gets,' never volunteer for anything where the number '204' crops up!

OSCAR TROOP - *by Sig 'Legohead' Ward*

Tp Comd **Lt Paul McTurk**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Olly' **Oliver**

The pre-requirements for deployment to Bosnia have kept Oscar Tp very busy recently starting with ITD week at Haltern Ranges. The Squadron left late on a Sunday night in order to be up bright and early thanks to a friendly wake up call from **Sgt Lyons** at 0500hrs. After some leave it was off to Sennelager for UNTAT training run by 21 Engineer Regiment which turned out to be an excellent week helped by the gorgeous weather. The training culminated in a confirmatory exercise tested all the skills for deployment. In one incident **Sig** 'Dinger' **Bell** was patrolling up a street when he saw an approaching gunman. Quick as a flash he raised his weapon, cocking it in the process. Unfortunately, whilst trying to issue the 'SFOR' Stani ili pucam!' warning SFOR! Stop or I'll shoot!). His rifle sling, which was too short, caught him around the neck sending him to the floor right on top of a PROM-1 anti personnel mine! Never mind 'Dinger', lets hope you don't do that for real. Unfortunately it is time to say good by to **Sig** 'Melter' **Roberts** but the future is bright at 1 Div we hope! Who knows we may even see you in Bosnia. Welcome to **Cpl Sam Huby** and **Sig Ian Cooke** and the augmentees from 7 Sig Regt, at least for the duration of the tour in Bosnia.

19 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

Sqn Comd **Maj Paul Peel**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Steve Mitchell**

The Squadron has been quite busy of late, and has just about finished turning around all the equipment after our little jaunt in the Balkans. However, we have made the time to enjoy ourselves a little. A squad of budding canoeists entered the LAND Canoe Slalom Championships and brought home 17 trophies, more than any other team. These included a first place in the Women's Event for **Sig Nicky Needham**, first and third places in the Intermediate Category for **2Lt** 'Eric' **Bristow** and **LCpl** 'Al' **MacKay** respectively and fourth place in the Open for **Sig Mark Stafford**. The team was squeezed into second place in the team events by a team of international paddlers! Two teams the 2 Div Athletics Championships with mixed fortunes. The women came second and go on to the Army Championships, aided by some fantastic individual efforts.

In the photo 209 Sig Sqn 's Canoe Team sport their small collection of trophies. In the back row (L-R): **Cpl Justin Gill** and **Sgt Pat Howie** and in the front row (L-R): **Sig Nicky Needham, LCpl Alan Mackay, Sig Mark Stafford, 2Lt Simon Bristow** and **Sig Rob Hill**.

WO2 (YofS) John 'Hop-along' **Wright** organised a team that took part in 'Race the Sun', a charity competition organised by 2 Sig Regt. The team of 25 took part in the various events, ranging from a 6km kayak paddle at 5am and a stretcher race at 4.30pm. A hard competition physically, but an enjoyable day was had by all, aided by lots of chocolate freebies from Nestlé, and a sizeable amount of money was made for charity.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt John Griffiths**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Jase Smithurst**

Life continues in Alpha Tp as we slowly continue to get back to business after the longest leave period that the troop has ever seen. PREs and Second Line Inspections have kept everyone busy whilst the Troop Commander swanned around on jollies to Italy and Bulford. Several Troop members have also been kept busy on their AFV DM course with even **Sig** 'Crazy Chris' **Allinson** eventually securing a pass. Squadron adventure training saw half the Troop down in sunny Fremington in North Devon to experience the delights of Barnstaple in the evening and the estuary at 0645am. **Sgt** 'Geordie' **Pearson** put in a sterling effort, injuring himself to ensure that he missed the early morning PT and then doing his bit for care in the community, downtown later that night. Meanwhile, **Sig Jen Galley** managed to overcome her worst nightmares and abseiled off the camp climbing tower, whilst **Cpl** 'Ski' **McKie** became slightly geographically embarrassed, missing a vital right turn whilst mountain biking. With even more leave looming in the not too distant future, everyone is looking forward to the delights of the Squadron half marathon, two weeks of ranges and a week in sunny Otterburn. Great.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Simon Bristow**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Mick O'Brien**

Since our last entry, the Troop has seen a few new faces arrive and some old ones move on to expand their knowledge and experiences. **Sig Chris Cooper** has joined us straight from the factory along with **Sig Danny McGowan** from Alpha Tp. We say farewell to **Cpl Dave Weatherstone** who has departed for pastures new with 15 Sig Regt and **Sig Stu Paton** who has left the army after 12 years and is now a proud member of 1(UK) Civ Div. Our best wishes go with both of them. As a Troop, we have all spent the last two months working hard to get the vehicles ready for second line and PRE inspections, interspersed with a smidgen of PT to keep us all happy. In the Inter-Troop Sports Competition, we proudly won the first two events, the football and volleyball, be it at the expense of **Sgt** 'Mac' **McGibbon**, who is currently enjoying a month's sick leave at home with his leg up in the air. Our sympathies to **Denise**! Members of the Troop took part in the 2 Div Athletics Championships and did very well. **LCpl Jase Whitehead** won the high jump, **Cpl Dave Pope** won the 100m and **Sig Phil Moore** managed to knock down all the 110m hurdles! The girls' team was led to success by Team Captain, **Sig Lindsey** 'W21D' **Rakocevic** who won the 100m and **Sig Nicky Needham** who also won her event.

SUPPORT TROOP

QM **Capt (QM) Graham Reith**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Steve Legg**

Support Tp have had a very busy month, MT have been working hard on Vehicle inspections, LAD on PREs and the QM's dept trying to make sense of the new Unit Equipment Table. We have also been Adventure Training, where the 2IC, **Capt Peter Young,** is convinced that the QM, **Capt Graham Reith**, tried to kill him when he helped fit the spray deck on his canoe and accidentally tucked the release handle inside. Unfortunately this small error was only discovered when the 2IC was upside down in rolling surf on the point of drowning. Somehow 'sorry' didn't quite seem good enough! Congratulations to **Sig** 'Smoothy' **Smith** for successfully completing the Royal Signals Leadership Course held down in Blandford, anything to get away from work.

Support Tp would like to extend a big welcome to the following new arrivals and their families: **SSgt Paul Warsdale, Cpl Lee O'Rouke, LCpls Grant McDougall, Adrian William Russel** and **Sig Jamie Danby.** The Troop sadly says goodbye to **Sgt Aidy Lines** who is off to a nice cushy number in 11 Bde and **Cpl Ian Kirkland** who is off to an even cushier number in NATO Sgt Balado Bridge in Scotland. Both have been stalwarts of the QM's department and will be very much missed. We wish them and their families all the best.

1 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (215)

Sqn Comd **Maj Paul Vingoe**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Grant Johnson**

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt (QM) Gerry Knight**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Daz Forrester**

EXERCISE DRIVESAFE WEDNESDAY 7 JUNE - *by Cpl John Grey*
Picture by SSgt Craig Stables

The day started at 0745hrs, with ten Landrovers lined up on Jellalabad Barracks Square, Tidworth. Each vehicle had a two man crew comprising a navigator and driver, the ten crews were subdivided into four Troop teams to facilitate a prize giving which would be held at the end of the day. The Troop Teams were Sabre, Bengal, Support 1 and Support 2. The first hurdle to be overcome was a documents check to ensure that all drivers had a valid driving license and the correct documentation for their vehicles. When this check was complete, the crews separated and took their vehicles to different parts of the square, where they had to complete a total of five manoeuvring stands. These consisted of various exercises to test driving skill, ranging from parking, to judging vehicle width, trailer manoeuvring and negotiating circuits of traffic cones. Penalty points were awarded to crews for any mistakes made while attempting the exercises. Once the crews had completed all of the stands on the square they were despatched to Perham Down Training Area, where they took part in an orienteering competition. The navigators were shown a training area master map and had to copy the locations of marker points onto their own maps. Once the navigators had finished marking their maps the crews set off in their vehicles at two minute intervals to locate as many of the markers as possible. There was a one hour time limit to complete the orienteering section of the competition. Again penalty points were awarded to the crews for any markers they did not find and also if they did not report to the finish line on time. When the crews finished the orienteering stage of the competition they made their way back to camp to enjoy lunch in the Junior Ranks Restaurant.

After lunch the participants reported to the LAD to start the finale stage of the day, a navigation exercise using roads and tracks on and around the training areas of Tidworth. The crews were given information books, each of which contained the route they were to take presented in grids and trace format. After much head scratching and trying to remember whether it was up the stairs or along the corridor first when plotting grids, the crews all managed to plot the route onto their maps within the time limit of 45 minutes. Again they set off at two minute intervals to complete the 56km course. Whilst driving around the course, the crews had to look out for and record the information from marker boards set out along the route, additionally, at the start of the navigation stage they were given timings by which they had to report to manned checkpoints along the route. Yet again the crews picked up penalty points for missing marker boards and being early or late at the checkpoints. When all the crews were safely back at camp, they cleaned the vehicles, while the event organisers totalled up the scores and results of the competition.

At 1800hrs all crews were seated in the Bradley Club so that the OC **Maj Vingoe** could present prizes to the winners. The winners collected their prizes to the shouts of 'FIX' as the LAD not only ran the event, but won it! Overall the total scores were very close, showing the high standards of driving and keen map reading skills within the Squadron. The results were,

First **LCpl Cathro** and **Cfn Upex** LAD
Second **Cpl Young** and **Sig Lindsey** Sabre Troop
Best Team Effort - Support Troop 2

(Three members of our LAD, **Sgt Hugh Williams, Cpl John Grey** and **Cpl Rip Campling** devised and executed Ex Drivesafe. It was an outstanding example of high quality training, packaged in an imaginative and enjoyable way. All credit goes to these three NCOs, well done).

The winners of Exercise Drivesafe
(L-R): LCpl Cathro and Cfn Upex, Sig Lindsey and Cpl Young

THE BATTLEFIELD TOUR 3-4 JUNE
by LCpl Fraser and LCpl Eddie Blackmore

It is the Squadron Commander's strong belief that to produce a better understanding of tactics and to reinforce their military education all ranks should be afforded the opportunity to study history's military actions. To this end, a number of rank specific battlefield tours have recently been organised by the Squadron. Over the weekend of 3-4 June 2000, it was the turn of the Squadron Junior NCOs. On the Saturday eleven of us, accompanied by the Squadron Commander, **Maj I. P. Vingoe** and OC Sabre Tp, **2Lt Wills** crossed the Channel to see the sights of France and learn about the D-Day Beach Landings of World War Two. We departed for France at 0500hrs just as British Troops would have done all those years earlier. On board the ferry between Portsmouth and Le Havre, **Major Vingoe** and **2Lt Wills** presented an overview of key events, which gave everyone a good insight into the Normandy landings. It was also sound preparation for what lay ahead.

Once in Le Havre we drove to the Normandy Memorial Museum in Caen. The museum tour comprised an exhibition of events spanning the end of the First World War to end of the Second World War. It was a very interesting display of pictures, documents, artwork and historical equipment. Most memorable parts of the exhibition were the uniform and artillery of WWII, and letters from Roosevelt and Einstein discussing the possible use of nuclear weapons. There was an extensive display of propaganda posters from all sides involved in the conflict and the Jewish exhibition was particularly strong and hard hitting. After the museum tour we moved to the cinema theatre to watch two superbly put together pieces of film footage shot during the Second World War, the Gulf War and latterly during the conflict in the former Yugoslavia.

On the second day we went to visit some of the places seen at the museum. First was Pegasus Bridge, this was the first European soil to be liberated by the allies. To stand on the ground and see where the first three gliders containing British Paratroopers had to land and seize the bridge was remarkable, how did they manage to land the things in such a small area? Amongst us all there was a real sense of admiration for the soldiers who'd taken part in this operation. **LCpl Eddie Blackmore** found this an immense source of pride as his father was part of the support team who were sent in after the initial assault. We also managed to take in the Omaha and Sword Beaches. Looking at the terrain and the distance British and American soldiers had to travel, and considering their mental and physical condition it was amazing how anyone survived. The sight of this shoreline battlefield promoted a real sense of gratitude for those who lost their lives on these beaches where we stood.

Finally we visited the military cemeteries where the British and American fallen are buried. The British memorial site was an immaculate and silent place, sacred in its regimented rows of bleached white headstones each bearing an engraved cap badge, rank and name. There were many Royal Signals soldiers buried here. It proved to be a very sobering experience seeing how young these soldiers were, seventeen, eighteen years of age, they were only kids. This part of the visit was an emotional moment for **LCpl Andy Campbell** who took the opportunity to pay respect at his uncle's grave. If we thought the British cemetery was big, the American one was immense, its architecture and natural surroundings giving it that same tranquillity which belies the awful violence and trauma which brought about the deaths of those who lie at rest. The sight of hundreds and hundreds of white crosses was breathtaking, it was impossible to take in just how many people died during the D-Day landings. The Normandy Battlefield tour was very educational and made us realise why we should never forget the appalling sacrifices made on those beaches. God forbid that mankind should ever slide into warfare on that scale again.

LONG SERVICE & GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL PRESENTATION

The LS & GC Medal recipients
(L-R): SSgt Craig Stables, Harriet Armitage and mum Sharon, Cpl Neville Armitage, Comd Comms, SSgt Lloyd Bagshaw, Ruth Bagshaw, Sgt Hugh Williams

It is unusual to have a Long Service and Good Conduct Medal presentation in a Royal Signals unit where none of the recipients are members of the Corps. That is exactly what we had however, when **Brig J. M. Shaw MBE**, Comd Comms HQ Land came to visit in June. REME and AGC recipients duly assembled, the proceedings were conducted in the ORs Restaurant thus enabling the rank and file to take part; these things normally happen in the Sergeants' Mess. It is always interesting and often sobering to hear a soldier's career condensed into a few short minutes and delivered as a citation. Quite often there is a dark horse among us who says nothing of his life's achievements until they are laid bare at an LS & GC medal presentation. Well done and congratulations to all four of you and your families.

COMMUNITY AWARD

Life in Support Tp goes on as usual, one of the biggest tasks since arriving back from Bosnia has been the 1st Tidworth Scouts sponsorship. In fact, the Troop's efforts have been so successful that we won the Tidworth Challenge, an accolade awarded annually to the organisation, civilian or military, which has done the most work to assist the local community. The Troop lays on fortnightly Sunday car-boot sales at the Ludgershall Vehicle Storage Depot, which raise much needed funds for the Scout group. The income has allowed them to replace their old condemned hut and is continuing to fund the purchase of fixtures and fittings. Including all the fund raising activities, the total raised so far is in excess of £30,000.

Squadron Commander, Maj Paul Vingoe, flanked by Quartermasters past (R) Capt Phil Abbott, and present (L) Capt Gerry Knight, with the community awards
Also pictured is Mrs Fran Catt and an extremely small Scout

WEDDING BELLS

Finally, the Troop would like to send its very best wishes to **Kes** and **Brad** who tied the knot in Salisbury on Saturday 29 April. You make a great couple, all the best for the future.

SABRE TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt Gordon Wills**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Chris Coates**

Sabre Tp has enjoyed a good few months with the arrival of a whole host of new members, not least of whom were a batch of six brand new Signallers. A busy exercise period has meant a lot of hard work, most notably on two recent deployments in support of 2PWRR and 1PWRR during their Ex Druids Dance. Druids dance is the battle group training exercise on Salisbury Plain using the Weapons Effects Simulator equipment. A short notice change in the tasking for this exercise meant that the new arrivals had to get straight in at the deep end within a few days of turning up. The Troop has had some time for fun as well. Having seen the WES kit, but not been allowed to play with it, **Cpl** 'Kev' **Young** and **LCpl** 'Smithers' **Smith** organised a paint balling day. The event was a great success, attended by 25 members of the Troop. Over all we fought ten pitched battles through the day, with a number of themes, the authors favourite being the all out killathon, which was the Hay Bale Field. Each having been give a number on entry, we fought as odds against evens. At the end of the day the evens were only just beaten by half a point. Or was that half a paint. The future also looks busy, with Troop and Squadron level training ahead of us and another Ex Druids Dance to support. Without question, however, there will also be more of the fun to come. A big well done to **Sgt** 'Norrie' **Crook** who, upon promotion, has inherited the Provost Sergeant's job from **Sgt Kev Twigger**. Once again welcome to the newcomers and good luck in the Troop.

Interested in Offshore Sailing?

Then contact Maj Atkinson on:

(9) 4331 3043 or
01722 433041

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

ALPHA TROOP - *by Sig Murray*
Tp Comd **2Lt J. K. Hawkins**
Tp SSgt **SSgt J. Walker**

As periods of leave and exercises come to an end, the Troop was soon fully manned again. There was a state of upheaval, as some of the Squadron were rushed to the tropical paradise that is Sierra Leone. **2Lt Jim Hawkins**, **Cpl Scott Dernie**, **Sig** 'Muzz' **Murray** and other lads from the Squadron were all deployed in support of 1 Para during Op Palliser. It was an interesting three weeks, but we were all glad to get back. While we were away there was a spate of departures and arrivals. We would like to welcome the following to the troop, **Sig Trist Ancell**, **Sig Paul Encell** and **Sig John Smith** from RSS Blandford. A welcome to **SSgt JJ** 'Talker' **Walker** who is taking over from **SSgt Chris McKenna**. Goodbyes go out to **Sig Merv Young** who is returning to 14 Sigs and **Sig Markus Kershaw** who is heading up north to 2 Sigs. Congratulations to those new fathers in the Troop. Including **Cpl Shaun Smith** with daughter **Sophie-May** and **LCpl Scott Robinson** with daughter **Jessica**. The Troop is now looking forward to Ex Eagles Strike in July, Ex Medicine Man in September and of course, some adventure training.

BRAVO TROOP - *by Sig Allen*
Tp Comd **Lt R. A. Hamilton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt P. Bartliff**

Easter leave came and went all too quickly. Since then **LCpl Good** has come back from his Class One to enlighten us on everything we didn't know about generators. Yet more people have been detached from the Chosen Troop to bring some form of professionalism to other less able units. **Sig** 'fuzzy bear' **Foster** is currently working in BATUS and **LCpl Young** is with 2 Para jungle training in Belize. An exercise of graft and toil in the Ascension Islands was unfortunately cut short for **LCpl** 'Gaz' **Lawson** and **Sig Allen** as the Sqn was recalled for the Sierra Leone deployment. In the end **Cpl** 'Robot Mary' **Murray**, **Sig** 'interesting shaped beret' **Jones**, **Sig Drabwell**, **Sig** 'Sy' **Wealleans** and **Sig White** represented the Troop and defended British interests against the sharpened mango fruited ones.
Promotion to SSgt meant that we had to say a sad farewell to **Sgt** 'Moon monkeys' **Owen** to 35 Signal Regiment. We would like to wish Dave and Chrissie all the very best. Finally the very best of luck goes out to **Cpl** 'Larry' **Kirk** and **LCpl** 'Scads' **Scadden** who have hung up their combat jackets for the last time and are off out into Civvy Street; remember us when you are managing directors and are earning your millions!

CHARLIE TROOP - *by LCpl Richardson*
Tp Comd **Lt O. T. B. Courage**
Tp SSgt **SSgt P. Hatton**

Two new soldiers have joined C Tp and the boys would like to welcome and ensure them that there's no pressure on them to pass P Coy; here's hoping that **Sig Dunseith** and **Sig McLachlan**, have a happy and enjoyable time. 216 Sig Sqn were recently approached by 30 Sig Regt for WOTAN operators to participate in an exercise in Ghana, Africa. The chosen few were **Cpl** 'The General' **Dernie**, **Cpl** 'Three weeks and still white' **Benson**, and **LCpl** 'fly food' **Cant** and myself. Other personnel flew out to the Ascension Islands to provide the 'other end' including **Sgt McGuinness**, **Cpl Knibbs**, **LCpl Lawson**, **Sig Bacon**, **Sig Allen** and **Sig Morris**. The rest had the honour of staying in Bramcote – unlucky! (of course they had the better deal as they didn't have to put up with flies, mosquitoes and red hot weather like the rest of us.

The teams flew out to their various countries on 28 April 2000. Everything had gone more or less smoothly so naturally it all had to start going wrong when we arrived in Ghana. The heat hit us as the jet doors opened and by the time we had found our transport we were in tatters. The waiting bus/oven took us off to our accommodation in the Ghanian Staff Officers College, passing through shanty-towns that housed dwellers living at the end of the poverty line. Memories of Aldershot flooded back as we passed people dressed in rags begging for food and cash. The bus was given a police escort consisting of one man on an ancient looking motorbike wearing the biggest crash helmet I have ever seen. He rode ahead of us with no regard for his or anyone else's safety, which kept us amused for the journey. The WOTAN kit finally arrived…well most of it, as the airline kindly left two of our boxes back in the UK. We set our kit up in a record slow time due to the hard ground and having to stop for water every 5mins. Once the link with the Ascension team was in it was pretty plain sailing. Unfortunately the following week 30 Sig Regt were warned off for Op Palliser and the remainder of the Exercise began to look tenuous.

Due to the heavy RAF commitment to Sierra Leone, it was a few days until we were moved from Ghana and flown to Senegal where we were held for about a week. Compared to Ghana, Senegal was freezing at night and was the first and only time I used my sleeping bag. From Senegal we flew onto Sierra Leone to Lungi airport, where we were able to marry up with the 216 blokes who went in with 1 Para including **2Lt Hawkins**, **Cpl Fulton**, **Cpl Stuart**, **LCpl** 'Loaf head' **Shields** and **Sig** 'Sleep monster' **Hoggett.** The rebels had very nicely timed kicking off with the beginning of the rainy season. Every night there would be a massive down pour of big heavy blobs of warm rain which wasn't too unpleasant and cooled the air for 10mins. Other than the shift roster there wasn't much to do but catch rays. Some of us managed to get away around the country. **Cpl Launder** ended up providing comms for the boat patrols on the rivers, **Sig Fyfe** was up and down to Aberdeen Peninsula with the 1 Para RSO and I managed to get to Lungi Lo village for six days with C Coy to provide a link back to the ops room. During this time some of our blokes managed to get a flight home because they had no job to do.

From 23 May 2000 onwards, the whole affair began to wind down. As the Royal Marines started to take over, 216 packed up and waited for a flight home, whittling away the hours playing Yahtzee. Meanwhile **YofS Wilson** got his head down for a couple of days in an air-conditioned tent with the medics with some poor excuse like he had tonsillitis. We took full advantage of the airport facilities including the duty free shop and became competent at wheel chair wheelies which seemed to be in plentiful supply. By 28 May 2000 everyone less **Sig Crutchley** was back in the UK. He was flown onto HMS *Ocean* and lived on the ship for a week. It was an experience not to be forgotten but definitely not repeated.

SUPPORT TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt S. A. Clark**
Tp SSgt **SSgt P. Latimer**

April and May were again busy months for Support Tp, culminating in the much awaited all ranks Sqn function. The 70's night saw the singlies buying deviant costumes from the charity shops whilst the Staff Sergeants and above raked in their wardrobes for their teenage clothes. First prize for porn tash has to go to **Cpl** 'how long will this makeup take to come off?' **Wilson**. After a small commitment to the Brigade CAST, the majority of the Troop were stood down for Easter leave, with only the Lanyard team staying behind to train. Well done to **Sgt Rayson** and **LCpl Cloney** for a brilliant effort and playing key roles in the team's victory. Ex Argon Mercury saw the deployment of some of the Troop to sunnier climes including Ghana, the Ascension Islands and Bramcote. The Exercise was cut short due to the commitment in Sierra Leone. Four techs deployed – **Cpl** 'I've got no webbing or helmet' **Benson**, **Cpl** 'Us Jocks burn in the sun' **Stuart**, **Cpl** 'Furry Roach' **Fulton** and **Cpl** 'I've not even had time to unpack my MFO' **Stojanovic**. The Squadron remains on R1. Consequently the Troop has been busy preparing for any eventuality. Duty rumour during Op Palliser has to be awarded to **Cpl** 'I like digging I do' **Williams** for his story of the Squadron's deployment to the forward mounting base on the island of Tenerife. The Troop says farewell to **Cpl Williams** on his posting to Civ Div, but says hello to **Sig Marsden** from the factory. A well done must be said to **LCpl** 'Yes, this para smock is a permanent fixture of my body' **Browning** on passing his jumps course and a get well soon goes out to **Cpl Angel**.

LANYARD TROPHY 2000 - *by Lt Toby Courage*

This year's competition was held in Dartmoor. Competitors assembled on 4 May at Okehampton Camp in eager anticipation; in all twenty-eight teams entered. The route for the first event of this millennium was suitably demanding. It was a full forty miles over the baron, hilly terrain which characterises Dartmoor. Navigation would clearly be a vital skill for each of the teams.

The event started at a car park just east of the small village of Hartford at 05:00hrs on Thursday 5 May. It was a massed start with teams spread out over a considerable distance. The sun had not quite appeared over the horizon when the starting hooter sounded and the competition was on. The first Checkpoint was a little over 3km away and some teams seemed over eager to get to it, racing off a quite a lick only to suffer afterwards as the initial climb took its toll. The distance between checkpoints one and two was more considerable, some 9km for those who got the navigation right, and this leg acted to spread the teams out. By Checkpoint five 216 Sig Sqn had a 28 minute lead over 228 Sig Sqn and a 1 hour 13 minute lead over 7 Sig Regt. In the women's competition there gap was much closer with just 16 minutes separating three of the four teams. 35 Sig Regt led the Territorial Army teams at this stage, but they had Leeds OTC just three minutes behind them. By Checkpoint 10, 30 Sig Regt had taken second place from 228 Sig Sqn, leading them by nine minutes. 216 Sig Sqn maintained a healthy cushion leading 30 Sig Regt by 39 minutes. However, the real battle was raging with the girls' teams. Although 15 Sig Regt had dropped out of contention by this stage, just four minutes separated 30 Sig Regt from second place 11 Sig Regt. A battle was also in full flow with the TA teams. Leeds OTC had secured the lead by this stage with their nearest rivals 31 minutes behind.

Again the tables were to turn by Checkpoint 15. 228 Sig Sqn snatched second place with a now healthy lead over the third placed 7 Sig Regt. At this stage 30 Sig Regt and 1 (UK) Armd Div Sig Regt were hard on 7 Sig Regt's tail. 216 Sig Sqn had managed to build up what was by this stage

an unassailable lead over 228 Sig Sqn, the gap being 1 hour and 5 minutes. In the girls competition 11 Sig Regt took the lead and were 14 minutes ahead of 30 Sig Regt. At the finish 216 Sig Sqn won by a margin of 1 hour and 11 minutes, however the next four positions in the regular male competition were very keenly fought with just 34 minutes between them. 228 Sig Sqn came in second and 7 Sig Regt third. In the women's competition 11 Sig Regt crossed the line first with a time of 14 hours and 9 minutes. 30 Sig Regt lost a little time between Checkpoint 15 and the finish but still achieved a very respectable time of 14 hours and 41 minutes. The fastest TA team was Leeds OTC with a time of 16 hours and 20 minutes, however, they were disqualified as they finished with an incomplete team. This left 34 Sig Regt to take the glory with a finishing time of 16 hours and 23 minutes. 35 Sig Regt withdrew from the competition in some style. They laid down their bergens at Checkpoint 11 and headed for a local pub! The tables below show the finishing positions of the top three teams in each of the three competitions:

Regular Male Team Competition

First	216 Signal Squadron	10 hours 29 minutes
Second	228 Signal Squadron	11 hours 40 minutes
Third	7 Signal Regiment	12 hours 00 minutes

Regular Female Team Competition

First	11 Signal Regiment	14 hours 09 minutes
Second	30 Signal Regiment	14 hours 41 minutes
Third	15 Signal Regiment	16 hours 30 minutes

TA Team Competition

First	34 Signal Regiment	16 hours 23 minutes
Finished undermanned	Leeds UOTC	16 hours 20 minutes
Finished undermanned	38 Signal Regiment	18 hours 21 minutes

The spirit of all the competitors was first class. Throughout the event teams displayed a steely determination to do well but there was also a great deal of camaraderie amongst fellow competitors. The sense of occasion continued in the bar afterwards for those teams that felt up to it. The next day was the Team Captains debrief and the SOinC presents the prizes. There was much praise for the event organisers, 216 Sig Sqn for running what was seen as a tremendously successful competition. The Squadron's team's victory means that it will have the honour of organising next years competition as well.

The victorious 216 team
together with it's assiduous support team
front row (L-R): Cpl Hoskins, Cpl Barnes, LCpl Thorpe,
Lt Courage, Sig Bourne, LCpl O'Donnell; back row; Maj Hooper,
LCpl Salmon, Sgt Rayson, LCpl Cloney, LCpl Lancaster,
Sgt Combe, Sig Sherrington, LCpl Blackmore, Sig Drabwell,
Cpl Fernie

The SOinC presenting the Lanyard Trophy to the team

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR ALL FORMER OFFICERS OF 216 SIGNAL SQUADRON!

In previous years, 216 Sig Sqn has held an annual reunion dinner for all Airborne Signals Officers. This year is to be no exception and will mark the transition of the Squadron from Airborne to Air Assault.

This year's dinner will be held in the Officers Mess at 16 Air Asslt Bde in Colchester, Essex on 20 October 2000. Proformas have already been sent to all known Airborne officers, but we suspect there are more who may have moved to a new address since the last dinner.

If you are one of these individuals and are keen to attend the dinner, please contact **Capt Steve Clarke** on 01206 782784 or mil 946512784 who will send you details of the event.

238 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS
Sqn Comd **Maj Ian Seraph**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Ewan Hall**

The Squadron would finally like to welcome our new Squadron Commander, **Maj Ian Seraph,** fresh from his brief jaunt to Sierra Leone. The stand in, **Maj (TFC) Dave Gilchrist** can now return, happy, to the relative quiet of OC Oscar Tp and start to pick up the pieces of his shattered resettlement plan. The Squadron has appreciated the work he put in during the gap period. Since the last post the Squadron has been very busy competing in various competitions, a Brigade battle camp and going out on a 'Squadron Walkabout'. Considering our resources, we've had a very successful period. The shooting team fought a fine battle with 243 Sig Sqn at the Corps SAAM, losing out by the narrowest of margins for the Minor Units Championship. In the London District RAM the team came away with the Regular Minor Units Championship, the Regular Minor Units March and Shoot Trophy as well as individual honours for **Sgt Si Schofield** as the Regular Pistol Champion and **Sig Toby Green** as the Regular New Shot Pistol Champion. In York, for Race the Sun, the team finished eighth overall, with special mention going to **Sig Chris** 'last, but first!' **McGuire,** who set the best time for the run-bike-run event,

introduced this year. At the Morrison Cup our only representative, **Sig** 'Mags' **West** came second in the female long jump competition. Well done to all the competitors and support staff involved in the above events. The first two weeks in May saw the Squadron involved in the Brigade battle camp, at Sennybridge. The camp was split into two one-week packages, with the Squadron supplying DS and admin support to the organisers, 243 Sig Sqn. Here's the memoirs of one of our DS, **SSgt Andy Cannadine**

2 BRIGADE BATTLECAMP 2000 - EXERCISE BLAZING BRUNO A DS PERSPECTIVE

Friday 30 April saw the Squadron DS representatives - **SSgt Andy Cannadine, SSgt Si Hadley, Sgt Bob Garlick** and **Cpl Stevie Hook** - deploy on the advance party for the Bde annual Battlecamp. Congratulations to **WO2 SSM** 'I managed to do both weeks of Battlecamp and still have clean combats' **Morrow** and **SSgt Bob** 'Read the Palms, done the course and got the T-Shirt' **Lawrence** of 243 Sig Sqn for organising the jaunt over a Bank Holiday weekend. At the time of deployment, we were all well aware that many clichés would be used in anger when **Sgt Bob** 'I've Just come from 11 Signal Regiment' **Garlick** was heard muttering, 'How weak and unmilitary the wearing of gloves was.' Only to be met with many replies of, 'Any fool can be cold.'

Over the initial few days of detailed recces and lesson prep, Sennybridge Training Area was true to form with regards to the weather. Nevertheless, it brightened up for the Troops arriving on Sunday. Units are reminded to book the correct weather in future for the event, 'Remember - it ain't training if it ain't raining'. Ten minutes into day I saw **Sig Chris McGuire** of 238 Sig Sqn being caught by **WO2** 'I've got pink pyjamas and dirty combats' **Smith** of 251 Sig Sqn with two pot noodles, six Mars bars and noodles galore in his Respirator pouch. Was this a sign of what was to come? Well if the Demolition Brothers - None other than SSgts **Andy** 'SSgt 1' **Cannadine** and **Si** 'SSgt 2' **Hadley** - can manage three fry ups in a day, why should everyone else be confined to the delights of compo for a week. With the troops split up into Sections under the watchful gaze of their section DS - that's when **Sgt Daphne** 'Vogue' **Clash** of 251 Sig Sqn wasn't posing for photographs - they participated in many varied military skills lessons over the next few days. Injuries were inevitably sustained by several individuals. However, Week One saw the miraculous recovery of **Cpl Durkin** of 243 Sig Sqn with the able assistance of two strips of orange mine-tape. Maybe the medics ought to prescribe orange mine-tape armbands in future as opposed to the standard Bruffen and TubiGrip. Not to be out done, **LCpls Andy** 'Semaphore Whizz-Kid' **Carr** and **Bri** 'Twice around my beautiful bronze body - GO!' **Stewart** of 238 Sig Sqn elected for the same cure during Week 2, and it worked! No prizes were presented for Best Section, etc... but congratulations go to **LCpl Sheppard** of 243 Sig Sqn on becoming the World Champion Schermuly Chucker for 2000 with a record distance of 10 feet. Well she did warn the Demolition Brothers earlier that throwing things was not her forté. In addition a special mention goes to **Cpl Steve** 'Beast-master' **Hook** on managing to be the only Section DS to injure participating Troops. Next time, don't do the chains up so tight !

Day Four of each week saw the Demolition Brothers and the Beast-master on the Practical Demolition Area (PDA), allowing the troops to try their hand at preparing and detonating confidence charges. Although all went to plan on the whole, **SSgt Si Hadley** did have to deal with two charges that weren't initiated correctly. A special mention to a member of the DS, **Sgt** 'JB' **Blyth** of 241 Sig Sqn, for being one of the PDA two. The final attack of the Exercise saw all the troops storming an occupied farm complex, bravely defended by all those wearing orange mine-tape armbands. Artillery strike BATSIMS were kindly provided by the Demolition Brothers. Mind you even they got it wrong in Week Two with two uninitiated charges being left until Endex before being dealt with.

The final day of each week were not disappointing either. Week One saw a rumpus in the car park between a hormone imbalanced Staff Sergeant and a sleepless and tired Staff Sergeant (both of whom remain nameless) with 1033's being drawn in anger. Week Two saw a Skill at Arms qualified individual (again nameless) checking a GPMG barrel for cleanliness inside whilst the BPFA (Sorry Sir ! That should be BFA) was still fitted. No wonder it was dark in there! In all, a good time was had by all and the Demolition Brothers survived to blow some more things up next year.

238 SIGNAL SQUADRON - SQUADRON WALKABOUT
by Sgt 'Chalky' White

On 27 April 2000, 12 hardy souls from 238 Sig Sqn ranging from the Sqn Comd, **Maj Dave Gilchrist,** to new arrivals such as **LCpl** 'Jonno' **Johnson** participated in the first Squadron walkabout of the new millennium. The event organised as ever by **Sgt** 'Chalky' **White** took place along the Grand Union Canal at Watford. God looked down on us that day, as the sun shone and the threat of scattered sporadic showers never materialised. After battling our way through the carnage that is London's traffic, the intrepid bunch set off from Cassiobury park in Watford. Along the way we were treated to some wonderful sights such as watercress beds, wildlife, fishermen, canal boats, as well as finding out how to, and how not to, open lock gates from a local boatman, which totally confused the educationally challenged amongst us, including (Yof S) **Neil Stewart.** The best sight of all was reserved until approximately half way around the walk, The Kings Head Pub. It's funny how all this walking brings on a raging thirst and hunger. A wonderful pub lunch/packed lunch was had by all, whilst listening to the tales of travel from **LCpl Keith Ford** on Australia, **Maj Dave Gilchrist** on Nepal, **WO2 (YofS) Neil Stewart** on Oman and **Sgt** 'Chalky' **White** on Skegness (Butlins). After lunch is was back onto the beaten track and an opportunity for a photo shoot from a passing local, before heading back into Cassiobury Park to complete the loop and an enjoyable day out.

THERE IS GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND IN LONDON

MIKE TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt (TOT) R. Nicol**
Tp SSgt **SSgt A. J. Cannadine**

The end of February saw half of the Troop deserting work for a skiing holiday, in the form of Ex Winter Warrior, in Hochfitzen, Austria. Well done to **Sgt Jacobs** and **Sig Muhammad** for achieving silver awards in alpine skiing, **LCpl** 'Ginge' **Smith** and **Sig** 'Stabilizers' **McGuire** for achieving bronze awards, and **Sig** 'Muller' **McFaul** for getting the wooden spoon! With **Sig** 'Mongo' **McFaul** leaving and the rest of the Troop needing to off-load lots of pent-up stress, it was decided by our illustrious leader that our notoriously gung-ho Troop would embark on a paint-balling afternoon. Two teams, one consisting of Techs the other of Mechs, fought bravely for hours on end. Of course no grudges were borne by either side. Honest! After many bruises being rewarded, the end result was an inevitable win for the Mechs. Any offers of a challenge are to be made to **Sig** 'Stop that, it hurts' **McGuire.**

With the Squadron CIS Helpdesk coming to it's end at the time of writing, the ACISG workshops under the guidance of **Sgt Jacobs** are in a race to clear all outstanding jobs prior to the hand-over to Aldershot. Summer brings the busy season for the Radio and PA sections, with the forthcoming Queens Birthday Parade, Queen Mothers 100th Birthday celebrations and the new Royal Military Tournament 2000. A truly stressful time for the Troop as it means all work and no play. As well as work, half the Troop found time to attend the annual 2 (NC) Signal Brigade Battlecamp in Sennybridge (the other half all dreamed up substantial excuses) with a fun time being had by all. Thanks to the Demolition Brothers **(SSgt's Andy Cannadine** and **Si Hadley)** for organising the early morning wake up calls.

Welcomes are extended to **Cpl** 'Johnny mnemonic' **Mesmer** from 30 Sig Regt **LCpl 'JP' Thomas,** fresh meat from Blandford; and to **Sig 'MJ Muhammad** after reappearing from her recent detachment to the Ethnic Minorities Recruiting Team. Farewell's go out to **Cpl** '15 pints before 10 o'clock, in bed by 5 past' **Bone** who leaves us for sunny NI **Sig** 'The Daddy' **McFaul** who's off to Germany. and to **Sig** 'Motormouth' **Blevins** who leaves the Corps for civvy street. Good luck to you all. On a similar note, farewell to Sig's 'Piers' Daw and 'Off on another jolly' **Multammad** who are to be imminently detached to the CIPIT team in Bosnia and Kosovo. In addition, **Sig Daw** is to be congratulated on receiving his first tape, not to mention the added bonus of a posting to Cyprus in October 2000

OSCAR TROOP
Sqn/Tp Comd **Maj (TFC) Dave Gilchrist**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Karen Ripley**

A not so hectic reporting period for the Troop this time around with no new projects being undertaken, the main focus of attention has been how can we cope with the loss of major manpower at all levels within the Troop. **Maj (TFC) Dave Gilchrist** has been dual employed as both Squadron and Troop Commander, so the Troop personnel saw a lot less of him. Welcome back **Maj Gilchrist. Sgt Lindy Lawrence** was recently transferred from her post of D Shift DSO within London Central COMMCEN (LCC) to replace the already departed **Sgt Debbie Gosnell** in the ADA. **Sgt Bob Garlick** arrived from the training establishment that is 11 Sig Regt to work in the COMMCEN as a replacement for **Sgt Lawrence,** only to complete three shift cycles before being thrust into the Squadron Training Wing. **Sgt Mandy Eardley** completes the trio of moves on the SNCO side as she now resides over D Shift in the COMMCEN after her arrival from SHAPE. The Troop had to say goodbye to **Miss Donna Wilson (CO3)** after she decided to move onto pastures new. **Donna** had been here within the COMMCEN for five years and was one of the well established and likeable characters. Thanks for all your efforts **Donna** over the years and all the best with your new career in the future. **Mrs Jill Urquhart (CO3)** has just been promoted and taken over the reigns as the **Tony Davis's** (CO2) able deputy.

A number of other key personnel have since departed, so it is with fond memories we say goodbye to the following: **Cpl Chris Vallance** and **LCpl**

Pete Fagg to civ div. **Sig** (soon to be Pte) **Jenny Mills,** who's moving over to the AGC. Unfortunately the Troop came a rather disappointing third place in the Inter-Troop swimming competition, but it is with high optimism that we look forward to the football competition, as we strive to increase our overall lead.

RADIO TROOP

Tp Cornd **Lt Andy Wilson**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Mark Brooksbank**

Firstly, Radio Tp has some hello's and a goodbye. The Troop welcomes into it's fold **Sig Wayne Gibson** from 249 Sig Sqn, **LCpl Shaun Dinsdale** from 7 Sig Regt, well done **Shaun,** within three days of his arrival he was running a half marathon for the Squadron on Race the Sun! We also have a new Troop Sergeant, **Mark** 'Brooksy' **Brooksbank** from the outlands of 3 Bn Reme. We say goodbye to **Sgt Si** ' Schofs' **Schofield** who's escaping to Mike Tp for a short period in preparation for his re-trade to Information Systems Operator, before his impending posting to 30 Sig Regt. Mention here has to go to 'Schofs' Troop leaving speech, Guinness have been approached about posting the record for the longest, most rambling, drunken, public speech. Also congratulations go to 'Schofs' as he'll arrive at 30 Sig Regt as a Staff Sergeant.

As we approach the mayhem that is Ceremonial season, Radio Tp have been busy disguising it's self as a Squadron, supplying the majority of soldiers representing the Squadron at various competitions. Firstly there was the Corps SAAM (Radio provided 100% of the manpower), followed directly after by the London District RAM (Mike Tp kindly provided one soldier, to make it a truly Squadron team!). May was very busy, starting with the Brigade battle camp, then Radio produced the only entry from the Squadron to the Morrison Cup, in the form of **Sig** 'Mags' **West**. The end of May saw the Squadron/Troop in York for Race the Sun (Radio provided 15 of the 19 who made the trip up to 2 Sig Regt) On top of all this commitment, Radio Tp proved victorious in the Squadron InterTroop Football competition, catching Oscar Tp overall to tie for the competition lead. Here are the thoughts of **Sig Toby Green** on three of those events:

The Corps SAAM and London District RAM: The Squadron sent a shooting team to the Corps SAAM which was hand picked from a cast of thousands, consisting entirely of Radio Tp (no surprise there then!). The team started off well and looked as if they may be in with a chance of winning the Minor Units Championship, until **Lt** 'Just wait till the LSW' **Wilson** decided he would just scare the targets on the Roberts Cup! Luckily **Sig Del** 'Not keen and not green' **Kearns** faired somewhat better. The Team ended runners up, on count back, to 243 Sig Sqn (who had received some expert coaching from 11 Sig Regt prior to the SAAM), a good one-two for 2 Sig Bde though! Straight after the Corps SAAM the Squadron went into the London District RAM. Reinforcements from Chelsea duly arrived with **Sig Stu** 'Giggsy' **Parker** raring to go, despite having to work over the weekend. A cold and miserable Saturday started badly with the Range staff on the first shoot somewhat unprepared! This caused confusion amongst the ranks, especially to **LCpl** 'Oops, nearly got you!' **Bull,** but the least said about that the better! The end result was a re-shoot for the team at the end of the day, when we were thoroughly cold and miserable! We feared the worst and only hoped we wouldn't be completely humiliated, but either we didn't shoot as badly as we'd thought, or the rest were even worse! We walked away with four trophies between us!

Brigade Battle Camp: 2 Sig Bde held their annual battle camp in the sunny hills of Sennybridge, which for once actually was sunny and dry! The good weather held out for the two weeks which kept everyone's moral up (except for the DS, who were treated to both weeks in the Welsh hills). Two groups from the Squadron attended over the two, one week packages. The battle camp started with the basics, such as pairs fire and manoeuvre, camouflage and concealment and contact drills. Then progressed right the way through to more in-depth skills, such as night navigation, OBUA drills and section attacks. Everyone had a chance to use various pyrotechnics during the week and there was one memorable occasion when **LCpl Zoe** 'Launch' **Sheppard** had the job of launching a schermuly and amazed all onlookers as she threw it a couple of metres into a nearby ditch! The week ended, with a dawn attack against a defended building, lots of 'bangs', lots of confusion and a lot of effort! Afterwards, we were given time to eat breakfast before the last test, a section assault course! The battle camp was very well prepared and run by **SSgt** 'Rambo' **Lawrence** and everyone learnt new skills and improved old ones.

243 SIGNAL SQUADRON

CORPS SKILL AT ARMS MEETING - APRIL 2000
by SSgt Lindsey Manktelow - Team Captain

After being given the task of running the unit team for the CORPSAAM 2000, a competition I had heard very little about, I set to work. The volunteers consisted of **Cpl** 'Gregs' **Gregory, Cpl** 'I'll sort them out' **Durkin, LCpl** 'Fitz - vodka and orange' **Fitzpatrick, LCpl Stu Golightly, LCpl** 'Pretty Boy' **Joyce** and **Sig** 'I haven't got a clue why I'm here' **Hill**. The training was held at various ranges over a period of two months but due to work commitments, it was a case of get there when you could. We then travelled to Pirbright on 3 April 2000 to spend a week training and then straight into the competition, thanks to the help of **Sgt Dave Copley**, who let us jump onto his ship for training. Let's face it, what he doesn't know about shooting is not worth knowing.

Well, a couple of the boys had been there before and knew exactly what to expect which was a great help. The first day was great, brilliant sunshine, however, the rest of the week was not to be the same. Every evening consisted of a check with the stats tent and the scores. The guys were doing good, however 241 Sig Sqn were in there every time and the whole week seemed to be neck and neck with them. It was literally down to the last shoot. **Cpl Gregory, LCpl Fitzpatrick** and **LCpl Golightly** did great in the pistol tiles managing to get through to the shoot off with 11 Sig Regt, which was unheard of as we had knocked the Ghurkas out. It was all too much especially as we had just finished the Pistol when we heard how 241 had done on the final shoot. Excellent, we had won the Minor Units. There was none as happy as me that day. The boys worked extremely hard and at the prize giving **LCpl Joyce** won a medal for the best FIBUA shoot, a total surprise for us all, a fantastic end to a great week. Well done the lads.

The Team Winners - Corps SAAM Minor Units
(L-R) : SSgt Manktelow, Cpl Durkin, Sig Hill, LCpl Golightly, LCpl Fitzpatrick, LCpl Liddle and LCpl Joyce
Absent: Cpl Gregory

Why not visit the Royal Signals Museum?
For opening hours ring : 01258 482248

The Prize
Maj Gen I. O. J. Sprackling OBE presents LCpl Joyce with the Minor Units Team Cup and FIBUA medal

ARMY INTER UNIT VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS
by SSgt Lindsey Manktelow

Having received details about the event I decided although the military element of the unit is a minority and the females even less we would enter a team. I rang **SSgt Bill Butler** in 11 Sig Regt who was organising the event and he informed me that ourselves and 11 Sig Regt were the only two teams to enter, therefore we would automatically go through to the Army Championships, the only small detail to resolve would be who would be first or second in the Inter Units. We decided that on the Tuesday evening before the Army Championships we would go to Blandford, to take on the Army Champions. After getting six girls together those being, **WO2 Bernie Smith, Sgt Mandy Duffy, Sgt Jackie Grimes, Sgt Elly Pomeroy, Cpl M. J. Durkin** and **LCpl Vinny Vincenzi** we played the match and were inevitably beaten, but we put up a good fight.

The following week was the Army Inter Unit Championships which were to be held in Larkhill. Not one for being beaten, I decided to train the girls every lunchtime in the week leading up to the event. When we arrived the girls were nervous and didn't hold out much hope for themselves. After seeing their improvement in training I knew we would work hard whatever the cost. The first game to be played was against 11 Sig Regt, the current Champions who in the previous week had already beaten us. After a long hard fight we took the first set, the girls were elated and so was the OC who couldn't control himself on the edge of the court. We went on to knock the Champions off the board. The day was long and hard with everyone putting in every effort. We managed to get through to the final but unfortunately Pribright took the Championship. Well done the girls.

249 SIGNAL SQUADRON (AIR MOBILE FORCES (LAND))

Sqn Comd **Maj D. B. Hudson**
SSM **WO2(SSM) K. Marsh**

Another busy period for the Squadron, which has seen the return from Norway and personnel deployed on the exercises mentioned below. In addition members of the Squadron have deployed on trials to the Netherlands and Belgium and one lucky chap has spent six weeks in Corsica. We have also seen some well deserved promotions, in particular **Sgts Pete Lawn** and **Jase Raybould**. Congratulations also to **SSM Ken Marsh** and his wife **Tracey** and our Chief Clerk, **SSgt John Sharples** and his wife **Jeanette**, on the birth of their baby girls.

EXERCISE ARDENT GROUND 2000 – *by Lt Mark Stoter*

Another month and another arduous exercise for the Arctic warriors of 249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L)); this time, three testing weeks providing CNR comms for a Force Artillery exercise in Hungary. Twenty-three men from the Squadron deployed to the dust bowl that formerly served as an assembly area for the 3rd Shock Army as well as being an active chemical warfare training area. 'Just make sure your men stick to the tracks,' we were told, 'We did a sweep yesterday and found one tonne of unexploded ordnance. Oh, and there was a chemical incident a couple of years ago, so don't pick up anything that looks unusual.'

Before the work started, we were fortunate to have some time to ourselves while the Log Bn took their time setting up the camp. **Sig Gallagher** and **LCpl Boyle** quickly sniffed out the more dubious establishments in town; quite how **LCpl Boyle** managed to spend more than his debit card's daily limit in the space of an evening remains a mystery. The comms plan was executed simply, with the deployment of two rebros on a large feature that was at least a couple of metres out of the MLRS danger zone. Danger close? The Exercise continued in the usual AMF(L) vein, with the Americans forgetting to turn up on the first day, the Spanish flying into the impact area during firing and the Hungarians landing rounds outside an impact area measuring 2km by 2km. Collective security? Multinational deterrent force? **Cpl Ansell's** naked shower in the middle of the day probably achieved the latter.

For the first NATO exercise in Hungary, we were warmly received by both the Host Nation Support unit and locals alike. Cultural trips to Budapest were particularly cultural; the East Europeans manage to do the most fascinating things with snakes. **Cpl Howe** certainly did his bit for cementing local relations, while **Sig Wood** and **Sig Clark** found the locals particularly accommodating in their kind loan of national flags. **SSgt Allan** and **Sgt Jackson** still seem a bit twitchy when they pass a parking attendant, though…A final note to any American readers: if you want your Gerbers, Leatherman, watch, rations or anything else you may have mislaid, do contact **LCpl Vallance** (tall chap, seems to have lost all his berets).

EXERCISE SPRING FORAY 2000 – *by Cpl Gareth Howell*

Ex Spring Foray is an annual exercise carried out by 3 (UK) DSR and this year members of 249 Sig Sqn were tasked to help out. For the lucky members of the Squadron who were chosen, this was an experience they wouldn't forget in a hurry. The majority of the Squadron members had never worked with Armour or at Divisional level before; what had we let ourselves in for!? On deployment the lads were split up and while **Cpl Kenny** and his RRB crew went for the easy life with 206 Sig Sqn, the remainder were spread amongst the two radio troops of 202 Sig Sqn, Overloon and Waterloo. We were divided between the dets that were short of crewing and wasted no time in being put to work and work we certainly did.

Week One consisted of getting to grips with the detachments and the equipment we would be using. The majority of the kit was new to us; things such as ATacCS, hubs, starboxes, fibre, Tac ICs and penthouse tentage not to mention the 432s. Trying to understand the complex layout was a task in itself. After several moves and total lack of sleep, the lads started to get to grips with the kit and had a basic idea of what was going to happen the following week.

Week Two began and I have never seen anything like it when the staff arrived. The complex that everyone had spent hours preparing for the arrival of the staff suddenly became a no-go area; far too many people for my liking. I was used to working isolated detachments; the last time I saw this many officers in one place I was serving them in the Officers' Mess. I suddenly felt as if I had become chief brew boy as I was attached to the complex Corporals, a job I wouldn't wish on anyone: too many jobs to do and not enough time or personnel to do them. Nonetheless, we would all like to thank everyone from Overloon Tp for the help we received over the two weeks. If I have learnt anything from the two weeks, it is how hard everyone works to make an exercise like this run smoothly. It was certainly an eye-opener and an experience I will not forget in a hurry. It was good to see how the other half live and work, an experience I think everyone in the Corps should have an opportunity to do at some point in their career.

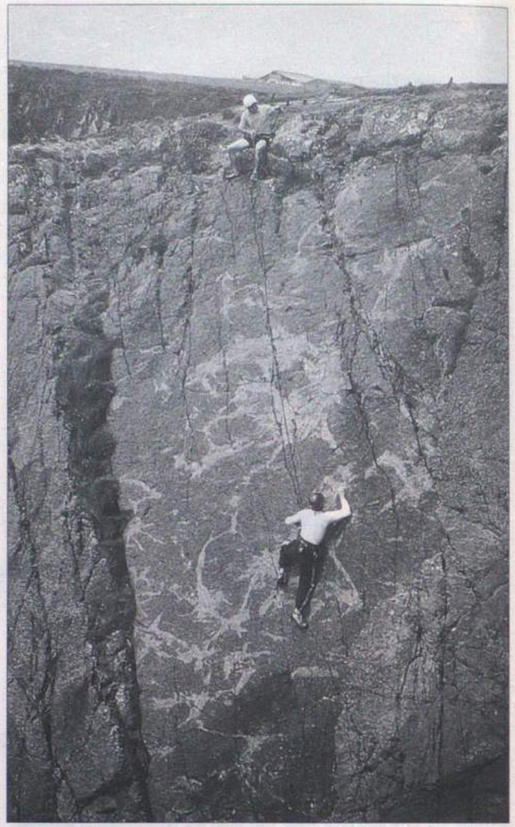
EXERCISE ADVENTUROUS DRAGON - *by Capt Niall Stokoe*

Ex Adventurous Dragon was a Squadron Level 2 Adv Trg exercise conducted at the home of 14 Sig Regt (EW) in Brawdy SW Wales over the period 5–16 June 2000. As an ex-member of the Regiment it seemed logical to take advantage of the Adv Trg facilities they have at Brawdy. In all 48 members took part in the exercise, deploying in groups of 24 for each week. Over a four day period they were able to do Trekking, Climbing, Mountain Biking, Sea-Kayaking and Coasteering. Most were able to get in some extra-curricular surfing as well.

Evening activities included bowling, 5-a-side football and go-karting. Local public relations were avidly pursued and spearheaded by **LCpl**

The Royal Signals Amateur Radio Society
Have you heard of us?
If not visit:
http://www.rsars.org.uk

Capt Chris Preston – Surfing 249 Style



Sgt Steve McAllistair puts his faith in Sig Patterson

'Trooper' **Bennett** and most notably **LCpl** 'Taff' **Jenkins**. Both phases of the Adv Trg passed without incident and it is safe to say that everybody enjoyed themselves. Although the reading of next month's bank statements will probably mar the experience for most. As with any such deployment there are a number of awards to be given, they are as follows:

a. I'll talk large but actually not jump coasteering award – **Sig Cole**.
b. Suicide climbing technique (jointly awarded) – **Sigs King** and **McLeish**
c. The Sea – Kayak as a porcelain bus award – **LCpl Bennett**
d. The Schumacher crash re-enactment award – **SSgt Allen**

The above awards in some way illustrate the fun that was had by all on the Exercise and as the main aim of the exercise was to have fun it was definitely achieved. There are people who worked in front of and behind the scenes to make the Exercise the success it was and our thanks goes to **SSgt Roberts** and **Cpl Anderson** of the Adventure Training Centre at Brawdy. **Sgt Steve McAllistair** from the gym at Blandford, who was our climbing instructor for the two weeks, and our very own chef, **LCpl Tinder.**

Coasteering
'We'll jump where the waves really crash in over there!!'

PHOTOGRAPHS

Please do not ask for the return of photographs unless they are truely irreplaceable. Contributors should be aware of the fact that although every care is taken with contributions, they should not risk losing those photographs which cannot be replaced in the event of an accident.

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

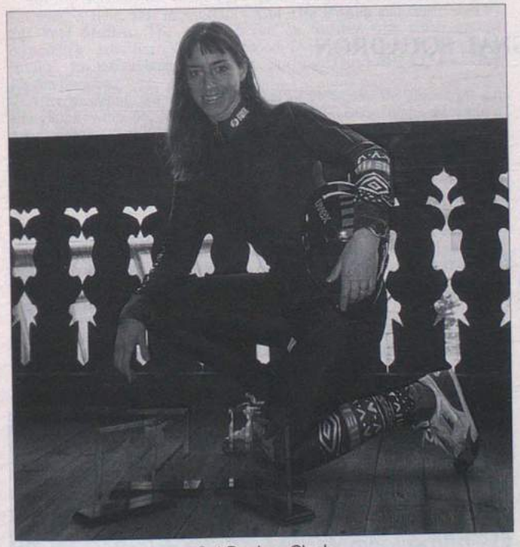
Sqn Comd **Maj John Oakes**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Gary Smith**

HAIL AND FAREWELL

Departures and arrivals have picked up again over the last few months, with two new arrivals and four departures: Welcome to the COMMCEN, **LCpl** 'Mags' **Thomson** posted in from HQ LANDCENT, and to the Technical Workshop, **LCpl McIlduff** posted in from 11 Sig Regt, Blandford. Farewell to **SSgt Whiting** who after 22 years of service has gone to CivDiv, **Cpl Bateman** posted to MOD Centre Block, London, **Cpl Shearan** who has transferred to Defence Dental Agency, and **LCpl Dean** posted to the Army Apprentices College, Arborfield.

CONGRATULATIONS

The Squadron has seen a few well deserved promotions of late and our congratulations go to the following: **Sgt Steve Gill** and **Sgt Martin Stebbing** both selected for promotion to Staff Sergeant. Congratulations to **LCpl** 'Mags' **Thomson** on the birth of her baby boy, **Ewan**. Last but not least, congratulations to **Sgt Daphne Clash** who competed in the British Skeleton Bobsleigh Championships and walked away with the Army Female and British Female Novice trophies, and is now the British Female Intermediate Champion and the Army Open Female Champion, well done.



Sgt Daphne Clash

SKELETON BOBSLEIGH - *By Sgt Daphne Clash*

Due to the double booking of the Bobsleigh track in Igls, Austria in January, the British Skeleton Bobsleigh Championships had to be re-booked in February. However, this posed a problem, **Kristan Bromley** and **Alex Hamilton** the top male and female sliders in Britain (and the world in **Alex's** case) would be competing in Canada's 'Goodwill Games'. The British Skeleton Association decided to rename the event the British Skeleton Intermediate and Novice Championships, as the two missing sliders would undoubtedly have been the true British Champions. Their stipulations were: a novice being someone who had begun to slide this season and an Intermediate being someone who had not been competing for the British team this season. However, incorporated within this competition were the Army Championships, which was open to all categories.

As a novice (I started by doing a week's novice course in Lillehammer in October), I was looking forward to a week's sliding to gain further experience, and also the social side of meeting new sliders and seeing others from the same novice course again. After arriving and registering on Monday 14 February, we had until the Friday morning to train for the final competition. Unfortunately, over the four days the weather was poor, which made the track and training extremely inconsistent; also at times very slow. However, the beers in the evening compensated for any possible disappointment for slow slide times!

During the week the Army and RAF Bobsleigh men and women began training for their team selections for the Interservices Bobsleigh Championships to be held the following week. Also, **Katy** and the Blue Peter Team came to film the barmy goings on. Igls was suddenly packed with Brits – the Gruberhoff bar was certainly getting through the beer.

Finally the day of the competition came, suddenly everyone seemed a little more serious: proper warm-ups were being done; new (gimp) suits were being sucked on; some even risked putting less padding on their arms (all in the name of aerodynamics)! Each competitor has two slides; the two times are then added together, this determines the position the competitor reaches in the final results. I was extremely disappointed with my first slide having made crucial mistakes on the way down, however a slightly better second slide at least ensured I wouldn't finish too cheesed off. As it happened I hadn't done too badly and came away with the Army Female and British Female Novice trophies, plus the British Female Intermediate Champion and the Army Open Female Champion! It was a really enjoyable week and has made me even more enthusiastic (if that was possible) for this completely bonkers, dangerous, fast, skilful sport. I urge anyone who gets the chance to go on this year's novice courses – it really is an experience you will never forget. I definitely intend to be sliding next season. Maybe I will see some of you who are willing to get to grips with your fear and try something new!

LONG SERVICE AND GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL PRESENTATION

As part of the first official visit to 251 Sig Sqn, on 7 April 2000, the new Commander 2(NC) Bde, **Brig N. C . Jackson MBE**, presented four members of the Squadron with their Long Service and Good Conduct Medals. The presentation took place in the Duchess of Kent Barracks Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess and was attended by all military personnel, and civilians of officer status. **Brig Jackson** then joined the Squadron for a buffet lunch and drinks to celebrate the awards.

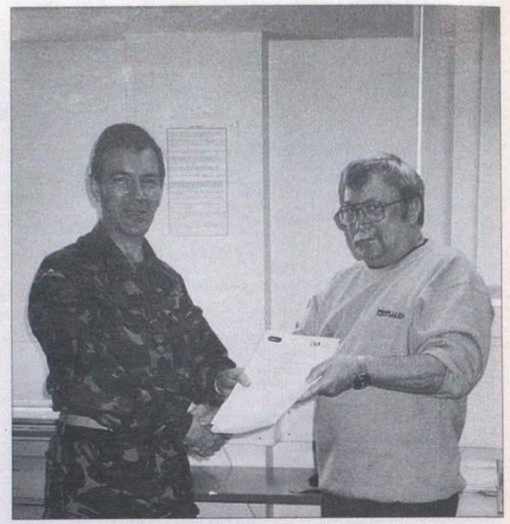
Rear Row (L-R): Maj Oakes, Sgt Gill, Brig Jackson, WO2(YofS) Cardwell, Sgt Stebbing, Cpl Hanbidge
Front Row (L-R): Mrs Gill (with children Laura and Emma), Mrs Cardwell

NVQ PRESENTATION TO 251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Brig N. C. Jackson MBE also visited COMMCEN Aldershot, 251 Sig Sqn on 7 April to present two members of staff with their National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) certificates. Aldershot is a very busy COMMCEN and it has taken both recipients of the award over six months to compile and prepare their submission for assessment and accreditation. The two COMMCEN staff who received their certificates were **Miss Jo Telford** and **Mr Mick Biglin**. The recipients, who are both communications officers based in Aldershot, obtained NVQ qualification

in 'Operating and Maintaining Telecommunications Equipment' (OTE) at Level 3 which deals with all aspects of military communications. **Brig Jackson** thanked the staff for all their had work and dedication. He hoped that their enthusiasm would inspire others to obtain NVQ qualifications, not just in the communication grades, but across all other MOD grades.

NVQ Presentation to Miss Jo Telford
(L-R): Brig N. C. Jackson, MBE, (2(NC) Sig Bde Comdr) and Miss Jo Telford



NVQ Presentation to Mr Mick Biglin
(L-R): Brig N. C. Jackson, MBE, (2(NC) Sig Bde Comdr) and Mr Mick Biglin

259 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. H. Fraser**
SSM **WO2 D. Ewing**

AIRFIELD TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Gareth Kemp**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Bob Stenhouse**

It is sad to say that we have a few who are departing from the Airfield Tp Massive. **Sgt** 'Get your burns up' **Parton,** his wife **Angela** and daughter **Lucy** are of to pastures new at 15 Sig Regt. **Sig Bennet** has left to go to 3 Inf Bde, and **Sig Gaz** 'I've a lot of loving' **Fuins** is leaving to go to 16 Sig Regt, all will be missed and we wish them the best of luck. **Sig Goddard** has arrived to step into the illustrious shoes of the departing mechs, welcome to Cyprus and good luck, you have a lot to live up to. On a brighter note Airfield Tp having entered the Akrotiri 100km rowing contest, produced a magnificent performance and became all island rowing champions. The team consisted of ten willing volunteers rowing 10km each all having had to overcome the swells and currents of the Akrotiri gym. **Cpl Danny Rudd** organiser of the Airfield Tp Team managed to get the best out of the Airfield rowers consisting of **Lt Kemp, SSgt Stenhouse, Sgt Parton, Sgt Waring, Sigs Hobson, Milevsky, Bennet, Stanley**, and **Joughin**.

DHEKELIA TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Nick Morris**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Taff' **Bryant**

Over the last few months Dhekelia Tp has been through a major overhaul with the move of the Troop from the old crumbling double building to the bottom floor of the Dhekelia Operations Centre (DOC). This has brought together all the Troop Sections under one roof and has made life far easier to operate and administrate. On the sporting front the Bistsa football team got through to the semi-finals of the ESBA league and were beaten by a narrow margin of 10-1 by B Coy 1 Cheshire. The Troop has said farewell to **LCpl Scott Tomblin** and **Zoe**, who are off to sunny Ireland, **LCpl Lorraine Dennis** off to 21 Sig Regt Colerne, **Sig Daz Ling** off to Civvy street, the Troop wish them all the best. The new arrivals are **Sig kye Topping** and **Sig Ben Tierney** welcome and enjoy!

EPISKOPI TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Sarah Covey-Crump**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Jim Duncan**

A fond farewell to **Cpl Pete Richards** who has left sunny Cyprus to join the ever increasing number of ex-259 Sig Sqn personnel at 21 Sig Regt (AS). Take it easy on the scrumpy cider and please, no more barking at stray dogs. Good luck also to **Sig** (now LCpl) **John** 'Old woman' **Atkinson** and **Sally** in Aldershot. Many thank for the six-foot cactus you left in the bar, that will come in very useful. A belated hello to **LCpl** 'Monkey boy' **Larcombe** and **LCpl Carl Tindall** who have joined the Tech workshop. Line Section has been bolstered with the arrival of **LCpl Dave Healy** from 8 Inf Bde, and **LCpl Palmer** from 7 Sig Regt. Welcome to the Mech world and land of the never-ending tasking order. Don't unpack just yet you've got the Falkland and Kosovo first and if you're lucky Troodos too. **Sig Guy Thomson** has newly arrived from Dhekelia and definitely qualifies for the award for getting so much hair under his beret. He is joined in Radio Section by **Sig Andy Cooper** posted in from 249 Sig Sqn. Please take that bergen off and remove the word 'tabbing' from your vocabulary. Finally a big Epi welcome to **Sig Jay Emett** who has joined the mechs in Line Section straight from the factory. Hopefully you will have had a full briefing from **Sgt** 'Fudge' **Macphee** at Blandford. We hope you all enjoy Cyprus.

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

101 LOGISTIC BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS & SIGNAL SQUADRON (261)

Sqn Comd **Maj Mark Baines**

The Squadron has been expanding by the day with over a dozen new arrivals since our last entry. This increase in manpower has been matched with an increase in activity both work and play. The second exercise Spring Viper 2 was held in June and with so many new people it was quite an introduction especially for the newer elements of SHQ and **Capt Sarah Pedder** (2IC) and **FofS Sue Spencer**. We are presently preparing to deploy on our third build up Exercise next week. Other more pleasant activities have included Summer Camp, the Morrison Cup Athletics and for those who get a kick out of pain the Lanyard Trophy Competition.

LANYARD TROPHY COMPETETION – *by Sig 'Chopper' Harris*

It was a cold and crisp morning when the gallant men of the 261st mustered with the rest of them for the start which was depressingly in the dark. The names of those heroic few are **Maj Baines, WO2 Alger, Cpl** 'Tommo' **Thomas, LCpl** 'Twiz' **Twissell, Sig** 'Paddy' **Grierson, Sig** 'Spanky' **Hanks, Sig** 'Geordie' **Holden, Sig** 'Smuged' **Smith, Sig** 'Will you hurry up' **Watson** and **Sig** 'Tank' **Harris**. As 5am struck we bolted off at a blinding pace neck and neck with the best of them but this was short lived and our mercurial flight dissolved into a slow but determined trudge. By check-point four we had lost two which meant to finish as a team everyone else counted. The battle was on through tired limbs and bleeding feet but eventually we crawled home in 16hrs 40mins and in 15th place. Thanks goes to all those who had a go either just in training or in the competition as well as **WO2 Jim Alger** for organising the training. Not forgetting the support element led by **Sgt** 'Dad' **Mullen** and **Cpl** Timmy' **Bishop** whose supply of bananas and boilies never ran dry.

EXERCISE SAMMY STROLL 2000

261 Sig Sqn summer camp was held in Newquay, Cornwall starting on Saturday, 3 June, ably organised by **Cpl Tim Bishop** and supervised by **Sgt Pete Mullen.** The circuit began on Sunday with small groups completing activities. These included Deep Sea Fishing, Mountain Biking, Rock-Climbing, Abseiling, Surfing, Quad Biking and Clay Pigeon Shooting.

After sampling the evening delights of Newquay the Squadron got straight on with a day of activities. Some found it easier than others and it was noted that **Cpl** 'Chico' **Towers** spent the majority of his day deep sea fishing either sleeping or feeding the fish on beer by holding his head over the side of the boat! The Mountain Biking activity consisted of a 22km cycle along the Camel Trail organised by **LCpl Tony Willis**. Other than an unfortunate collision between **Sig** 'Dimbers' **Dimberline** and **Sig** 'Chopper' **Harris**, when two bikes were written off, this went very smoothly. The Quad Biking was an excellent opportunity for everyone to show off their driving skills, or lack of them as in **Sig** 'Dangerous' **Conley's** case. (A name he got before this by writing off a Corsa). The Clay Pigeon Shooting left the pigeons well up on the scoring most of which got away without even a scratch ! Top Shoot of the week was **Sig Gemma Treen** which surprised everyone. Surfboarding and Canoeing was a very popular activity as it was a good opportunity to spend some time on the beach. Some of the keener ones decided to attempt Sea Canoeing, however, **Sig** 'Tom' **Hanks** got a little over confident and he had to be rescued. Climbing and Abseiling took place on a climbing wall in the morning progressing to a 160-foot cliff face in the afternoon. There was also a traverse across the cliff and the braver members of the Squadron decided to take up the challenge and pull them self across the ravine.

The end of the week was marked with a BBQ supplemented by a couple of the huge Pollocks caught by the Dea Sea Fishers. An excellent week for the Squadron.

EXERCISE STRING OF PEARLS – *by Sig Gemma Treen.*

In May four members of 261 Sig Sqn went to the National Army Museum, Chelsea where they represented the Army of today in 'The Army Through The Ages' exhibition. After an evening of showing around Cpl 'Axel' Meilens (Royal Australian Signals) on Friday everything was set up and ready for the museum opening early Saturday morning. The display was a typical detachment set up and a tent displaying photographs of recent 261 events which included our tour of Kosovo, exercises, the cross country championships and most recently the Lanyard Trophy competition. There were also 349 radios and an SA80 for the children to play with. **LCpl Gav Holloway** found great pleasure in camouflaging the children, much to their parents despair! Overall the weekend was a great success organised by **Cpl Ian Galloway's** leadership and organisational skills. After being asked back again in the near future, it was agreed that the weekend had been an enjoyable and interesting one for us all.

FINALLY

Some major personalities have recently left us and we wish in particular **WO2 (SSM) Brown** and **WO2 (FofS) Morche** all the best in their new postings. We also welcome a raft of new comers: **SSgt Dummer, Cpls Reynolds** and **Monger, LCpls Ellison, Milford, Mooney, Skeggs, Taylor** and **Watson**, also **Sigs Campbell, Blower** and **Hartley**.

280(UNITED KINGDOM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. A. Harris**
RSM **WO1(RSM) Kearney**

RETURN FROM THEATRE

At long last the Squadron finally managed to recover from its KFOR mission, even if in true 280 fashion it had to deploy fifteen personnel from the rear party to cover the gap between the already deployed personnel leaving and the EUROCORPS arriving. The End of Mission brought changes in command with the Sqn Comd, **Maj Simon Hutchinson MBE, WO1(RSM) McKenna** and Tech Adjt, **Capt Dave Stewart** handing over, we wish them and their families well in Glasgow,Wrexham and Northern Ireland respectively. Welcome to the new Sqn Comd, **Maj Jim Harris** and his wife **Fiona, Capt Ossie Osborne** and family, and **WO1(RSM) Keaney** and family. Although following the End of Mission festivities and Medal Parade the majority of the Squadron then left for extended Post Tour leave, the rest of the Squadron still managed to take part in Exercise Combined Endeavor, which was again a great success.

END OF MISSION PARTY

Following the Squadron's return from Kosovo and during the week before Post Tour leave the LAD put together another great All Ranks Party, during which the main entertainment was provided by **Sig Smiejkowski** and thanks to the hypnotist, the future **Mrs Smiejkowski** learned a thing or two that perhaps she didn't know before. We were also fortunate enough to be joined by **OfW Walter** and **OfW Cleve** from our sister unit, the 990th (GE) Signal Regiment, who had the enviable pleasure of working as British Troop Staff Sergeants for 280 during the tour in Kosovo.

MEDAL PARADE, FRANCISCA BARRACKS - 14 APRIL 00

Some sterling efforts were made by **SSgt** 'H' **Baker** in an attempt to bring the Squadron's drill movements up to speed on return from a six month tour in the Balkens. After a crash course and a few sessions on the square, members of 280(UK) Sig Sqn paraded on 14 April 2000 to receive medals for operational service in both Kosovo and Bosnia. It was a particularly moving event as it was not only a medal parade but also a parade that marked the change of command from the previous Squadron Commander, **Maj Simon Hutchinson** and the new Squadron Commander, **Maj Jim Harris**. It was also the last day in the Squadron for RSM, **Mick McKenna** and so it seemed only right that both the outgoing (OC and RSM should do a lap of honour of the camp while being swung on a pallette dangling from a crane! Obviously to comply with Health and Safety hard hats were issued! Then it was off for six weeks well deserved leave.

ALPHA TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt B. Higgs**
Tp SSgt **SSgt K. Roberts**

We must wish all the best to **Cpls Wells** and **Menzies** in Northern Ireland (and congratulations to **Ross** and **Miss Karen Penny** of Stirling, on their forthcoming wedding) and good luck to **Sigs Viagas** and **Crothers** in Civvie street. The whole Squadron has been shaken up with the disbandment of Charlie Tp and along with the new arrivals of the last six months the Troop is now approaching a normal size for the first time in twelve months. The welcomes to the Troop include: **Sgt McLaughlin, Cpls Cattle** and **Rycroft, LCpls Dempster, Donaldson, Humby, Leslie, Mallet, Wallace** and **Sig Young**. As always with 280 (Balkans) Sqn some of the new arrivals had already departed for a tour in Bosnia before we returned from Kosovo, and we hope that they are doing well, and look forward to them eventually rejoining the Troop.

BRAVO TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Lindsey Calderhead**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Graeme Weavers**

Bravo Tp, now including several members of the old Alpha and Charlie Tps due to the recent Squadron re-organisation, has seen a number of new

faces. Firstly we would like to welcome to the Troop **Cpl Cattle, Cpl Templemen, LCpl Booth, LCpl Pearmen, Sig Healey** and **Sig Gill**. A welcome back must also be said to **Sig James**. Farewells must go to **LCpl Turner** (posted to 3(UK) Div) and Cpl Gilbert (posted to 21 Sig Regt).

EXERCISE COMBINED ENDEAVOUR 2000

'By someone who was there'

On Sunday 07 May 2000, 8 members of the Squadron, **SSgt (FofS) Rick** 'Udo' **Griffiths, Cpl Daz** 'Tony Toenails' **Cattle, Dave** 'PB' **Rycroft, Andrew** 'This bed is lumpy' **Jackson, LCpls Gordon** 'Snores louder than a Yak' **Carle, Iain** 'I'm quiet 'till I've had a beer, then I'm LOUD' **Wallace, Ester** 'GW' **Humby** and finally **Sig Les** 'Wannabe' **Ryall** departed camp for the sunny destination of Baumholder, home of Ex Combined Endeavour 2000, billed as the largest CIS interoperability exercise in the world. Sponsored by the United States European Command (USEUCOM) Partnership for Peace programme, this year's exercise consisted of 35 participating nations and organisations, including NATO.

We arrived on Sunday afternoon to be told the Exercise would not actually start until Wednesday, however, our training on the new Combined Endeavor Planning, Tracking and Reporting (CEPTR) database would fill the next couple of days. So it was with heavy hearts that we went down the bar to work out the escape plan. On Tuesday we left the bar long enough to welcome the rest of our motley crew, who were **WO2 (FofS) Martin** 'Fluff' **Flather, Cpl Maz** 'Tanya Toenails' **Cattle** and **Sigs Donna** 'Don't make me beat you' **Henley** and **Sarah** 'I walked into a door . honest' **Kimberley**. The actual Exercise started in earnest on Wednesday morning at 0630hrs. With 43 different types of Switch to try and understand and document the days were long, but human interoperability is a key part of this multi-national event, so the socialising remained as important as ever. Most noteworthy were the Bavarian Night and a Talent Night, where our own **WO2 (FofS) Martin** 'Fluff' **Flather** proved just how talented he was by talking and drinking with every nationality in the bar, and **Cpl Dave** 'PB' **Rycroft** demonstrated to the Americans how to do that traditional dance including flaming toilet paper and an indoor assault course.

The Exercise was stood down on two occasions for social events, the first one being a day trip into the town of Mainz where the Squadron showed that they were the foremost in escape and evasion by escaping from the tour guide at the earliest opportunity. The second took the form of a sports day and a sevens rugby match against our old friends the Americans. They put up a good fight, helped in no small measure by our referee **Maj Garth Pickersgill** but they still got beat! After three gruelling weeks the Exercise was over and finished with a closing ceremony with **LCpl Gordon** 'I'm Scottish, rain doesn't bother me' **Carle** not wearing his waterproof jacket and just as the visiting dignitaries were giving their speeches it rained and rained but everybody agreed that Ex Combined Endeavour 2000 was a big success

1 (ROYAL BUCKINGHAMSHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS)

Sqn Comd **Maj David Raleigh**
SSM **WO2 Dave Scott**

The period of these WIRE Notes has been extremely hectic, not least with new operations deploying and numerous visitors to host. We have bade **Sgts Steve Milne** and **Vinnie Hill** best wishes on their Yeoman of Signals Course; once again all those SC Operators who applied for Yeoman training were successful. **Sgt Danny Ford** has also departed to the wilds of 14 Sig Regt, after many long years in SC. We thank him for his sterling service and wish him the best of luck. In return, we have welcomed **Sgt Dave Thomas**, who begins a new and hopefully glorious career as NRPS. Other new recruits are **Sgt Simon** 'Wez' **Wesseldine** and **Cpl Steve Pritchard**. The latter had just completed his arrivals proforma before being whisked away on operations, stuffing malaria pills as he went.... Congratulations are also due to **WO2 (RQMS) Willie** 'The Safecracker' **Ironside** for the birth of his No2 son, and the Ops Officer, **Capt Richard** 'I spend too long in the office' **Newhouse** on getting an expedition to the top of Kilimanjaro and back.

The start of April saw teams deploy to Scotland and Cornwall to test the

Special Comms goes to Africa - the Ops Officer on Kilimanjaro (without a radio)

new HF equipment which the Squadron is due to take delivery of over the summer. **Sgt Ian** 'Avast!' **Lumsden-Gordon** was in his element in Dundee putting the Field Detachment through its paces, but things did not go so well in Cornwall. After much hard work, **SSgt (FofS) Ted** 'Nobody cares about Techs/ LOCK / me' **Heath** had to declare the trial a failure, and the Exercise will be repeated in June. **Sig Tanya Whigham** has earned her first 'mention in despatches' for coming top of the Recruits Course at Blandford, and is now a qualified Class 3 Operator. Several other new, and not-so-new, TA soldiers have qualified as Class 3, either with 33 Sig Regt (thanks!) or on exercise. Last, but certainly not least, the Squadron has now moved to being under the command of 2 Sig Bde after five very successful years directly under HQ Land. This means that we welcome **Brig Nigel Jackson** as the new Director Special Communications, and thank **Brig James Shaw** and his staff for their hard work and support.

SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS PARATROOPERS

Several brave/foolhardy members of the Squadron volunteered to undergo the Squadron's pre-parachute selection course in May. They were joined by some volunteers from neighbouring 60 Sig Sqn (V) in Aylesbury, who have 'inherited' ten parachute posts from 55 Sig Sqn (V). Under the watchful eyes of the DS, **Lt Angus Evers** and **LCpl Gaz Woolley**, the candidates were put through a challenging course comprising a BFT, ten mile tab, gym tests and a very wet steeplechase (thanks SSM!). All the candidates survived the course, but not all passed it. Lucky **LCpl Simon Roberts** won a free weekend away-break in sunny Catterick for his efforts. We wish him well on P Company! The Squadron has a small but dedicated contingent of parachute-trained personnel, TA and Regular who are keen to jump with any other units in the Corps (or the Army for that matter) with a parachute role. Any offers of a couple of places on a C-130 or Skyvan will be gratefully received and almost certainly accepted.

SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS COURSE

SC Course 1/00 has just commenced, with the lucky seven busy practicing their trade skills and dusting off their A&P knowledge. It has been decided to conduct a second SC Assessment Course, in September, leading to attendance on a Special Communications Course 2/00, starting in November this year. Any Radio Sys Ops who wish to volunteer should follow the procedure in SOinC PD 206, or contact the unit for advice.

EXERCISE GLOBAL LYNX 3/99 – FAR EAST

The last exercise of the training year was a major deployment to Singapore, Brunei, Bangkok and (it's a hard life!) the Maldives.

BANGKOK DETACHMENT – *by Cpl Kev Heaton*

'Unfortunately **Cpl Heaton'**, the Ops Officer said, 'You are going to have to take a detachment to Bangkok.'

'Err, OK.'

So the scene was set, **Cpl Kev Heaton, LCpl Mark Gower** and **LCpl Paul Chambers** were going to Thailand. British Airways was kind enough to fly us to Thailand and the car sent by the British Embassy dropped us off at our hotel. We were shown to our rooms by the porter, who then continued to talk through the mod cons in the room. 'Here you turn on the aircon, and here you turn on the TV and do you want a woman for the night?'

On the comms side, we established a communications centre in a third floor flat and managed to erect our antennas across the steep roof of the flat, (not quite health and safety), and begin working the link. The communications phase of the exercise began with earnest with **LCpl Mark Gower** and myself carrying out the operating, whilst our technician, **LCpl Paul Chambers**, made himself busy adjusting the straps of the 'genuine' Rolex and Tag Heur watches we 'might' have bought, and pushing the hoover around.

For R & R, we decided to hire a limo for one of the days, bartering the driver down to £30. One of the places we visited was the Bridge on the River Kwai, which is one of those 'once in a life time visits'. The sights and sounds of Bangkok city itself were also sampled by the Detachment. Its strange how Thailand seemed to like out-of-tune Karaoke singers.

BRUNEI DETACHMENT – *by Cpl Wayne Miller*

This was the first time in Brunei for TA soldiers from 1 (RBY) Signal Squadron (SC). Fortunately, they were under the expert guidance of **Cpl Wayne Miller** who was in this part of the world for his confirmatory exercise on the Special Communications course. After a comprehensive guided tour of Seria (which took all of five minutes), the Detachment established comms to Singapore (which also took all of five minutes). Still, the Detachment was kept busy in practicing new operating procedures, and we all benefited in one way or another from the training aspect of the exercise.

A visit from **Maj Raleigh** and **Maj Miller** (SO2 Spec Comms) added a touch of excitement on the second day. The days were long, and the nights were even longer. Fortunately, there was a bar for the Detachment to retire to in the evening. It has to be said that drinking out of date Guinness for two weeks does nothing for your stomach, but at least it tasted better than Tiger Beer. By the time the exercise drew to a close, all Detachment members had become expert pool players (not through choice I hasten to add), but at least everyone was skilled in something by the time we departed Brunei.

Eventually, the time for some well deserved R & R was upon us, so we decided to hop across the border into Malaysia. The highlight had to be **LCpl Stu Adams'** perseverance in preventing himself from being burnt by the blazing sunshine. Unfortunately, this was to no avail. How can a man who covers himself in a damp towel whilst sitting in the shade under a palm tree all day, still end up looking like a sun-dried tomato? The truth is out there!

MALDIVES DETACHMENT – *by LCpl Gaz Woolley*

The detachment consisting of **Sgt** 'Jeff' **Hope-Jefferson, Cpl Jase Broome** and **LCpl** 'Gaz' **Woolley** arrived at Male Airport and were met by the Maldivian National Security Service who were to be our hosts for the next two weeks. The Detachment was located at Girifushi Training Island, and after the short boat-ride from the airport we arrived at the island and were met by the Chief instructor, **Sgt Rishwan**.

Cpl 'Jase' Broome presenting a Squadron Plaque to Sgt Rishwan (Chief Instructor, Girifushi, Training Island) in the Maldives

The mode of transport for collecting the radio equipment changed from a speedboat to the slightly more relaxed pace of a large passenger boat to enable us to fit all the equipment on board. After a few hours of graft in the blistering sun the detachments radio installation was complete, and communications established to Singapore. The first phase of the exercise had begun and all detachment members were in need of a good nights sleep. We all awoke next morning to discover that the 9th Platoon of the 3rd Battalion of the Maldivian Mosquito Regiment had decided to use us as their midnight snack, and we all scratched our way to breakfast. After testing the comms exploring the island, **Cpl Jase** 'Fitness' **Broome** spent many an hour running around the island, which considering it only took four minutes to do a complete lap, sent him slightly dizzy. The main bay provided a calm and clear area of sea for swimming. It also provided an area for all sorts of creepy crawlies to hide, but we were assured there were no sharks.

The Scenario phase of the exercise was started, and by the end of the first day we had managed to destroy most of the Middle East. The following few days were spent building up a clear scenario picture and consequently the amount of traffic increased and the system was tested to its limit. Before long, the R and R phase began, with a day spent in Male, the capital. This gave the Detachment an opportunity to not only see the cultural aspects of the island but also to get some bargain shopping. We returned to Girifushi that evening with giant wooden dragon, T-shirts and sharks teeth in tow. We then departed for the tourist island of Lowifushi, a magnificent island where we enjoyed all the water-sports and recreational facilities available.

The detachment would like to thank the NSS for their assistance in making this exercise not only an overwhelming success but also a fantastic experience for the Detachment members.

Capt Conrad Giles prepares to sample some of the delights of Singapore

!WANTED!

The Best Radio Sys Ops in the Corps

If you:
Rate yourself as a good operator,
Are adaptable and versatile,
Able to work on your own or in a small team,
Enjoy a challenge and
Enjoy foreign travel (often outside Europe),

Then Special Communications may be for you.

The next Spec Comms Assessment Course will be held September 2000. Those candidates assessed as suitable will be invited back for Special Communications Course 2/00, from November 2000 – March 2001.

Apply now, using the form in SOinC PD 206, available through your Sqn Office or YofS.

For additional information, contact the 1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) Training Wing on (9)4240 8518 / 01908 638518 or the Sqn YofS on (9)4240 8516 / 01908 638516

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT FALKLAND ISLANDS

257 SIGNAL SQUADRON BECOMES JCUFI

OC JCUFI **Maj Bill Adsett**
USM **WO2 Tom Smith**

257 Signal Squadron formed at the beginning of January comprising over 60 personnel from across 3 (UK) Division Headquarters and Signal Regiment. After a month of training back in Bulford it was time to depart for the South Atlantic as the Army Element of JCUFI (Joint Communications Unit Falkland Islands). JCUFI is tri-service, numbers around 150 and as such is one of the largest independent units in the Falklands. The first couple of months were a blur as everyone learnt the ropes, but there was still time to enjoy a variety of activities: air experience flights, visits to Navy ships, days out with the infantry, battlefield tours, walking expeditions, charity events, and much more. The facilities at MPA include bowling, golf, a cinema, go-karting and watersports to name but a few. For more on these, see the articles from the Troops below. Personnel changes are ongoing as the remaining 80 making up JCUFI are on trickle postings. Within UHQ, we have welcomed a new 2IC, **Flt Lt Mark** 'Look at my creases' **Wright** who replaced **Flt Lt Stu** 'No Belt' **Russell**, and **Lt Pete Simpson** who replaced **2Lt** 'Gentle' **Ben Davenport** as Ops Officer when the latter returned to Blandford for his Troop Commanders Course. Life has stabilised now we are over half way into the tour, but the exercise season is just beginning, and winter is also on its way. Roll on August and a return to the British summer.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Flt Lt Chris Hamilton**
2IC **Sgt John Batts**

It has been a long three months out here in Penguin Country. Time flies when you are having fun! It all began with a small transfer by air to the other side of the world and the story goes on to describe the horrors that our little band in A Tp have had to face.

We arrived in February to find our home in the Falkland Islands. The Mt Adam and Mt Campito Detachments were slung into the back of helicopters and flown to their new homes to relieve the ecstatic (but after six months slightly mad) 1 (UK) Div personnel. Meanwhile the rest of us MPA-bound grafters had extensive and very thorough introductions to the excellent nightlife around MPA, not least 'Sharkies' where **Sgt** 'Smile' **Jenkinson's** warming smile attracts hordes of people to the unit bar. After all the introductions had been made and the hilltops got their first visitors they realised that there was no need to go mad just yet as people still remembered they exist! We (at MPA) all settled down into our 'leisurely' (ha ha – not) routines. While **Sgt** 'Darth Vader' **Batts** took charge we were soon up to **LCpl Andy** 'The Cat' **Cornfield's** hairline (if you know this man you realise how high that is) in crash-out plans, local defence plans and preparation for our first exercise.

Exercise First Adventure was a tactical HF Comms Exercise to accustom us frail operators to the arduous task of HF communications in the Falklands. Little did we know how difficult it would be! I think we all learned something on that exercise. Even **LCpl Julie** 'The Devil' **Cornfield** on shift in RADCON discovered a new love in her life (sorry **Andy**) – an amazing HF antenna. As for the detachment at Goose Green comprising **Cpl** 'Not the Hair' **Wicks, Sig** 'Garth Jr.' **Davies** and myself, we learnt a few things about power. Unfortunately not the type that comes with rank. Not only did we learn that a man-pack will not run for long without spare batteries, but also that a generator can only run so many items of electrical equipment at one time, much to the anger of the EDs. That exercise over we returned to MPA for an extensive session of banter in Sharkies. As we roll on through this epic story of graft it is time to pay homage to our sangers which we've expertly taken apart (demolished) and even more expertly put back together (thrown it all in a pile) an uncountable number of times. I'm proud to announce that every member of RADCON can now fill a sandbag from a seemingly impossible-to-dig embankment in under ten seconds (less than half the time it takes to fill **Cpl Bob** 'Cables don't just break' **Dryden's** amazingly large belly with haggis).

As we drifted slowly along to our halfway point it was time for revenge against all the seniors of the Unit (all for a good cause of course) in the 'Slave for a Day Event'. Armed with a bundle of cash and bags of enthusiasm our A Tp reps went in search of slaves to do all the dirty jobs no-one else will do. In fact our five slaves spent most of the day sewing costumes for the '70s Night and moaning about us working them too hard. Now here we are with three months left to go. Will no-one save us!?

CHARLIE TROOP - *by Lt Aidy Johnson*

Tp Comd **Lt Aidy** 'Disco Queen' **Johnson**
Tp 2IC **SSgt Chris** 'Mad Frankie Fraser' **Loughlin**

Since 14 February in the 2000th year of our Lord 257 Sig Sqn have been lucky enough to occupy the hot seats that make up JCUFI. C Tp consists of four sections which are responsible for various aspects of keeping the comms train firmly on the tracks. This has proved to be a challenge to all involved. Along with the satisfaction of doing a real job there are many activities to keep everyone occupied in the less frantic times. I am confident that we will leave here in August having achieved a great deal. It has been a voyage of self discovery, and the whole Troop have come through the first part of the tour with more caring, sharing and richer personalities. The Falkland Islands' beauty and variety of terrain is breath taking and the grandeur of the MPA death star is the icing on a particularly magnificent cake.

PS: I am now deaf in one ear due to the persistent gale force winds, which is nice.

FITTEST SECTION

There are eight permanent members of this Section based within MPC: **Sgt Walton, Cpl Beck, Cpl Doherty, LCpl Bielski, LCpl Bridger, LCpl North** and **LCpl Perrin**. We also have a resident Marconi Engineer, **John Nicol**, who has just celebrated sixteen years of service on the island. There are also three technicians who are based on three of the mountain sites. These are **LCpl Binnie** at Mount Kent, **LCpl Haughen** at Byron Heights and **LCpl Millard** at Mount Alice. For those based at MPC, the two main jobs are FITEN and FITS. FITEN involves the programming, repair and maintenance of the telephone exchanges; this job is done in association with Line section. The other main job FITTEST is responsible for is the repair and maintenance of the FITS radios and the DIGIFITS links. There are 19 FITS sites scattered throughout the two islands all linked together, through the radios, to provide total coverage island-wide.

Apart from work there are a lot of other things that go on in the workshop. As of a few weeks ago the Section have become proud owners of a little ball of trouble called 'Mickey'. The workshop was a little empty after the unfortunate demise of the original workshop cat FITS when she died of old age, but a replacement was soon found to keep Lister company.

The workshop as a section has plenty of other things on the go, there was go-karting and the forthcoming flight in a Hercules and a VC-10 tanker, which everyone is looking forward to. There are plenty of chances to do adventure training with several weekend walks lined up over some of the mountains on the island. Visits to other Sections are also on the agenda, like the resident Infantry Company who will be allowing us to play with their toys. There is also the opportunity to stay at Blue Beach Lodge and work on the farm and in the guest lodge which is one of the most picturesque locations on the island. There is also upcoming weekend adventure training at Shag Cove, which is always a popular R&R location. The FITTEST section is definitely keeping itself very busy, both in and out of work, and the three months that we have been in the Falklands has passed surprisingly quickly. We are all looking forward to our R&R on Ascension Island and then the last few months until our return to the UK.

LINE SECTION – *by Sig Jones*

Life down in the Falklands continues at a hectic pace. February saw us take over from 1 Div, and take control of the Telecommunications infrastructure. Those of us who thought we were in for a quiet and enjoyable tour got a rude awakening courtesy of **Sgt** 'Elvis' **Hemstead,** who had us working seven day weeks for a three week period, preparing for the upcoming yearly inspection carried out by CPD(Communications Projects Division). Thankfully we were rescued on February 22 when **Sig Dave Butler** came to share his valuable experience. Cheers **Dave**, we don't know how we would have coped without your crisis management talents! Overall it went better than expected, and **Sgt Hemstead** lived to see another day. He even gave us a weekend off.

May saw CPD back down here, this time to install new exchanges in 12 FAC, Mare Harbour and Mt Kent, and the upgrade of the trunk system. This led to the rewire of the FITS cabins on the three mountain sites. Due to the large amount of time that **LCpl Owen Trimble** spent on the mountain sites he has been adopted by the mountain as their mascot. Throughout this period we were getting ready for Exercise Cape Petrel.

Sig Dan Unwin lost at Monopoly on the internet and went to jail for five days, and **Sig Gaz Hitchings** got press ganged and went to sunny Rio

with the Navy. A few minor incidents within the section have included **Sig Butler** impersonating Benny Hill when he saluted the OC Tp without his beret on. There was also the instance where I was attempting to megger a cable without turning on the equipment. We cannot forget to mention our two adopted lineys: **Sig Daz Clarkson** who has been working hard on faults with **LCpl Liam Lee** and our second liney 'SCULLY' (**Sig Scull**), who has been trying his best to run the stores how it should be.

POWER SECTION

Well, we are half way through our tour now and things seem to be more hectic than ever. The first to arrive in theatre was **Sgt** 'Jenks' **Jenkinson** on 8 February. Ten days later, the rest of the team arrived led in by **Cpl Marty** 'Doc' **Warner**. Straight away, things started to get difficult! Twelve Landrovers were due for replacement with brand spanking new civilian ones. When they arrived we found that there were no seats in the back of them. This has led to multiple journeys around MPA just to get people to work! What a nightmare for **Sgt Jenkinson**, so much so that since they arrived, he's been pulling his hair out and has resorted to growing an eyebrow over his top lip.

Cpl 'Doc' **Warner** soon got into sorting out a servicing schedule for the next six months for the generators on the hill top sites, only to find that nearly every week it goes to pot. He's currently on R & R and I'm quite surprised he didn't take it on Mt Caroline, as he spends most of his time up there! **LCpl** 'G.W.A.' **McDermont** heads up the helibid bookings and when he's not up a hill servicing generators, you can usually find him chuntering to himself by his desk or pulling his ginger locks out of his head. He's getting quite friendly with a certain RAF Flying Officer up at the Heli-tasking cell too! Suits you Sir! **Sigs** 'Big Keith' **Malait,** 'Tommo' **Thompson** and **Clare** 'Power Chick' **Ryan** should be congratulated for passing their Class 2 upgrading and can now work without **Sgt Jenkinson** or **Cpl Warner** breathing down their necks anymore. **Sigs Malait** and **Thompson** have also learnt new trades (concreting and brick laying), when they spent a week up at Blue Beach Lodge doing just that. **Sig** 'Big Keith' **Malait** (all 5ft of him) came back looking like Arnold Schwarzenegger and **Sig Thompson** came back looking about two stone heavier due to all the tea he'd consumed while away. **Sig Ryan** passed her Class 2 unaided, as you can usually find her on crutches! In her spare time when she's not rolling Rovers over, she spends her time looking for kerbs or holes to twist her ankles in! The last to be mentioned is **Sig** 'Pottsy' **Potts.** You can find him loitering with intent around the USM's office, ready to start shining **WO2 (USM) Smith's** boots or making him a brew. 'Pottsy', he's not the man that's going to promote you, the man you want lives three doors up the corridor!

All in all, Power Section (being the nerve centre of JCUFI) is working hard and we can safely say that we are all looking forward to 16 August when the big white bird takes us back to sunny 'Blighty' and we can rest our weary right arms! 7 Sig Regt, come on down.

The handover between WO2 (USM) Rook (L) and the current USM, WO2 Tom Smith

ONE MAN AND HIS DOG 3-7 MAY 2000

by LCpl Reg Perrin

William Anderson of Blue Beach Lodge and his collie, Tess walked from San Carlos to Stanley over the period 3-7 May 2000. He is raising money to provide the Falkland Islanders with a proper means to diagnose heart problems. **Wiliam** is 64 years old, has had a quadruple heart bypass operation and suffers from angina, chronic osteoarthritis, spondylitis, hypertension and diabetes; such a walk was therefore a great challenge for him. Tess you will be relieved to know is very healthy.

When I became involved in the walk about a month ago I was staying at Blue Beach Lodge for the week. **William** decided it was about time to do some training, lucky me!! The first tentative steps were taken up the hills at the back of the lodge. It took us quite a while and was hard going, involving quite a few rest breaks at this point. With the walk coming up so soon I had my doubts about whether **William** would manage it. Thankfully my doubts were proved to be unfounded. During the last weekend that I was there, the two of us (and Tess) set off at an ungodly hour for the trek over Sussex Mountain. It was hard going on the climb, but we made good time and eventually managed about 12 miles that morning; before **Williams'** legs decided they could not go any further. The next time I made that journey it was a lot more comfortable. I was driving the Support Rover on the actual walk. I was quite surprised by **Williams'** speed and endurance; he had obviously put in a lot of training in the couple of weeks since I had last seen him. At the beginning there was **William**, Tess, **Maj Bill Adsett** (OC JCUFI) and **Capt Paul Stevenson** (OC MTW) walking. **John Nicol** (JCUFI Marconi Engineer) and I drove the support vehicles; with the shows of BFPS and FIBS blaring from the vehicle mounted speakers.

We did roughly 21 miles to Stanley Gates, which is quite an achievement in itself. The next day we were joined by **Cpl Leslie Beck** (JCUFI) for the walk into MPA. Following a Tornado F3 fly past by **Wg Cdr Bond** (CO FIAW) we reached MPA in the afternoon and **Sqn Ldr Morris Egglestone** (OC JSSU) met us with Military Police Vehicles and dogs. The police then very kindly escorted us as we stopped all passers by for donations. The next morning we set off on the home stretch for Stanley. Every passing car had the bucket waved at them and a lot of money was gathered from a surprisingly small number of cars. That evening the JCUFI girls hit the bars dressed as St Trinian girls and they alone raised around £700, which I know **William** was very grateful for.

The Saturday was probably the best day of the walk. There were quite a few extra walkers and they were treated to a very spectacular display from the Tornado F3 of 1435 flight who performed a couple of low-level passes, one of them with the undercarriage down. Later in the day 78 Sqn Search and Rescue flew in, performed a low pass and then dropped off their OC, (**Sqn Ldr Lee Calderwood**) to personally deliver a cheque for the money raised in MPA. As the Sea King left I did notice a tear in **William's** eye. The Sunday was a quiet day in relation to the rest of the week. It involved about an hour's walk from Sapper Hill to the Cathedral in Stanley for a service and that was the conclusion to The One Man and His Dog Charity Walk.

There are some I would like to thank on behalf of **William**. Firstly the St Trinian girls for their sponsorship efforts, BFBS and FIBS for their help in publicising the walk, 78 Sqn and 1435 Flight for their part and JCUFI as a whole for their support and fundraising efforts.

2 (CITY OF DUNDEE) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

Sqn Comd **Maj Eric Blyth**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Andy Waterston**

TERRITORIAL ARMY - STAFF SERGEANTS COURSE 2000/01

Having put this off for as long as possible, **Sgt Ronnie** 'Bravo Two Zero' **Thomson** and **Sgt Tracey** 'Does my bum look big in these combats' **Waterston** decided to take the plunge and get it over with before they were too old (Too Late). They traveled to Blandford Camp early on the Friday and booked into the luxurious accommodation on offer, namely Anson Block. On meeting some of the other Course Personnel, it seemed only right to visit 'Humph's' for a few drinks. Tiredness and lack of food and five pints of Grolsch later, we returned to the Hilton by 2am, enough said! The Course started at 12pm and time to meet the other 14 Students.

Week One comprised of all the theory subjects required for the exercise phases in Week Two. Lots of Tactics (**Sgt Les Gamble** – What does 'S'stand for?). N.B.C, Map Reading, with a generous helping of fizz in the form of a BPFA, March and Shoot and Log PT, with the sun blazing down, all that was missing was the pina coladas. However, all the phy's stood us in good stead for Week Two. Week Two started with tests on all the subjects taught in Week One. It was then time to collect all the stores required for the Exercise Phase. This was our first introduction to the dreaded defence stores, which were to play a large part in our lives in the 3-day Exercise Phase.

The Exercise took place out on Salisbury Plain and after a few demonstrations on pyrotechnics and radios , it was time to get on with the nitty gritty. Needless to say for the next three days we had to work hard , defending the Comms Site and taking part in commanding Recce Patrols and Clearance/Fighting patrols (and losing glasses,I cannae see Staff!). The photo provided is before the Exercise for those who didn't know, the one after didn't come out as us Jocks were melted to a greasy spot due to the exceptionally hot weather conditions! Once back in camp all the equipment was cleaned and returned to Stores. The next thing on the Agenda was the 'Course Dinner' which was held in the Sergeants Mess. The evenings entertainment was provided by 'Madam Vice', **Sgt Tracey Waterston** who gave an uplifting rendition of 'Suspicious Minds.' this was to be the highlight of the dinner. The usual procedure of port drinking carried on into the night, with generous donations from **Sgt Waterston, Sgt Les Gamble** and **Sgt Addie Stowel**, as the Course and the Training Team partied into the early hours.

On the Friday the Course wound down to allow them to carry out necessary admin, and it was the last opportunity for the Course to socialise, together, ie: another Nepalese curry at the acclaimed restaurant next door to 'Humph's'. On the Saturday they all said their farewells and returned to their Units with a lot of knowledge, more experience and a feeling of achievement.and loads of bruises eh **Sgt Helen Mountey** and **Sgt Karen Lyons**!!! A special thanks must go to SQMS Chalky? who was an inspiration to us all cheers mate!

Sgt Ronnie Thomson and Sgt Tracey Waterston

EXERCISE NORTHERN BLUEBELL 2000 – *by Sgt Dave Heap*

Ex Northern Bluebell was a Comd ES 2 Div competitive training exercise for REME that took place over the weekend 5 –7 May 2000 at Warcop (AFTC). The aim was to test REME soldiers in trade and military skills, also to assess the readiness and standards of training of REME in 2Div.

As usual 2 Sig Sqn (V) REME Attached (may I say the smallest unit participating!) entered a highly skilled and well motivated team that also included two Royal Signal members (well someone has to employ them). **Lt Alistair** 'What course can I do next' **Galloway**, a true leader of men, an ambassador to his Corps, an academic intellectual even after being head butted by a rifle blackening his eye and breaking his nose. Back to the point, continued to push his men to the limits of endurance on the assault course to obtain one of the fastest times of the day. Considering the average age of the team was 45 mainly due to **LCpl** 'Dead Eye' **Abbott's** participation, the team produced a good effort. The Team would have received first prize if it weren't for **LCpl Joe** *'Shiny Top'* **Wiggins** zimmer-frame collapsing at the wall.

Saturday morning was a 0700hrs start at the First Aid Stand where **Sgt Dave** 'REME for ever' **Heap** was found by the team in a field suffering from hypothermia, exhaustion and a broken ankle. This after wandering aimlessly around the training area all night with no one but sheep to talk to. (Poor Sheep). Miraculously **Cpl Rod** 'Dr Death' **Hamilton** and his sidekick **LCpl Joe** 'Shiny Top' **Wiggins** healed him. No names no pack drills, someone tried to warm **Sgt Heap** with his body. He got quite worried when he produced a sleeping bag and suggested that they get in it together. One of the tasks on the Local Manufacture Stand was to manufacture a NATO socket extension lead and **Cfn** (at present Class 4) **Smith** (an electrical whiz kid) took on the task. A cut here, a snip there and a few intricate joints, yes he was the head surgeon in the theatre of electro mechanical engineering.

There were many memorable moments over the weekend but the one that stood out the best was the wacky race. Each team had to manufacture a two-man tricycle. There were bat mobiles, helicopters, ships, three wheeled prams and low slung racing triclopse. As with all major racing venues, the streets were cleared, straw bales situated at the danger spots and countless ambulances and medics on standby in case of a horrendous pile up, and I can tell you there were plenty. The end of the race was like the aftermath of a major battle. Buckled bike wheels bent and twisted frames, splintered wood and manly wounded pride. The bar was opened and the race forgotten. No, we did not win. Our team tricycle was driven by the two very famous formula triclopse racing drivers. **Lt Alistair Galloway** and his sidekick **LCpl Dave** 'Pit Stop' **Lyall**. The presentation on Sunday was the icing on the cake for our team. We returned to Dundee with a rather large trophy and plaque. Beware, 2 Div, for next year, 2 Sig Sqn (V) will be the team to fear.

Exercise Northern Bluebell Team
(L-R): LCpl Abbott, Cpl Hamilton, Cfn Smith, LCpl Lyall, 2Lt Galloway and Cpl Wiggins

CITY OF EDINBURGH UNIVERSITIES OFFICERS TRAINING CORPS

CO **Lt Col A. A. S. Harwell**
OIC Sub Unit **2Lt G. P. Gaw**
PSI **WO2 (SSM) Shelmerdine**

Formed in 1945 the Royal Signals Sub Unit plays an important role within Edinburgh's University Officers Training Corps. This academic year has seen the Sub Unit achieve a great deal and maintain the high standards of the unit.

In the lead up to Christmas assistance was given throughout the MTQ1 and MTQ2 training cadres in the form of lessons, practical activities and exercise communications. After the Christmas break the sub unit's strength was boosted by a large group of first years fresh from their MTQ1 Cadre. The first training weekend to Barry Buddon concentrated on long range HF communications using the PRC 320 and a variety of masts. Our newly acquired line laying equipment was also put to good use with enough line being laid around camp to put any cable television company to shame. A second weekend involved another trip to Barry Buddon with the skills learnt on the previous weekend being put to the test when the sub unit was tasked to establish communications with STCICS at RAF Kinloss and make a phone call over the airwaves.

Training continued as usual on Wednesday evenings, with the sub unit being taught all the theory and reasoning behind the practical activities undertaken at the weekends. One Wednesday, however, a visit to the NATO Satellite Ground Station at Balado Bridge was arranged to allow the newer members of the sub unit to see another side of the Royal Signals, and to see what is kept inside those massive golf balls. We had a very enjoyable evening and would like to thank our hosts for looking after us so well and not getting too technical. With their HF skills at a high standard after the two weekends at Barry Buddon, the sub unit traveled south to Otterburn to take part in an exercise that combined basic infantry patrolling skills with simple electronic warfare. With the unit's own infantry wing providing the enemy, just by listening to their radio traffic the Royal Signals sub unit was able to pin point their location and conduct a close target recce of their harbour area at dusk. Otterburn was also the scene for a live firing artillery exercise for which the sub unit provided the communications between the guns and the forward observation party.

All the training throughout the year was thoroughly interesting and enjoyed by all, but it was all geared towards one thing: Ex Lightning Strike. With a mixture of Strike Veterans and Virgins the team traveled down to Salisbury determined not to return empty handed. With stands ranging from survival with the SAS to a command task with 32 (Scottish) Signal Regiment, this year's competition was one of the best yet. The team gave its best performance in the competition's history and won three prizes, including the final race.

OCdt Colin Grant, **OCdt Oliver Beard** and **OCdt Paul Caldato** attended the UOTC Signals course held at Blandford over the Easter holidays and are now trained signals instructors who will be fully utilised during the next training year. The course introduces cadets to various aspects of the Royal Signals, with the emphasis placed on exercise planning and teaching.

FUTURE MOVES

The end of this academic year sees four members of the sub unit moving on to pastures new. **2Lt Gaw** is off to 32 (Scottish) Signal Regiment (Volunteers), **OCdt Bateson** and **JUO Zelaya** are going to RMAS as Royal Signals bursars and **WO2 (SSM) Shelmerdine** is moving to HMS *Warrior* in October, to be replaced by **WO2 (SSM) Manktelow** from RSS Blandford. More information about the sub unit, including a photo album of recent activities, can be found on Edinburgh UOTC's web site at: www.ceuotc.org.uk

Ex ercise Lightning Strike 2000
Back Row (L-R): WO2 (SSM) Shelmardine, OCdt Davidson, OCdt Caldato, OCdt Bateson, 2Lt Gaw, OCdt Beard, 2Lt Corkerton
Front Row (L-R): OCdt Erhahiemen, OCdt Ciechan, OCdt Rae, JUO Zelaya, OCdt Grant

OCdt Andrew Rea receiving the prize for 2 Signal Regiment's stand from the Regimental Colonel, Col R. Crombie

SPORT

BOWLING

ARMY TENPIN BOWLING CHAMPION 2000
SIG SIMON JONES

At the recent 33rd Army Tenpin Bowling Championships held at the AMF Leeds Bowl on 25-27 February 2000 a new name was established. **Sig Simon Jones**, serving in Paderborn with 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200), became Serving Army Champion for the year 2000. The overall winner was **Alan Smith** (ex-Army), who was in first place in the Men's Singles with a new Championship record of 1100 total pins in his five singles games. **Sig Simon Jones**, a Preston man, showed tremendous skill and stamina at the recent 33rd Army Tenpin Bowling Championships this year. A total of 154 competitors, made up of serving and ex-serving military persons and their dependants, took part in the three-day event. All competitors bowled five games of singles, four games of doubles and three games of team (four players). The top 24 bowlers proceeded to the Masters and bowled a further three games. The top 12 of these bowled three more games and the top six of these proceeded to a round robin final.

Simon was one of only three players to average over 200 for all his 23 games played. His superb highest individual game of 270 ensured that he deservedly became Serving Army Champion for 2000. The standard of play is getting better each year and many high quality scores were returned this time. A high standard of mental as well as physical discipline is needed to do well in competitions of this calibre and Simon showed admirable determination and expertise right through to the last ball. **Simon** attended St Michael's High School in Preston and then Preston College, before joining the Army in 1997. He completed his initial training at Bassingbourne and Blandford and was then posted to Germany, where he is still serving. In 1999 he was joint eighth place in the Masters final of the Army Championships and represented the Army in the British Tenpin Bowling Association Nationals at Plymouth in the same year. He began bowling at the age of 12 and progressed quickly to the adult leagues in Preston by the age of 14. **Simon** represented Preston at Tenpin Bowling and was a member of the Lancashire YAC Tenpin Bowling Team. His personal best high game is 299, just one pin short of a perfect game. **Simon** has obviously been selected for the Army team in 2000.

NATIONAL SUCCESS FOR ARMY BOWLERS

It is with great pleasure and pride that I write to inform you that two of our talented bowlers from the Army Tenpin Bowling Association finished in third place in the doubles event at the recent British National Tenpin Bowling Championships on 18-19 March 2000 in Enfield. **Sgt Les Colquhoun** and **Cpl Mark Passfield**, both serving with 11 Sig Regt in Blandford, played superbly to achieve this hard earned and well deserved third place. The British National Competition is of an incredibly high standard and attracts only the best bowlers in the country, making **Les** and **Mark's** success a feat of which to be proud.

CROSS COUNTRY

EXERCISE SOUTHERN CROSS

On Wednesday 15 March nine Corps athletes **(Capt Lynn Higgs, Capt George Tyndale, OCdt Steve Cadywould, Sgt** 'Ginge' **Davey, LCpl Kev Conlon, LCpl Jamie Baulch, LCpl Lee Wilkinson, Sig Pete Tucker** and **Sig Sy Sheppard)** and three coaching staff **(Majs Les Wood** and **Jerry Hegarty** - athletics and **Mr Dave Pittman** - golf), met at Hamersley Barracks, Aldershot to finalise preparations for the following day.

At 'early o'clock' the following morning the coach arrived to ship us off to Gatwick Airport, where we caught a flight with far too much leg room. On arrival in Portugal the weather was excellent for that time of year, a cool 22 degrees centigrade, much to everyone's delight. We picked up our transport and proceeded to the hotel 'Alfa Mar', where we were booked in for the visit. Instead of getting the expected hotel rooms we were given three villas which were excellent. Friday morning at 0800hrs saw the start of the arduous training programme, and for most of the squad, the first meeting with former London Marathon Champion, **Mike Gratton**, who was organising the training. During the next week the training was consistent, with the sessions ranging from steady eight mile runs to whistle fartlek and mile reps. The group performed well leading most of the time up to the point where the sessions were being organised around us. Saturday saw the start of the World Cross-Country Championships, fortunately it was only walking distance from the hotel, just a coincidence? We think not! This gave us the chance to see some of the world's finest athletes in action and how the British athletes compare to the rest of the world. We all found this to be an excellent experience and personally one I

will never forget. The championships lasted for two days and, much to our surprise, ran during the hottest parts of the day to the advantage of athletes from warmer parts of the world. This does not include England as it is raining as I write these notes!

The rest of the trip carried on as before, training twice daily at 0800hrs and 1600hrs. Evenings, however, were free. This meant socialising moderately always eating out and taking turns to choose the location. The weather stayed fantastic throughout the entire week until the last day where we did an extremely hard hill session in the rain. The rain soon stopped however and another afternoon of sunshine meant last minute panic tanning for the women. At 1900hrs we all met at 'The Mess' and went for our final meal in Portugal at what had now become our local pizza restaurant. The following day saw the end of the trip, with a 0700hrs leg stretch session before booking out of the hotel and flying back to the UK. A brilliant time was had by all, many thanks to **Maj Les Wood** for organising the trip.

ARMY INTER-CORPS CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS 16 FEBRUARY 2000

This season's Inter-Corps championships were held at Blandford on 16 February 2000. With all 16 of the Corps top runners available, less **Cpl Paul Clancy,** the Team Captain - **Sgt** 'Ginge' **Davey** and Team Manager - **Capt Neil Turnbull** had the difficult task of selecting the ten team members. This was duly done over a glass of lemonade in the Bowling Alley. After a flurry of snow in the early morning the afternoon turned out to be ideal running weather. The Corps Ladies were first away with former Army Champion, **LCpl Nicky Dean,** leading the Corps Challenge to try to retain the trophy they won so convincingly last season. This season's under strength team, however, could not compete with very strong RLC and APTC teams and the team finished in third place.

The Men's Team wearing the new Corps strip for the first time, warmed

The Corps Captain, Sgt Simon Davey, receives the winners trophy from the Chairman of RLC Cross Country

up and after a few words of encouragement from the Team Manager were ready for the off. An easy start saw the team packing in the middle of the field, the end of the first lap however saw the Team Captain leading the Corps challenge in tenth place with the remaining runners packing around eighteenth place. Team positions altered very little on the second lap and the bright yellow vests of the Corps team were plentiful in the leading places on the approach to Pond Bottom, an excellent run in, consolidated team positions and the team finished with a points total of 139. With our main rivals the RLC finishing with 157 points, this was a resounding victory for the Corps for the first time in this Competition. Individual finishing positions were as follows:

Sgt Davey	34 (N) Sig Regt (V)	9th
Sig Grady	11 Sig Regt	12th
LCpl Conlon	3 (UK) Div Sig Regt	15th
Sig Lowe	30 Sig Regt	16th
WO2 (FofS) Docherty	3(UK) Div Sig Regt	18th
Cpl Cadywould	2 Sig Regt	21st
WO1 (YofS) Keily	7 Sig Regt	22nd
LCpl Kemp	3(UK) Div Sig Regt	26th
Sig Tucker	11 Sig Regt	34th
Cpl Whittaker	11 Sig Regt	36th

THE ROYAL SIGNALS INTER-UNIT AND INDIVIDUAL CROSS-COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

Cpl Steve Cadywould scored a rare victory over **Sqt** 'Ginge' **Davey** to become the new Royal Signals Cross Country champion, on Wednesday 9 February. The 3 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt hosted the new Inter Unit and Individual Cross Country Championships, providing a testing course on a windy day. Teams from most Royal Signals Units were represented from the UK and Germany. The ladies were first off and with the race being won by the in form **Sig Lisa Wiles** - 11 Sig Regt who is currently the Army Junior Champion, she was closely followed by **Capt Tindale** -2 Sig Regt with **Sig Twaites** - 3(UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt finishing in third with 3(UK) Armd Div & Sig Regt taking the Ladies Team title.

In the Men's race, a leading group of five broke clear with **Sgt** 'Jock' **Castle** - 7 Sig Regt, making an early bid for the title in the first 400m but unfortunately he had spent too much of his time training in the NAAFI queue and had to concede to the blistering pace set by the Corps top distance runners. At the top of the first steep incline **Sig Tom** 'Puny calfed boy' **Grady** -11 Sig Regt and **Cpl Steve Cadywould** - 2 Sig Regt broke clear leaving **Sgt** 'Ginge' **Davey** - 34 (N) Sig Regt (V) and **Sig Tom Lowe** - 30 Sig Regt battling for the minor places. The leading two remained locked together until **Cpl Steve Cadywould,** who was still feeling fresh after his easy run in the Army Cross Country Championships the previous week surged clear on the final uphill section to come home for a convincing victory to take the individual title.

3(UK) Armd Div & Sig Regt took the team title in the Major Units with 11 Sig Regt a close second. In the Minor Units 243 Sig Sqn were Corps champions and 21 Sig Regt Runners - up. **WO1** 'Stu' **Little** -11 Sig Regt won the veteran Championship while at the other end of the age scale **Sig Pete** 'Rotherham Harriers' **Tucker** became the Junior Champion.

3 (UK) Division Headquarters and Signal Regiment - Major Unit champions

Sig Lisa Wiles - 11 Signal Regiment receives the winners trophy from Brigadier Shaw

RUGBY

CORPS MERIT TABLE 1 FIXTURE VERSUS RA 23 MAY 2000

After considerable delay the final game of the ARU Merit Table 1 against the RA was eventually played on 23 May 2000 at Blandford. In order to win the competition, and regain the title of Corps Champions, the Corps Team had to secure a victory over the Gunners. Owing to short notice of the fixture and the bad weather delaying the travel we were left without several players until minutes before the game. The RA brought a contingent of Fijians but may be forgiven at being concerned about the presence of **LCpl S. Gibbs** starting at outside centre for the Corps. For those watching your eyes did not deceive you, **LCpl S. Gibbs** (21 Sig Regt (AS)), our hooker, was playing at outside centre. Despite the recent good weather, Blandford remained true to form and gave appalling conditions on an extremely wet and windy afternoon.

The Corps played with the wind in the first half and quickly forced their way into the gunners 22. After three minutes, a clean ball from **Lt Whittely** (2 Sig Regt) in the line out was driven forward by **Maj Drew** (RMCS) and **Sgt Jones** (16 Sig Regt) providing the perfect platform for **SSgt Cassidy** (2 Sig Regt), who had only arrived six minutes before kick-off, to dummy and exploit the gap left behind the retreating RA pack and put the Corps into an early lead at 6-0. The Corps maintained the pressure through the considerable advantage given by the weather conditions and after ten minutes a big drive from the pack forced a mistake from the RA Fijian scrum half who was subsequently flattened by the ever present **Sgt Jones**. The ball failed to reach its intended target and bobbed along the ground into the hands of **SSgt Cassidy** who raced away from our ten-metre line to put the Corps into a comfortable lead at 10-0.

The RA, fresh from a week of Corps sevens, soon got into their stride and began forcing their way forward with some excellent support play. The Corps defence held strong with big tackles in the centre from **LCpl Gibbs** and **LCpl Latham** (11 Sig Regt). The Corps should have put the game beyond the Gunners reach before half time but were thwarted by the weather causing handling errors. **Lt Whittley** forced his way over the line from a scrum, only to have the ball tapped from his fingers at the last moment and in the final minutes of the first half **Sgt Tomkinson** (21 Sig Regt (AS)) had an open field out to the right of the scrum but was denied by a wet ball failing to remain in his hand.

The Gunners used the weather to their advantage in the second half but were contained by a determined defence from the Corps. The only means by which the RA were able to make significant ground was either through kicking with the wind or taking quick penalties. After 30mins these tactics paid off and the Gunners forced their way to the Corps 22metre line and remained camped there for some time with the clock running down. In frustration the RA fly half, probably the smallest man on the pitch, decided to crash a pop ball directly into **SSgt meek** (11 Sig Regt), probably the largest man on the pitch. The RA fly half subsequently left the pitch in a dazed state but only after the referee had awarded a very dubious try which was then converted to put the score at 10-7.

The RA renewed their attack with vigour and looked dangerous until extra time when **LCpl Fox** (16 Sig Regt) broke from the back of a ruck and burst into the RA half before being stopped by a desperate defence from the gunners. The Corps was then awarded a penalty just inside the RA 22metre line in a position, which, on a normal day, would have allowed us to secure the game, but the weather forced the Corps to kick for touch. The RA were then awarded a penalty for an infringement only to give the initiative back to the Corps when the RA scrum half fumbled the ball at the base of the scrum. **Sgt Jones** promptly burst in and was manhandled towards the line by **Lt Whittley** and **Cpl Humphries** (2 Sig Regt). Their momentum broke but the ruck was formed on the RA line and the ever sharp, **SSgt Cassidy** executed another swift dummy to open a gap and crash over the line to secure the game at 16-7.

A big thank you to those who braved the weather to support the team and to the substitutes who endured the conditions from the touch-line. Particular thanks to **Sgt MacFee** (11 Sig Regt) for his help in the administration on the day. The Corps has retained the championship. This could not have been achieved without the support and encouragement of parent units who have ensured that they are available to play despite the heavy commitments throughout the Corps. To all those who helped us achieve this goal-thank you. - CERTA CITO

SHOOTING

CORPS SKILL AT ARMS MEETING (CORPSAAM) 2000

Over 200 competitors from both the TA and Regular Royal Signals units competed in CORPSAAM 2000 at Ash ranges from 9-16 April. The meeting is run concurrently with Joint CORPSAAM in which there was a combined total of over 1000 competitors from five Corps: RE, R SIGNALS, RLC, REME and AGC.

THE TERRITORIAL ARMY MEETING 9 - 11 APRIL 2000

The Territorial Army meeting had excellent attendance with eighteen five man teams from 11 units plus 19 individuals giving a total of 109 competitors. The following units were represented: 32 Sig Regt (V), 33 Sig Regt (V), 35 Sig Regt (V), 36 Sig Regt (V), 37 Sig Regt (V), 38 Sig Regt (V), 39 Sig Regt (V), 40 Sig Regt (V), 71 Sig Regt (V), 1 (SC) Sig Sqn (V) and 94 (BY) Sig Sqn (V).

The competition consisted of team and individual matches in Rifle, LSW and Pistol. 71 Sig Regt (V) won all three team rifle matches with 35 Sig Regt (V) winning the LSW and 37 Sig Regt (V) winning the pistol. **2Lt Woodhams** from 71 Sig Regt (V) put in some excellent shooting and was the overall Champion at Arms on the combined scores of all three weapons. He was also the Champion Rifle Shot and Best Officer. The Unit Championship was won by 37 Sig Regt (V). Best Female Rifle was **Sig Morse** and Best B Class Rifle was **Sig Wilton**, both from 71 Sig Regt (V). **SSgt Weaver** from 35 Sig Regt (V) won the LSW.

For many competitors it was their first taste of competition shooting. All gained a lot of valuable training and increased confidence with their personal arms combined with having an enjoyable and worthwhile weekend. The SOinC (A), **Brig C. J. Burton OBE ADC**, who is President of Corps Shooting, presented the prizes with **Col D. M. Mills**, Chairman of Corps Shooting, on Sunday and joined attending COs, RSMs and Team Captains for a curry buffet afterwards

THE REGULAR ARMY MEETING 12 - 16 APRIL 2000

A total of 18 teams from 11 units together with 10 individuals gave a combined total of 100 competitors. This was disappointingly down from the 150 declared entries. The following units were represented: 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt, 2 Sig Regt, 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt, 11 Sig Regt, 15 Sig Regt, 16 Sig Regt, 21 Sig Regt, 30 Sig Regt, 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (200), 201 Sig Sqn, 238 Sig Sqn and 243 Sig Sqn together with individuals from 7 RHA, 31 Sig Regt (V) and 35 Sig Regt (V).

The overall standard of shooting was very good and although 11 Sig Regt and 30 Sig Regt largely dominated the competition, there was a good spread of prizes among the individual and team runners up. 30 Sig Regt 'A' Team won the Champion Unit as well as the LSW Match, the Combat Snap, Falling Plate and three of the Rifle Matches. 11 Sig Regt won the Pistol Tiles and two of the Rifle matches. The Best Young Officer was **2Lt Morris** and Best Young Soldier was **Sig Khagendra** both from 30 Sig Regt (V). The Best Female was Sig Williams and the Best 'B' Class was Cpl Davies, both from 16 Sig Regt. The Champion Rifle Shot was **Capt Yam Rana** from 11 Sig Regt and the overall Champion at Arms was **Sgt D. Copley** from 11 Sig Regt who produced a consistently high standard of shooting in pistol, rifle and LSW throughout the competition. **Lt Col Hoole** won the Pistol Championship (again!). The Corps Team also won the Inter Corps Falling Plate and Combat Snap Matches.

The Master Of Signals, **Maj Gen I. O. J. Sprackling OBE** presented the prizes with **Brig N. C. Jackson MBE**, Comd 2 (NC) Sig Bde on Friday and joined attending COs, RSMs and Team Captains for a curry buffet afterwards. The Pipes and Drums from 32 Sig Regt (V) led the final march off and were very much appreciated.

DATES FOR NEXT YEAR'S DIARY
ROYAL SIGNALS CORPSAAM 2001

31 March - 1 April 2001 - Territorial Army Corpsaam
2 - 6 April 2001 - Regular Army Corpsaam

There will be a VIP Curry Buffet for CO's, RSM's and visiting officers on Sunday 1 April for the TA meeting and on Friday 6 April 2001 for the Regular meeting. All units are thanked for their continuing support for this competition, which also provides our soldiers excellent military training value. 32 Sig Regt (V) and 11 Sig Regt are thanked once again for their outstanding contribution to the administration of the meeting and completing the Corps' Charter Tasks.

Sgt Dave Copley CORPSAAM 2000 Champion at Arms being chaired of by the 11 Sig Regt Team

The Master of Signals presenting Sgt Dave Copley with the Ghurkha Kukri

UKSC(G) SKILL AT ARMS MEETING (SAAM) 16 - 18 MAY 00

The UKSC(G) SAAM took place over three days last week at the Kohima ETR range complex at Haltern Training Area in Germany. The SAAM was open to all major units, sub units and minor units within UKSC(G). Despite operational commitments and post tour leave 12 teams entered the competition, totalling over 80 soldiers. The SAAM included both team and individual competitions, with unit teams competing for the Unit SAA Championship, which involved units taking part in Rifle, LSW and Fire Team Matches. A separate Pistol Match and Falling Plate Competition were also held.

The competition was fierce from the outset, with a high standard of shooting from most teams. Days One and Two saw unit teams and individuals competing for the Rifle, LSW and Pistol Championships. First honours went to 252 Sqn, 16 Sig Regt, who won the LSW Team Championship, beating 250 Sqn, 16 Sig Regt, by four hits. It soon materialised that the overall Unit Championship was going to be a close battle between 14 and 170 Sqns Sp Bn ARRC and 14 Indep Topo Sqn RE. In the Team Rifle Championship, 14 Indep Topo Sqn RE narrowly beat 170 Sqn Sp Bn ARRC by five hits, with 14 Sqn Sp Bn ARRC coming third. Meanwhile, 14 Sqn Sp Bn ARRC were setting the pace in the Team Pistol Championship, and beat 14 Indep Topo Sqn RE by a large margin of 27 points. The afternoon of Day Two saw some windy weather for the Fire Team Match which involved teams marching two miles in 22 minutes, carrying 25lbs, over muddy farm tracks, and then executing a very difficult shoot, involving a 50m run down, followed by a reorganisation and enemy counter attack shoot. Teams only had two minutes to sort themselves out prior to commencing the shoot after the march. The eventual winners were 14 Indep Topo Sqn RE, who beat

170 Sqn Sp Bn ARRC and 14 Sqn Sp Bn ARRC who won second and third place respectively. By the end of Day Two, all the team matches had been completed, and the final outcome of the Unit SAA Championship had been determined. The outright winners were 14 Indep Topo Sqn RE with 99 points, with 14 Sqn Sp Bn ARRC (91 points) and 170 Sqn Sp Bn (83 points), coming in second and third place respectively.

The final day was all about determining the champion individual shots, and who is to go forward to Bisley to compete for the Queen's Medal. The eight firers who had progressed through to the finals in the LSW Match were now required to shoot at distances ranging from 300m to 600m. **Sgt Lynch** from 252 Sig Sqn had an excellent Phase 2 shoot, achieving 65 points overall to claim first prize. **Spr Crovetto** from 14 Indep Topo Sqn RE and **Cpl Durrant** from 252 Sig Sqn, were in second and third place. The Individual Pistol Match proved to be yet another close run affair, with **LCpl Lawrence** from 14 Sqn Sp Bn ARRC beating **LCpl McGonigle** from 14 Indep Topo Sqn RE. However, the closest of events proved to be the Rifle Championship, with everything at stake, including a coveted place at Bisley this year. Last year's third Individual, **WO2 Ashcroft**, went into the second phase in the lead, and consolidated his position to claim the Champion Rifle. **Cpl Southworth** from 14 Sqn Sp Bn ARRC and **LCpl McGonigle** from 14 Indep Topo Sqn RE (finished in second and third place respectively).

The SAAM finale was the Failing Plate Match, which was done on a knockout basis, with teams progressing through to the quarter-finals, semi-finals and then finals. GOC UKSC(G) and several of the HQ staff branches assembled teams for the competition. 170 Sqn Sp Bn ARRC beat 252 Sqn Sp Bn ARRC in the final with the tie for third place being won by 14 Indep Topo Sqn RE. The GOC UKSC(G), **Maj Gen C. H. Elliott CBE** presented the prizes at the end of the last day's firing.

SQUASH

14 SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)
RUNNERS-UP: ARMY SQUASH CHAMPIONSHIPS - 1999/2000

14 Sig Regt (EW) continue to set the standards as Corps talisman in the world of Army Squash. A history of near misses and epic encounters continued during the 1999/2000 season with the Regimental Team narrowly defeated in a close Major Unit Team Squash final at the Winchester courts, they finished as runners-up to 1 RSME from Chatham. Regimental commitments meant that the strongest side could not be assembled until the final week of the championships so the Regiment was compelled to exercise catch-up squash and play all its games in the space of four days. A walk-over in the first round against a defeatist 12 Royal Artillery saw a journey to Deepcut to play a second round match against ATR Pirbright. The highlight of a successful 4 - 1 demolition job was a rare victory at No 5 seed for **WO2 (AQMS) Basnett** although his worth was to become more apparent in the quarter-finals against 15 Sig Regt, when after our Royal Signals champion was beaten by the Corp No 6 it was left to the No 5 seeds to decide the outcome at the match. Unfortunately the 15 Sig Regt No 5 was still on route from Lisburn and at some four hours late **WO2 Bas Basnett** was forced to claim a walk-over.

The semi-final and final stages were held at the impressive civilian courts at the Winchester Tennis and Squash Club, a far cry from the squash facilities at Brawdy. The semi-final was played against 22 (Air Defence) Royal Artillery and resulted in a straight forward 5 - 0 victory. Mention here should be made of our No 4 Seed, **SSgt John Blackadder,** a Intelligence Corp Squash stalwart of many years. Brought out of his hospital sick bed and made to play with his old wooden rackets he showed that there is no substitute for experience by giving his opponent the run around. The final was played early the next morning. Our opponents were the Engineers from Chatham who boasted five of their Corp players within their ranks and resembled something of an all-star team. Not to be deterred most of our Regimental side opted for an early night in preparation for the big push the next day. However our No 3 seed and banker, **Capt** 'I've won this Championships before' **Gordon Cole** insisted that a few beers and a take-away curry was all the preparation he needed. The final started with the No 5 and 3 seeds taking the court. **WO2 Baz Basnett** went down kicking to a very strong No 5 but our overall aspirations were dashed when our banker **Capt Cole** lost in five to a player half his age and a quarter his ability. The No 1 seeds went on with the Regiment knowing that it had to salvage a win to stay in the final. **WO2 (SSM) Dean Richardson,** just back from three months exercise in Kenya found the initial pace hard but recovered and recorded a hard fought 3-2 victory over the Engineers No 1 **Capt** 'Singe' **Webster.** The No 2 and No 4 seeds went on for the final games with the Regiment knowing we had to win both games. Our Team Captain and No 2 seed **Capt Colin Jackson** had a comfortable victory against an aggressive Engineer but on the other court **SSgt John Blackadder** was finding four games in four days too much at his age and he went down screaming 3-0.

An overall 3 -2 victory crowned 1 RSME as Army Team Squash Champions 1999/2000 and 14 Sig Regt (EW) as the runners-up. Thanks to **Capt Colin** 'The Brigadier' **Jackson** for his sterling work in moulding a team around huge Operational commitments and to the trusty five who ventured up and down the M4 in search of glory. A further mention should be made of **SSgt Steve Roberts** who never made the photograph, didn't play any games but received a trophy as sixth man for his efforts.

SCORESHEET

1st Round	Vs	12 Royal Artillery	W/O
2nd Round	Vs	ATR Pirbright	Won 4 - 1
Quarter-Final	Vs	15 Signal Regiment	Won 3 - 2
Semi - Final	Vs	22 (Air Def) Royal Artillery	Won 5 - 0
Final	Vs	1 RSME	Lost 2 - 3

(L-R): Capt Cole, SSgt Blackadder, Capt Jackson, WO2 (SSM) Richardson, WO2 (AQMS) Basnet

SURFING

THE ZUMA JAY ARMY SURFING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2000

The Zuma Jay Army Surfing Championships 2000 were held on Sunday 16 April at Penhale Corner in place of the planned Army vs RAF competition that had been scheduled for the 15th but was postponed due to poor surf conditions on the Friday and Saturday and an internet forecast that said a swell would be arriving on Sunday but with strong onshore winds.

When we finally managed to drag ourselves out of bed on Sunday we were greeted with a 4-5ft swell and offshore winds, so after a sobering social surf in the morning we decided to hold the first ever Army Championship. By this time we were down to seven surfers in the seven foot plus division due to **Pte Tim Wyatt** of 2LI deciding to concentrate his efforts on the shortboard, a fact that was greeted with some relief from the rest of the surfers in that division. The shortboard was down to four surfers due to **Cpl Craig Learmonth** of The Army Foundation College deciding on Saturday to head for better waves on the North East coast and **LCpl Sean Wilkes** of 29 Commando Wksp coming down with a bad bout of flu. We only had two bodyboarders from the beginning and the rest of the competition was made up from four novices.

The competition started early afternoon with the tide rising and the wind and swell dropping off slightly. First in the water, after a quick introductory chat from **Sgt Jase Fern** of 14 Sig Regt (EW) LAD, were the novices in a four man final consisting of **Sig Chris Treweeks** of 14 Sig Regt (EW), **LCpl Dave Grimes** of 14 Sig Regt (EW), **Cpl Jimmy Ewing** of 9 Regt AAC Wksp and **Sig Dave Campbell** of 14 Sig Regt (EW). **Chris** went into an early lead with his second wave being scored a three from our 'have a chat about it' style of judging, but at the half way stage he was neck and neck with **Jimmy. Dave Campbell** found himself out of position and **Dave Grimes** was catching a few but failing to make much impression on the judges. As the red five minute warning flag went up **Jimmy** pulled two waves out of the bag to pull away from **Chris** and become the first ever Army Novice Champion.

Novice Result:

1st	**Cpl Jimmy Ewing**	9 Regt AAC	8 Points
2nd	**Sig Chris Treweeks**	14 Sig Regt (EW)	6 Points
3rd	**LCpl Dave Grimes**	14 Sig Regt (EW)	5 Points
4th	**Sig Dave Campbell**	14 Sig Regt (EW)	4 Points

Next in the water was the first Semi of the over seven foot division comprising of **Sgt Phil Stroudley** of 14 Sig Regt (EW), **Cpl Jay Webster** of Para Coy 3 Bn ITC and **Sgt Steve Webber** of Cmdo Log Regt (ES Squadron). The heat was strongly contested with **Steve** taking an early lead with his second wave being scored a four pointer, **Jay** and **Phil** pulled off a couple of three pointers to close the gap with **Jay** trying to impress the judges with a couple of switch stance attempts but they couldn't catch up with **Steve** who ran out the winner of the heat from **Jay**, who also qualified for the final by a point from **Phil**.

Then it was the turn of the other Semi comprising **Jase Fern, LCpl Dai Jones** of 14 Sig Regt (EW), **LCpl Gaz Roscoe** of 14 Sig Regt (EW) and **Sgt Dom Warren** of Hereford Garrison LAD. This was another close heat with **Dai** managing to catch all ten of his waves and getting a four pointer for a well worked floater, **Dom** and **Jase** both managed to catch seven waves and were basically fighting it out for the other qualifying place, **Jase** raised a few giggles from the judges by pulling off a coffin ride after a left hander closed out on him, but **Dom** edged himself through to the final by a point with some consistent surfing. **Gaz Roscoe** never really got himself going, he was suffering from the exploits of the night before and the mornings surf that had left him tired out and he only managed to catch two waves. (Better luck next year mate!)

The first Semi of the shortboard was a two man heat between **Tim Wyatt** and **Cpl Graham Greeves** of ATR Litchfield, some good surfing from both of them saw this heat, for which **Tim** was hot favourite go into the last five minutes neck and neck. Unluckily for **Greevesy** the waves just wouldn't work for him and **Tim** pulled off his best three waves of the heat, pumping his board and getting as much power out of the waves as he could. This saw **Tim** win the heat by three points. The second Semi of the shortboard was between **Dai Jones** and **Pte Barney Scully** of 3CS Bn RLC. **Dai**, having just surfed the 7ft+ semi and looking forward to the final of that, declared that he would catch three waves and sack it, which he did. This, coupled with **Barney's** obvious power and ability which saw him score two fours on his first two waves meant that he won the heat by seven points to set up a mouth watering final between **Barney** and **Tim**.

Next in the water were **Chris Treweeks** and **LCpl Al Hayes** of 2LI in the bodyboard final, **Chris** had been firing all day and managed to catch his full quota of ten waves, pulling off some amazing stunts and scoring big points for his drop knee 360's and various airs. **Al**, carrying an ankle injury still managed to put in a good performance but he just couldn't compete against the in-form **Chris** who eventually ran out to win by five clear points.

Bodyboard result:

1st	**Sig Chris Treweeks**	14 Sig Regt (EW)	10 Points
2nd	**LCpl Al Hayes**	2 LI	5 Points

With the swell dropping off it was decided to run the 7ft+ and shortboard finals at the same time, so **Jase** and **Phil** (the Bude brothers), still smarting from not being involved, had some frantic judging to do. In the 7ft+ division we saw the closest fought heat of the day with **Steve Webber** catching everything that came through on his longboard and **Dom Warren** being as consistent as ever, even riding hand in hand with **Jay Webster** on two separate occasions. The judges were worried that **Jay** may have taken offence to **Dom's** close proximity but both times it ended in friendly handshakes that stopped any points being deducted. Meanwhile, the goofy footed **Dai Jones** was taking full advantage of the left hander that had started working and with a strong display took the title by one point from all the other competitors.

7 Foot Plus Result:

1st	**LCpl Dai Jones**	14 Sig Regt (EW)	10 Points
2nd	**Sgt Steve Webber**	Cdo Log ES Sqn	9 Points
3rd	**Sgt Dom Warren**	Hereford Garr LAD	9 Points
4th	**Cpl Jay Webster**	Para coy 3Bn ITC	9 Points

(Placings worked out from 4th and 5th best wave scores)

Going on at the same time was the eagerly awaited shortboard final between **Kiwi, Tim Wyatt** and Newquay local boy, **Barney Sculley**. This was a display of pure power from both surfers with **Tim** pumping his board like mad to get the most out of the ever decreasing swell size, and **Barney** showing why he has been on the verge of the British Squad. **Tim** managed to catch nine waves and even got some air but it was **Barney** who got the best waves with a thrilling display of power, ripping the six waves he managed to catch, smacking off the lip and cutting back more often than seemed possible, and catching the wave of the competition that earned him five points, who eventually snatched the title by a clear three points.

Shortboard Result:

1st	**Pte Barney Sculley**	3 CS Bn RLC	13 Points
2nd	**Pte Tim Wyatt**	2 LI	10 Points

7ft Plus Division
(L-R): LCpl Gaz Roscoe, Sgt Fern, LCpl Dai Jones and Sgt Dom Warren

What had started out as a disappointing weekend ended up with everyone having a fantastic time. It's never easy competing against friends, but the whole event was run in the best spirit and did more to forge the team spirit and morale of the lads who took part. Although we are a team that is still in it's infancy we can only go forward from here. It was a terrific turn out with people traveling from far and wide at there own expense as we don't have the backing of the Army Sports Board yet. This just goes to show the commitment and enthusiasm of all involved. It has to be said that the judging was a bit iffy but we feel that the right results were reached in the end. Next year we will find someone with some experience to do it!! Some special words of thanks must go out to **Nigel** and all at Zuma Jay's in Bude who kindly agreed to sponsor the event and also to **Sgt Callum Davey** of 14 Sig Regt (EW) LAD who did the photography and all those who turned out just to watch the event. The attitude and standard of all the competitors was a pleasure to see and I would love to hear from the vast amount of surfers in the Army who haven't contacted me yet as soon as possible at: **Sgt Jase Fern**, telephone Brawdy mil. 94359 5825 or civvy 01437 725825.

One last thing, Jase would really like the contest rash vests to be returned PLEASE!!! The Kinchendo spirit lives on!!

TABLE TENNIS

ARMY APPRENTICES COLLEGE
CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE TENNIS TOURNAMENT
SPRING 2000

In the final **AT Sweeney** defeated **AT Tyrell,** in a hard fought sporting final, by a 21-14, 17-21, 22-20 score line. The awards were presented by **John Cunningham DLOPTTC** and the Tournament was sponsored by Allied World-wide Computer Services.

AT Tyrell

WINDSURFING

INTER-CORPS WINDSURFING SERIES
THIRD ROUND RESULTS

The third round of the Inter Corps windsurfing championships took place at Christchurch in early May. The conditions were demanding, with light to moderate winds and a heavy tide running. The Royal Signals team worked extremely hard in the conditions to gain second place, behind an almost invincible REME team. After three events in the series, with two to go, the Corps is lying comfortably in second place, well ahead of the Royal Engineers, Royal Artillery and RLC, but considerably behind the REME. There is no room for complacency, however, and a strong turnout is still required in the fourth round at Weymouth in June and the finals which are held during the Army Championships in July. In a fleet of 30, creditable individual performances were recorded by **Maj Dave Gilchrist** (2nd overall and first 7.5m raceboard); **SSgt Norman Finnegan** (6th overall) and **Maj Peter Bowles** (8th overall). **Cpls Pete Hoggart, Adrian Varney** and 'Herbie' **Hyde** also achieved commendable results.

Anyone interested in competitive windsurfing with the Royal Signals should contact the Club Secretary, **Capt Andrew Mould**, on 94344 5111, or the Competition Secretary, **SSgt Norman Finnegan** on 94359 5684.

If responding to any advertisements in *The Wire* please mention that you saw it in your Corps magazine

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

President: The Master of Signals

Chairman: Major General A. Yeoman CB

Vice Chairmen: Brig N. F. Wood 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; Lt Col C. N. Lightfoot N Ireland

General Secretary and Treasurer: Col A. R. Carter MBE — **Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col I. J. Hamilton**
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J. Cornick — **Administrative Officer: Mr. P. J. Cuckow (Membership & Records)**

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. Internet: www.royalsignals.army.org.uk/museum/rsa.htm

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.*

THE FORGOTTEN WAR

By Ex-WO2 N. D. Davies

Tac HQ Signals 29 Brigade
Taken in a school yard on the Inchon Road just after the Presidential Citation presentation to the 1st Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment and the 170 Independent Mortar Battery RA for their action at the River Imjin in April 1951

The Korean War deserves its title, 'The Forgotten War'. World War II, the Falklands, the Gulf War and other campaigns have involved our armed forces to some degree or other but to mention the Korean War to the public at large invokes little response. This year is the 50th anniversary of the start of the Korean War, one of the bloodiest wars in history. In 1950, Britain sent two Brigades to that war, the 27th Infantry Brigade and the 20th Independent Infantry Brigade, to be followed in 1951 by the 28 Commonwealth Brigade. Also heavily involved were the Royal Navy, the Royal Marines and the Royal Air Force.

It was the first war to be fought under the banner of the United Nations and throughout the next three years, a war of attrition was waged against the North Koreans and the Chinese as both sides fought the length and breadth of the Korean Peninsular. The first two years of the war were the worst. Men lived and fought in appalling conditions, in the stinking heat of summer and in the mind numbing cold of winter accompanied by the howling, freezing wind from Manchuria and Siberia. It was fought in the style of World War I and II. Hand to hand and trench warfare, armed with the personal weapons of World War II vintage, the .303 Lee Enfield rifle, the Bren, Sten and the Vickers. The movement of men, tanks and vehicles in winter temperatures well below -40°F and in summer temperatures reaching 105°F, and in the quagmire conditions of the monsoon season, stretched both machine and man to the limit.

Communications were, as in other wars, the lifeline that bound the units together. Both radio and landline links were vital. The repair, installation and recovery of communications equipment and cables in these extremes of temperature, plus the continuous movement of the fighting troops, tested Signaller's skills, resourcefulness and ingenuity beyond what could normally be expected. Communications were far removed from the sophisticated equipment of this computerised and electronic age. Our world was still the world of the 1939-1945 war. Radios, 19 Sets and 62 Sets. Tele 'F', Tele 'J', Tele 'H' telephones. Field and Fortress and 10 line Magneto Switchboards. Type 'X' Cypher Machines. D8 and D10 cables. Creed 7B WD Teleprinters.

As a Lance Corporal Tele Mech with 29 Bde Tac HQ from September 1950 to August 1951and then with HQ 1st Commonwealth Division until May 1952, I would like, through *'The Wire'*, to pay tribute to all the Royal Signals personnel that served and fought in that war. The Reservists, the Regulars and the National Servicemen. Many have since died but they and those that remain are a special breed and should never be forgotten. They carried out their duties in the best traditions of the Corp and under the worst possible conditions both militarily and climatically and as such played a major role in maintaining the Corps fine record.

Below is a unique photograph which was sent to me by **ex-LCpl Edwin** 'Ted' **Hodgetts MiD.** 'Ted' was a Despatch Rider and was Mentioned in Dispatches by the 29th Brigade Commander, **Brig Tom Brodie**. He now lives in New Zealand with his family but is not in the best of health due to injuries sustained during the war.

After 50 years the memory fades but certain faces remain etched. **Brig Tom Brodie, Maj** 'Tubby' **Marshall, CaptArmstrong. Lt Kirby, SSM** 'Paddy' **Flaherty, SSgt (FoS) John Le-Hardy, LCpl** 'Ted' **Hodgetts** MiD, **Cpl Bill Milne, Sigs** 'Bonny' **Bonwick, Ken Littlechild,** 'Busty' **Weeks** and **Roger Livesay, LCpls Jennings** and **Ward, Sig Cairns** and **Dvr Miles** who were captured by the Chinese during the Imjin River battle. For the record I am in the second row from the front and third in from the left. If any reader recognises himself or others I would be interested to hear from them. I can be reached on Tele/Fax: 023 92598970 or Email: mavedayies@tinyonline.co.uk.

NOTES FROM THE AO's DESK

Branch News: Maj (Retd) J. B. Greenwood, Hon Secretary of the East London Branch, has moved address to; 65 Bruce Grove, Wickford, Essex SS11 8RN. Tel: 01268-570 725.

Branch Secretaries List: Holders should amend the E-Mail address of the Bournemouth Branch Secretary on page 7 to read:- 'hhawke@lineone.net'

Cenotaph Parade: 12 November 2000. The RBL will as usual be organising the Ex-Service contingent attending the Parade and Service at the Cenotaph, Whitehall on Remembrance Sunday 12 November. All who have served under command of British Forces and War Widows/Widowers are eligible. Members should apply to this office for tickets. Members should assemble by 1010hs on Horse Guards Parade in time to march off at 1015hrs to Whitehall. The Corps representation will be in column 'F' and those attending should fall in on the 'R Signals' marker board.

New Life Members: The following members were enrolled in the period since the last issue of *The WIRE*:-

Name	Branch	Served
SSgt Andy Brown	RHQ	1976-00
Sig Matt Dorling	RHQ	1992-00
Cpl Colin Slater	York	1950-52
Cpl C.C. Young	East Kent	1957-66
Cpl Richard Huxtable	RHQ	1989-98
Sig Geoff Freeman	RHQ	1960-63
Cpl Scott Edmond	RHQ	1987-00
SSgt Geordie Thompson	Dorset	1975-99
WO2 Jim McDougall	RHQ	1974-85
Col Peter Pritchard	RHQ	1961-98
Sig Carl Moody	RHQ	1957-59
Sgt Harry Million	RHQ	1963-78
Lt Col A. B. Harnden	Bristol	1937-47
Maj Tommy Lynas	Bristol	1936-65
Sgt Jim White	North London	1939-45
Sgt Chris Hartley	RHQ	1977-91
WO2 Mick Ginty	Bristol	1981-date
Cpl Colin Berry	RHQ	1988-00
Cpl Archie Gemmell	Dorset	1982-date
Sig Stan Holdsworth	RHQ	1953-55
Sig Keith Baker	West Wales	1954-56
Sig Derek Baker	West Wales	1952-64
WO1 Tam Macdonald	RHQ	1958-83
Maj Andy Williams	Chester	1971-76
Capt Roland Burgess	Newcastle	1938-51
Sgt Rod Mawer	RHQ	1960-85
LCpl John Ford	Cotswolds	1945-48
WO2 Jeffrey Martin	RHQ	1974-98
Sig Andrew Workman	RHQ	1988-99
Maj Mike Wise	RHQ	1980-00
LCpl Ted Parker	Beverley Ex-Boys	1953-62
Sgt Benjamin Shotton	RHQ	1942-46
Sig Donald Randall	RHQ	1940-46
LCpl Peter Arkell	East London	1970-78
WO2 Paul Stevenson	RHQ	1973-00
WO2 Rick Rickson	RHQ	1982-00
SSgt John Rutland	RHQ	1976-00
Cpl Thomas Farrell	Middx Yeomanry	1985-95
Cpl Kevin Stevens	RHQ	1976-85
Sgt George Hardiman	RHQ	1950-75
Lt Col Geoff Gill	Hull	1940-67
Cpl Dave Savage	RHQ	1960-69
LCpl Walter Keown	RHQ	1992-00
WO2 David Beggs	RHQ	1976-00
Sig Mick Pluchino	RHQ	1959-61
Sig Dennis Gunn	RHQ	1960-62
Sgt Patrick Fox-Roberts	RHQ	1946-69
Sig Ernest Harris	RHQ	1939-46
Col John Kirby	RHQ	1967-99
Sig Adrian Clarke	RHQ	1992-98
SSgt Ray Ramsay	RHQ	1976-00
Pte Tom Doy	Colchester	1943-46
LCpl Michael Holbourn	RHQ	1978-date

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

Our Spring Luncheon was followed in May by our Annual Quiz Night. This proved to be a popular event and the attendance would have exceeded 100 had we not been limited in the number we could accommodate. We welcomed many old friends and made new ones, there were teams from the West London and Reading Branches, the WRAC Association and several Squadrons serving in the Aldershot Area. We have to report that the victory went to a visiting team from Reading. **Joe Fairbairn**, Garrisdon Sergeant Major and stalwart of the Branch, accorded us the facilities of his Mess. We would also like to thank him for all his hard work and that of his staff. **Neville Lyons**, our knowledgeable Quiz Master, was ably assisted by **Carole Thomas** in a very professional presentation. **Jimmy** and **Apple Ward** organised the raffle, the Committee having kindly donated the prizes. **Peter Sharpe**, our Treasurer, could be counted upon at the entrance. In fact all of the Committee lent a hand. Our Chairman, **Noel Moss,** and **Edelgard** organised everything superbly. Our President **Gen Henry Hild** and his wife **Janet** were there as, indeed, they are on all our social occassions. Ghurkas served us a delicious curry as a mid evening supper. Alas, it was our last opportunity for savouring this delicacy as sadly the Ghurkas leave our area later this year.

GLASGOW BRANCH

The year did not get off to a good start with the deaths of two of our founder members, **John Harris** and 'Monty' **Brydon**, whose obituaries were published in the April issue. A letter of thanks was received by me for the Branch members, from **Mrs Helen Harris**, with a copy of an acknowledgement letter from Erskine Hospital, to say that the donations to **Erskine**, in place of flowers at **John's** funeral, amounted to £498. The letters will be read out to the members, with **Mrs Harris's** appreciations, at the next Branch meeting. The monthly meetings are well attended, and we can boast of having several new members joining the Branch in recent months.

The Branch AGM was held on 16 May 2000, 26 members and eight associate members attended, several apologies were indicated. The Branch President, **Maj Gen A. A. G. Anderson CB**, sent his best wishes to the members as, due to an accident, he was unable to attend. The minutes of The 1999 AGM were read and passed by the members. The new committee was due to be elected at this AGM. **Bill Taylor** a founder member, and Chairman since the Branch was formed in May 1991, had indicated that he wished to step down. He stated that he would of course help, if necessary, any member taking over as Chairman. Two nominations were put forward, but both members declined to take up the post at present. Unfortunately, as in many associations and clubs, many members are reluctant to volunteer for the appointments on committees. A motion had been proposed to the Secretary in writing, that if those nominated did not take the post, then the Vice-Chairman **Joe Keegan**, should take-over as Chairman, also on that nomination, it was noted that the Branch Treasurer, **Eric McWaters**, and the Secretary, **Ivana Muir** (all three are Founder members), having indicated that they were prepared to continue in those posts for at least another year. That they be reappointed. The motion was carried unanimously. Under an OCB, **Jim Prentice** with **John McGregor** as seconder, made a motion proposing that, 'for his dedicated service as a founder member, and first Chairman of the Branch, **Mr Bill Taylor** have life membership of the Glasgow Branch conferred on him and a plaque to commemorate the event be presented to him. This was passed unanimously by the members. **Eric McWaters**, the Branch Treasurer, was in on the proposal, as was the Branch President, **Maj Gen Anderson**. The plaque, (which had been prepared for the AGM), would have been presented to **Bill** by the Branch President, but, not being able to attend, he asked **Eric** to do the honours on his behalf, and to tell **Bill** that, he was delighted to see **Bill** receive a thoroughly deserved honour, from the Branch Members, and was sorry be could not have been available to present it himself. **Bill Taylor** then thanked the members for all the support they had given him over the years. He said that, he was very pleased and surprised on receiving the plaque, as he had no idea this had been planned, but thanked the Members sincerely for the honour accorded him.

There being no further business the members adjourned to the WOs' & Sgts' Mess for refreshments and the buffet, provided by **Mrs Betty Taylor** and **Mrs Annice McWaters**. The members wish to thank them both for all their efforts. Mrs Margaret Brydon had been invited to attend and was presented by **Bill Taylor**, with a ladies' scarf with the Branch logo printed on it, enclosed in a chrome picture frame, with an inscription at the top, 'Atoken of esteem, from the Members of the Royal Signals Association Glasgow Branch', and at the bottom, below the 'Jimmy', 'In memory of **Montgomery Brydon**' a similar item will be presented to **Mrs Harris** later, as she is unable to attend functions away from the house. On Saturday and Sunday 20/21 May, several members accepted the invitation of the 1940 Dunkirk Veterans Association, West of Scotland Branch, to participate in the final tribute on the Saturday, with a Memorial Cruise on the motor vessel Skylark IX (one of the small boats that took the troops off the Dunkirk beaches), a short service was held aboard and poppy petals scattered on the waters of Loch Lomond. The last post and reveille were played and a piper played 'The Flowers of the Forest. A march past, with the salute taken by the West Dunbartonshire provost, **Alistair MacDonald JP**. The Branch Standard Bearer, **Bill McNamara**, paraded the Branch Standard among other standards at the march past on Saturday and Sunday. The final march past salute on Sunday was taken by **Comd R. Lord** RN.

There was a dance, bar and buffet on the Saturday night, where the raffle and other donations amounted to £1,848 in aid of The Erskine Hospital 2000 appeal. The cheque was presented to a nursing sister from Erskine Hospital, by local children, at the church service in Jamestown parish church, conducted by the **Rev Ken Russell BD**. The nursing sister thanked everyone for their generosity, mentioning that the hospital is in the process of increasing its capacity to cater for the ever increasing numbers of ex service personnel requiring treatment and it's only income to cover the costs are from donations. The three Dunkirk veterans in our Branch, were pleased that the Branch supported them in this their final parade. Their Association is now being disbanded. **Brian Warren** a Glasgow Branch Associate Member, and the Branch Piper, was a leading light in organising the veterans' final event, and our congratulations to him for making it a memorable one.

Seven members accepted an invitation to attend a lunch, in the WOs and Sgts' Mess of 32 (Scottish) Sig Regt (V) on Friday 26 May, and were treated to a first class meal with wine at the table, and a complimentary drink at the bar afterwards. This was a first 'Jimmy luncheon' the Regiment had attempted, with members from 52 Sig. I and the other members who were present, hope it will not be the last. It allowed the RSA Branch members to meet with members of the Squadrons we don't see on our monthly meetings. The Branch members convey their best wishes and thanks to **WO1 (RSM) A. B. Hilborn** and members of the mess, for an excellent lunch, produced by **WO2 Master Chef John Wren** and his staff.

34 members, families and friends took a coach trip to Dunfermline on Saturday 27 May organised by **Jim McMillan**. The weather was dull and overcast with intermittent rain, so most of the visit was spent in the shopping centre, under cover, before beading for Crossgates British Legion club for high tea. A very enjoyable meal produced by outside caterers, at a very reasonable price. We then whiled away time in the clubs and bars. After a few games of bingo, with some of our party having small wins, we made the trip back to Glasgow. A raffle had been organised on the coach for a bottle of whisky, a bottle of wine and a small teddy bear. On our return it was discovered that Glasgow area had been bathed in sunshine, this is becoming a habit of the weather with our trips away. **Bill Taylor** and **Ivana** managed to arrange to see **Mrs Helen Harris** at home, for **Bill Taylor** to be able to present her with a plaque, similar to that presented to **Mrs Brydon**, produced by the Branch, to the memory of her late husband **John Harris**. Members are now well ahead with preparations and raring to go, to the reunion at Blandford, trusting the weather improves.

EAST KENT BRANCH

On Saturday 8 April a small select group of eleven members led by the Chairman embussed in a minibus, kindly lent to us by **Mrs Jo Barrett** at what seemed like the crack of dawn, to go to Chelsea Barracks in London for the Royal Signals Association AGM, which started at 0930hrs. At a crossroads in Lewisham, we drew up at red lights beside a London bus. The Hon Sec glanced at the two lady passengers on the bus nearest to him and was surprised and flattered when both smiled sweetly at him. He suddenly realised the reason-on the side of our minibus was displayed 'The Parkinson's Disease Charity'. It was a smile of sympathy rather than endearment. The Chairman was quick to point out that he was sure they assumed that at least he was the 'carer' and on arrival at Chelsea Barracks he announced the arrival of 'The Royal Signals Association Parkinson's Disease Troop'.

On Sunday 9 April, another small and select group of thirteen members met in bright sunshine at Chartwell at 1230hrs and proceeded to the restaurant for lunch. Tickets had been booked to enter the house afterwards at 1330hrs and being a small group we were able to go round together and discuss the exhibits amongst ourselves. A walk through the gardens down to the studio coincided with a short talk by the curator on **Sir Winston's** life as an artist and a description of some of the many pictures hung on the walls around us. Did you know that he painted over 500, only one of which was painted during the war. He never had painting tuition and only sold three, for the purpose of paying for **Lady Churchill's** severe illness in 1965.

On 14 May there were some spare seats on the bus which took us to the Imperial War Museum at Duxford and those that went seemed unanimous that those who didn't had missed a splendid outing. Of course the weather was superb and traffic allowed us to get there and back in two hours each way. Most brought their own picnics and started off by sitting at the trestle tables in the picnic area and comparing hampers. There were five hangers full of exhibits to choose from. Most headed for the Land Warfare Hanger which has the largest collection of hardware of many nation's armies set in the terrain in which they were mostly deployed. The US Airforce hanger was most impressive, dominated by a B52 under, round or over which were many of the other US aircraft of yesteryear and today. The other hangers were 'working areas' where volunteers were working on reclaimed aircraft of every sort and painstakingly restoring them, in most cases to flying standards. Indeed throughout the afternoon many of the celebrated aircraft were rolled out and flown for the spectators to watch. It was very nice to be joined by **Sheila** and **David Geary** who had driven direct from their new home in Suffolk.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Jack and **Rachel Dienst** have recently visited Sorento to reminisce on his exploits as a DR in the Italian campaign which he recorded in his book 'A Civilian in Uniform'. **Frank** and **Olive Castle** went on a cruise to the Canaries and kept an eye on **Gen Alan** and **Barbara Yeoman**. **Michael Barrett** took his grandchildren for a day's visit to the Dome (and survived). If you have heard about the auction by the Government of frequency bands for the next generation of mobile phones, you will not be surprised to know that **Trevor Allison** has been involved.

AU REVOIR

Maurice Bloomfield who had been a member from the early days of the Branch has had to disband the local Branch of 'Guide Dogs for the Blind' because of a lack of support from anyone to run it. At the same time he has decided that it is time for him to give up the Branch. He served with **Harvey Blizzard** in 26th Indian Div and with the late **Bill Brewin** in the 45th Wessex Div and has fond memories of both **Harvey** and **Hazel**. We, too shall miss him.

NEW MEMBERS

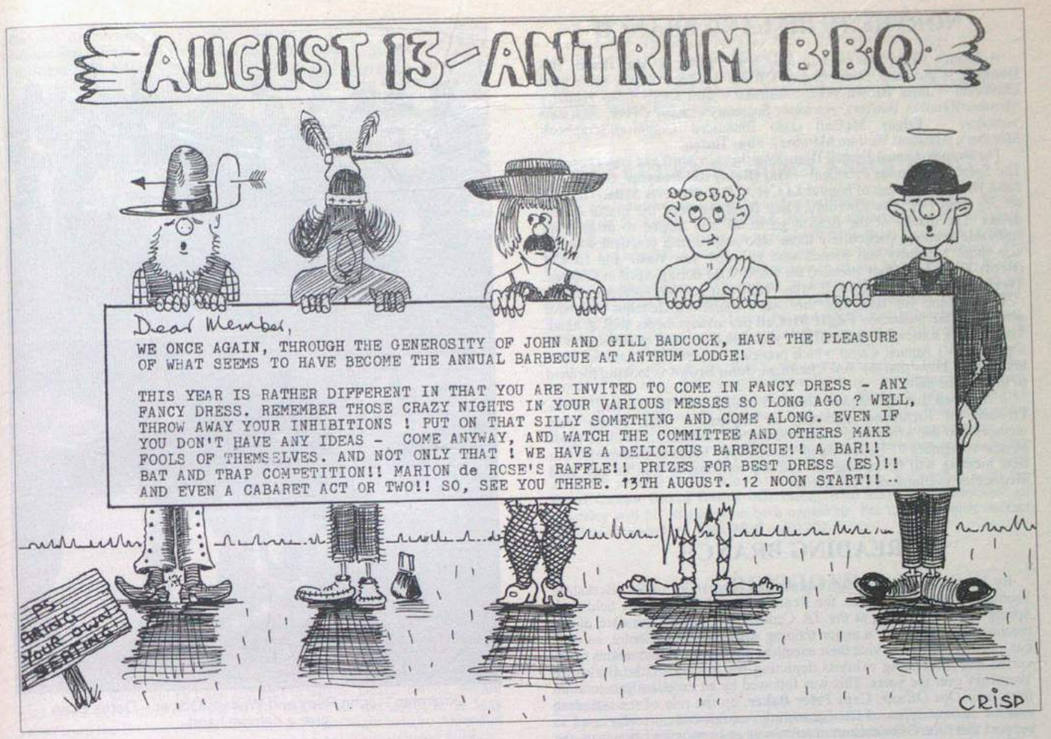
We are delighted to welcome six new members. **Mr** and **Mrs Christopher** and **Rosemarie Beard** of Chatham. **Christopher** served in the TA from 1959 to 1967 as a Lance Corporal in 329 Sig Sqn (TA) at Bromley and is one of several from that Squadron who have now joined us. **Mr** and **Mrs Geoffrey** and **Jean Randerson** of Sittingbourne. **Geoffrey** was an apprentice at Harrogate and served as a Regular from 1952 in Korea, 5 Corps Sig Regt in Colchester, 3 Inf Div & Sig Regt and 7 AGRA(AA). **Mr** and **Mrs Clifford** and **Sarah Young** of Faversham. **Clifford** served as a Regular from 1957 to 1966 in the rank of Corporal in UK, BAOR, Cyprus, Jordan and Aden.

NORFOLK.BRANCH

The Norfolk Branch has recently held their AGM with the result that several new members are now manning the fort. Thanks must go to the outgoing Chairman, **Frank Mortlock**, for his hard work and dedication over the last couple of years. A special mention also goes to our outgoing Secretary, **Brian Gibbs**, who has been in the post over nine years, ever since the Branch was formed. In their place, **Maj (Retd) Mike Sexton** takes the helm as Chairman whilst **Steve Nobbs** has the hard act to follow **Brian** as the Branch Secretary.

Our annual dinner at the Hilton Norwich was again well attended and well enjoyed. Our guest of honour was the Assistant General Secretary, **Lt Col (Retd) Ian Hamilton** and his wife **Elizabeth**. This was the first time that they had dared to venture to Norfolk. Lets hope they come to see us again. (Photo below)

We recently had some bad news when our Vice-Chairman, **Gordon Royall**, suddenly died. **Gordon** was our first Chairman when the Branch opened, and was instrumental in setting it up to what it is today. He will be sorely missed.



HUDDERSFIELD BRANCH

The Branch had its first speakers lunch last year, The speaker was **Capt G. Tyndale** and her Yeoman of Signals **SSgt P. Winstanley** from 219 Sig Sq, 2 Sig Regt. **Capt Tyndale** gave an illustrated talk on the role played by today's Signallers, and was thanked by the Branch Secretary.

The annual Christmas get together was again held at the Greenside Arms, Waterloo, Huddersfield, and was attended by 30 Members and their guests. This year we intend to hold more speakers lunches, to be held on Sundays thoughout the year.

(L-R) Back Row: Mr R. Pawson (Treasurer). Mr P. Berry, Mr P. Smith, Mr J. Rosendale, Mr D. Crawshaw, Mr D. Pollard, Mr A. Dunn, Mr J, Dearden and Mr P. Ling.
(L-R) Front Row: Mr J. Hirst (Chairman), Mr G. Scott (Secretary), Mrs B. Mellor (President), Mr D. Tippen (Deputy Chairman)

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

A Branch AGM was held in May with President, **Maj (Retd) Bill Douglas**, in the chair. Some Branch Offices were rearranged, these were Chairman – **John Brown**, Vice-Chairman – **Jim Reilly** (also Property Member/Reunion Banker), Assistant Secretary – **Kim Greer**, Assistant Treasurer – **Edgar McCall** (also Blandford Organiser/Scrapbook Member), Assistant Welfare Member – **Sam Totten**.

The Branch Annual Formal Dinner was held in April and was a success. The Speakers were the President – **Maj (Retd) Bill Douglas**, Chairman – **John Brown** and guest of honour **Lt Col A. P. R. Roberts MBE** – the CO 40 Sig Regt (V). The Ravenhill Flute Band provided the music during dinner. The thanks of the Branch go to all who helped to make it an enjoyable evening, particularly those who helped in a practical way but also those Members and friends who attended. **Ian Wolfe** and **Lt Col (Retd) Terry Lightfoot** attended the RSA AGM during April in Chelsea. **Terry Lightfoot** was appointed Area Vice-Chairman for Northern ireland.

By the time you read this, this year's Blandford Reunion will have arrived. In the meantime **Edgar McCall** has arrangements well in hand. The party is somewhat depleted this year due to a clash of dates with 40 Sig Regt (V) Annual Camp which prevents our serving Members from attending. I know that the new Chairman, **John Brown** is looking forward to leading the party.

It is hoped that the Branch Standard Bearer will 'fly the flag' at the Freedom of Richmond ceremony in September. This brings back memories to the writer who when training in Catterick in 1945/46 (does anyone remember 97 Squad?)spent many happy hours in Richmond. Our next meeting will be in August. You are welcome to join us any third Wednesday in Clonaver TAC, Belfast

READING BRANCH

By kind permission of the Squadron Commander of 94 (Berkshire Yeomanry) Signal Squadron, the Reading Branch of the RSA held their Spring Branch meeting at the TA Centre in Windsor. The date of the meeting coincided with a major training weekend at the Centre, so after our meeting we able to visit their excellent museum, which contains many varied and interesting exhibits depicting the history of the Berkshire Yeomanry over the years. This was followed by an excellent presentation from their Ops Officer, **Capt Peter Baker**, on the role of the squadron and the various types of Clansman radio equipment currently used to support that role. Of even more interest was an overview of Bowman, the next generation combat net radio system, and how this will be used by the Squadron in the future. Proceedings ended fittingly in the Squadron bar where, along with suitable liquid refreshment, we all enjoyed an excellent buffet lunch! For particulars regarding Reading Branch, please contact **Alan E. Foot** on 01189261952.

SALE BRANCH

After 12 years of existence the Sale Branch of the Association feels that it is now time to be identified as an ever growing organisation and this is the first article on the activities of one of the younger Branches who at this moment in time have 32 members on their books .

We saw out 1999 in October with our usual annual Social night at the Ashton on Mersey Golf Club where the only rounds being played were swiftly executed across the Bar. We were entertained by the 60's and 70's Band 'INDIGO' who were the back up group to Herman's Hermits on many of their tours. Thus the bunions, blisters, gout and all the other ailments of us Old Soldiers were cast to one side and the 109 members and their guests rocked the night away. **Capt Frank Lawson**, our President, laid a wreath at Sale Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday where we paraded with members of the United Services Club behind the Standard carried by our Standard Bearer, **Derek Blain**. The Royal Signals contingent were well represented with a total including ourselves of 200 ex-servicemen parading. In December we had a successful Pie and Peas Night in the Service Club. Many tales were told over a pint - some as long as a fisherman's tale - and we have a few of them.

In January for the new Millennium we held our first ever President's Night. Although having been in hospital for many months in 1999, **Capt Frank Lawson** ably assisted by his lovely wife **Dorothy**, organised a superb evening for all the members and their ladies. The meal was of gourmet standard at the Lennox Lea Hotel in Sale and the President's guest, **Maj Chris Reynolds-Jones** - President of the Manchester Branch, gave us an insight of his career in the Royal Signals. During the evening a presentation was made of a decanter and glasses with the insignia of the Royal Signals to our Padre, the **Reverend Ray Rossiter,** in recognition of his award by the Queen of the OBE, a well deserved distinction.

Our annual long weekend in May was a return trip to the Emerald Isle where 51 members and their guests stayed in the town of Dungarvan, South West of Waterford the home of Waterford Glass, where a few members made purchases from the superb selection in the showrooms.

As usual whilst all England were enjoying a heat-wave, mist and drizzle descended on our heads but this gave us more - encouragement to sample and enjoy the Guinness. In the morning when breakfast was served many bedroom doors had the 'do not disturb' sign displayed so a good time was had by all.

Chairman – John Riley and Welfare Officer – Derek Blain give a helping hand

The members have asked that the following be mentioned for their hard and sterling work that has gone on during the year, **Capt Frank Lawson** our President at 82 and after lengthy stays in hospital is always there with a guiding hand, Secretary **Martin Quinn** who writes down the minutes of our monthly meetings while hurtling down the motorway from anywhere in the country to be there on time, our Chairman **John Riley** one of the nicest full backs to ever don football boots in the Cheshire area -the scars still show and that was in the 50's. He greets every members wife with the same enthusiasm which he had for scoring a goal - the first player to kiss his fellow man on a football field!! Our Welfare Officers **Derek Blain** and **Gary Robertson** are always around to assist and comfort those who need a chat or help in any way and last but not least **John Deas** our Treasurer and Social Secretary who is too modest to say that this is all his doing,

President's PS: Unfortunately ***John Deas****, inundated with his many commitments, is retiring at our next AGM, it will be very hard to replace such an enthusiastic and efficient Social Secretary/Treasurer.*

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

The 53rd Annual Reunion Lunch for the Southampton Branch took place on Sunday 16 April 2000 at the Hampshire County Cricket Club, Northlands Road, Southampton. The lunch was well attended with sixty-four members including our guest speaker and representatives from the Reading, Winchester, Aldershot and Salisbury Branches. We were also pleased to have **Roy Andrews** and his wife **Patricia** representing Area 4. **Capt. C Cluett** our Hon. Treasurer said grace. After lunch, toasts were proposed to:

Her Majesty the Queen	-	**Mr S. L. Smith**
The Princess Royal	-	**Brig J. C. Clinch CBE**
The Royal Corp of Signals and the Royal Signals Association	-	**Mr N. D. Davies**

Our Branch President welcomed all our guests in his usual inimitable manner before introducing our guest of honour, **Capt. Sarah Stonier. Sarah's** response and her talk about her Service career over 23 years was a true eye-opener. After joining the WRAC at the age of 17, she transferred to the Royal Signals on the demise of the WRAC. The trials, tribulations and yes, prejudice encountered on the journey to her well earned Commission, could not fail to invoke much admiration for a 'gutsy' lady, as the reception to her speech showed. She also displayed a sense of humour as, with the occasional expletive, she described various events in her career. The consensus was that **Sarah** was and is a great asset to the Corps.

Our Vice Chairman, in his closing address brought our attention to Branch Members **Nancy** and **Fred Griffiths** who celebrated their 65th

Wedding Anniversary on Thursday 20th April. All present offered their congratulations. Our thanks to **Mrs Ruth Dear** and **Mrs Janet Mitchell** for organising and running the raffle. Members, as always, were very forthcoming with raffle prizes and the grand total of £125 was realised. All Branch Members greatly appreciated the efforts made by the Committee and others, in the organisation of such a successful reunion lunch. Our thanks also to **Richard Marsden,** the Manager of the Cricket Club and all his staff, who once again did us proud with a well-presented and excellent lunch.

It was most unfortunate that our Chairman, **George Packer**, could not attend the lunch this year as he was attending the AGM of the 'Market Garden Veterans Association', of which he is Vice-Chairman.

Top Table
Joan Stuart, Sidney Smith, Sarah Stonier, Johnny Clinch, Ruth Dear, Chris Cluett

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Although we had to forego our last monthly meeting, some of our members have been active in attending events taking place at our neighbouring Branches. Our Chairman, **Ron Miller** and his wife **Pat** were among those who visited Brussels on the annual weekend organised by 31 Signal Regiment (V), the last unit in which 'Dusty' served. we are told that a good time was had by all, and we do not doubt it. In May teams from the Branch attended the Annual Quiz Night held by Aldershot Branch. We were made very welcome and enjoyed a Curry Supper , prepared and served by the Ghurka unit in their area. It was a very good evening.

31 SIGNAL REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

May was a busy month, with committee meetings, the AGM and the annual trip to Europe. The committee led by our Chairman, **Col Donald Crawford**, continue to do sterling work trying to find spelling mistakes with our Secretary's, **Henry Holman**, typing. The AGM was well attended and once again our thanks go to **George Collins**, who volunteered to be the 'Fish and Chip' member, they were most welcome after all our deliberations. The highlight of the month was our long weekend in Brussels. This was organised by our Social Secretary, 'Dusty' **Miller**. We moved on to Plan 'B' fairly rapidly when we got wind of the French dock workers strike at Calais. We were down that tunnel before you could say Colditz! All this hassle interfered with our normal routine of, 'Let's drink the ferry dry!' Not to be done out of it all together, we stopped at the first wine and spirit warehouse, topped up and were on our way. The drink of the weekend was a gin and port mixture and very nice it was too. (hic!)

Our picture shows a few of our members looking happy. By one or two of them thought that the Eiffel Tower was a different shape? Plans are now in for next year's trip.

July was our next busy month with the following events taking place:

2 July Royal Star and Garter Summer Band Concert
14 July The Royal Military Tattoo 2000 at Horseguards
23 July Visit Denbies Vineyard for a Wine and Dine Day

For further details of these events contact 'Dusty' on 01784 250756.

We have just received the news that a former member of the Regiment, **Maj Tim Willis**, has died.

BEVERLEY EX-BOYS ASSOCIATION

We are continuing to grow and now have 137 members. At the suggestion of **Archie Mulholland**, we have advertised in the Glasgow Daily Record as there were a number of lads from Scotland in the 6 (Boys) Training Regiment, and we have received a few replies. On Sunday, 7 May, we held a Carvery Lunch at the Marric Hotel, Poole, which was attended by 20 members, including guests. At this Lunch we were able to welcome new members, **Alan Davies** and **Peter Gray**, together with their wives. **Terry Poingdestre's** two brothers joined us, both of whom are ex-army, and one of them was on a visit from Jersey. A great time was had by all.

In the last issue of *The WIRE*, we mentioned that **Cliffe Webb** was probably the longest serving ex-Beverley boy. Our Branch Secretary, **Tony Hull**, received a phone call from **Ray Webb** to say that he had served from 1939 to 1982 but he was a member of 'F' Company, not a Beverley Boy. However, we do congratulate him on his long service.

The 50th Anniversary Reunion weekend will take place with a dinner on 7 October at the Museum of Army Transport, Beverley. There will be a church service at Beverley Minster on Sunday, 8 October, with the **Revd Canon David Bailey** officiating. The Mayor and Mayoress of Beverley will be attending on both occasions. For further details contact the Branch Secretary, **Tony Hull** on 01202-770261.

REUNIONS

From: **Derek Reid**
27 Kempton Avenue
Northolt
MIDDLESEX
UB5 4HF

Dear Readers,

I recently e-mailed the Royal Signals Museum to seek some form of assistance and they have kindly put me in touch with *The WIRE*. I served at No 280 Signals Unit, RAF Troodos during the period December 1974 - December 1976. I am now trying to establish whether or not it will be feasible to hold a reunion, this would obviously include ex-members of No 259 Sig Sqn. Troodos being such a small unit, the guys from 259 Sig Sqn played a major part in camp life, and as such a reunion would not be complete without them being involved. The names that immediately spring to mind are as follows:

Names	Towns/Areas of Origin
LCpl Jim Duncan	Bedworth, Warwickshire
Sig Brian Shave	Newbigging, Tyne & Wear
Cpl Sam Mosedale	Cornwall
Cpl 'Daps' **Price**	Liverpool
Cpls Jim and **John Marshall**	Airdrie
Sig Rob McBride	East Kilbride
Cpl 'Mac' **McIntosh**	Edinburgh

My contact numbers are as follows:
Home: 020 8422 5053
Work: 020 8992 5344 extn: 462
Mobile: 0771204 7639
E-mail: derek.reid@bbc.co.uk

'F' BOYS COMPANY ROYAL SIGNALS 1920-41 REUNION

The ninth reunion of 'F' Coy members will be held at the Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, London, situated just behind Waterloo Station on 20 September 2000. There will be a private room with bar (larger than last year) from 1100 hours until 1500 hours. A curry lunch will be provided or an alternative meal if we are advised well in advance. The cost this year is £15.00. Invitations will be sent out in June to members who are currently on our list, but all who served in 'F' Boys Company 1920-1941 are eligible to attend. Contact is the Hon Secretary, **Victor Dugdale**, 12 Deep Well Drive, Camberley, Surrey. GU15 2HF. Tel: 01276 29176.

260 SIGNAL SQUADRON OLD COMRADES ASSOCIATION

Some came by plane, some came by boat, car and caravan, others via the Channel Tunnel, to our reunion in 'Dortmund' Germany, joining two members **Peter Lori** with partner **Rita** also **John** and **Anna Seymour** who

still reside in Germany. It was marvellous to see 24 members from far and wide, intent on enjoying themselves and they certainly did. The weather was kind to us, more like midsummer than early May with temperatures soaring to 30 degrees centigrade. The majority arrived on Friday 12 May and were quick to find the watering hole, a snug little bar in the cellar of the 'Drees Hotel' our home (the Hotel I mean) for the weekend. On the Saturday morning a little the worse for wear (say no more, Secretary) it was time for a little nostalgia. Members made their way to various parts of Dortmund they were once acquainted with, Lunen, Massen Brackel and Napier Barracks (which is no more) now a golf course, to name but a few.

Steve and **Ulla Freeman-Pannett** teamed up with **Geoff** and **Beryl Scott** accompanied by their youngest daughter, **Heather** and visited their old quarter in Summern. **Heather** was born in December 1973 at the nearby BMH at Iserlohn, not found on this visit, (has anyone got a map reference for **Geoff**?) **Heather** decided to play in the sandpit that her older brother and sister had played in 26 years previously, when they lived there. The road system had changed a little and there were more houses, but they could still identify with their flat. Several members visited nearby Westfalen Park, which was having a Motor Show, **Roy** and **Pat Andrews** were impressed and almost came away with a brand new Mercedes, cars appear to be 1000's of pounds cheaper than in UK.

At 1800hrs. on Saturday everyone appeared for our Annual General meeting and dinner. Photographs were taken mostly by **Heather Scott**, who was afterwards voted honorary photographer for 260 Sig Sqn. We were all pleased to see our Chairman, **Maj (Rtd) Tony Morgan**, back in harness after a long struggle with illness, he was accompanied by his charming wife **Ann**. We were pleased to welcome, for their first re-union , **Heather Scott** who joined her parents, now become an associate member, **Peter Lori's** partner **Rita, Archie** and **Hilda Cairns** and **Ted Williams**, also in our midst we had an old soldier **Joe Radford**, who was a National Serviceman in 1952 in Dortmund, he was in the Royal Artillery. After a lot of leg pulling ie: 'Plankie' He asked if he could join with his wife as an associate member of the Branch, everyone agreed. Well done, **Joe** and **Brenda** we enjoyed your company and look forward to meeting you again on another occasion.

During dinner a toast was made to absent friends. After dinner it was back to the cellar bar to listen to tales and anecdotes of Dortmund and Ireland in 60s/70s. Everyone was saying how delighted they were that they had decided to come to Dortmund for the re-union. Our thanks go to **Peter Lori** for finding the Hotel and putting in the ground work. On Sunday morning some members disappeared as quickly as they came, to catch boats etc., others caught planes in the evening to return to work on the Monday, back to reality. A few stragglers hung on till Monday making a long weekend of it. What can I say? It was a wonderful weekend. See you all next year in Southend.

REUNION

Calling all ex 4 Div HQ and Sig Regt members who served in 4 Div between 1963 and 1966.

For the past two years the Ex 4 Div Corporals' Mess Reunion has taken place, in Morecambe, on the first weekend in December. The numbers in 1999 were double those of 1998 and the general opinion was that they were great reunions.

By request of all those who attended last year it is now proposed that the reunion be opened to all ranks who served in 4 Div between 1962 and 1966 thus allowing more former colleagues to attend.

If you would like to take part then let's hear from you.

For details contact: **Les Downie**
4 Winchester Close,
Heaton with Oxcliffe, Morecambe,
Lancashire,
LA3 3RU
Tel: 01524 417758
Fax: 01524 412859
E-mail: jan.down ie@connections-plus.com

LOST COMMS

George Montgomery would like to contact anyone who served with 1HQ Signals 39/40 especially if they were in 7LM Section, and then with 21 Army Group from 1940 until the end of hostilities, again especially 16TM Section. Does anybody know which beach we landed on? I can be contacted: 101 Millhill, Musselborough, EH21 7RP. Tel: 0131 665 2044 and his E-mail: honestlad@talk21.com

John Bright (Advanced Wireless Section – 1st British Corps 1942-45/46), would like to hear from former friends/colleagues who served with this unit from 1942 in Barnborough (Yorkshire) via West Kilbride, Weybridge and 'Juno Beach' on D Day through France, Holland and Germany until reaching Iserlohn. Reunions are held on an annual basis. Already in touch are 'Hash' **Harkin**, **Jack Walsh**, **Ken Hands, Johnny Sharples, Cyril Dorman**, 'Jacko' **Jack** and **Doug Smith.** For details please contact **John Bright**, 22 Merrillies Crescent, Holland on Sea, ESSEX, CO15 5XX.

From: **Mark Lamerton**
36 Jardin à Pommiers
La Rue de Patier
St, Saviour
JERSEY
JE2 7LT

Dear Readers,

Since 1994 I have been researching the British Force, Task Force 135, which liberated the Channel islands (Operation 'Nestegg'), after five years of German occupation, in May 1945.

Recently I have completed my research on the composition, training, marshalling, sailing and landing of the Force in the Channel Islands and I am now concentrating on the senior officers of the units involved.

The Royal Signals Museum were unable to supply me with information regarding the Royal Signals officers (biography, obituary, medals etc) and or their units which I have listed below:

Maj M. G. Gordon-Wilson
Deputy Chief Signals Officer (Stationed in Guernsey) & Commander Det Force 135 Sig Sec (Guernsey, Alderney & Jersey).

Capt W. P. James
4 Wrls Sec Type P (Guernsey & Jersey)

Capt J. Worley
110 Constr Sec (Guernsey & Jersey)

Lt W. E. Garrett
Force 135 Cipher Set (Guernsey)

Lt T. A. Hudson
Force 135 Indep Sig Coy HQ (Guernsey)

The Archivist suggested that should I contact *The WIRE* some of the older readers might be able to help or may even have taken part in Operation 'Nestegg' and thus be able to offer further information. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely…….

George Sharp, who served from 1955 to 1958 in Catterick, Cyprus and Aden, would be pleased to hear from anyone who remembers him. Contact him on: ann@uk.dreamcast.com

Maj (Retd) L. B. H. C. Baker, of Dipford House near Taunton, TA3 7NR, would like to hear from any other survivors of 27 Line Section, who built a railway along the River Quai in Siam in 1942-45.

Robert Nichol is seeking the present whereabouts of his father, **Robert James Nichol**, who served in the Corps during the 1950s and 1960s. He served in the Himalayas and his last known address was in Melbourne Australia. Anyone who can help is asked to call **Robert** on 01554 773 572.

David Mathieson is seeking the whereabouts of any of his pals from No. 22 Tp, 7 Selection Regiment from August 1948. **David's** address is:
3017 Dover Road SE, Calgary, Alberta CANADA, T2B 1VB

Mr J. W. Bunker is seeking the whereabouts of his old pal **Fred Randall**. **Fred** served in 75 TE, 2 L of C Sig Regt during WW2 and used to live in the Birmingham area. Anyone who can help, please call **Mr Bunker** on 01428 644734.

CORRESPONDENCE

From: **Maj (Retd) R. T. M. Sharp**
6 The Hollow
Haywards Heath
SUSSEX, RH16 2SX

Dear Sir,

I was very interested to read the letters from **Mrs Vickers** (December 1999) and **Lt Col Soward** (March 2000) as I served in both of the Greek campaigns: 1940/41 (a very raw sabaltern IC 5 Line Construction) and in 1944 (as a Captain in 18 LofC - a unit re-roled back to its original 3 Corps Signals). I remember the concern when the RAF HQ was over-run by members of ELAS, the military wing of KKE (Greek communist party). We heard that the rebels had liberated their prisoners boots then marched them unceremoniously into the hills. **Gen Nalder** in his History of the Corps says, '... made POW...for a short period' but gives no further details.

About this time I was repatriated on PYTHON so have no further information but will research further and if successful I will write to **Mrs Vickers**.

5 Construction Section was raised in Palestine in 1940 from locally recruited Jews with a leavening of UK personnel some regular ex-infantry signallers and R. Signals NCOs. Trained in permanent line for the Haifa to Bagdad route, the Section spent its time laying D8 cable round rapidly moving airfields. With so many Jews we were high on the evacuation list but by chance, another story, were on the last convoy from Kalamata.

Yours Sincerely……

From: **Lt Col (Retd) L. F. Ball**
3 Renning End
Mountsorrel
Loughborough
LEICS
LE12 7HP
Tel: 0116 237 6142

Dear Editor,

On a visit to Paris recently, I was intrigued to find, in the gardens behind the Palais Royal, a sculpture which (I feel) must have been inspired by the 'White Helmets" I am sorry that i found it at dusk, so that the picture is not very clear. However, it clearly shows several half 'Jimmies' with bits of motor-cycles.

Yours Sincerely.....

From: **Capt (Retd) J. Esson**
156 Holme Lacy Road
Putson
HEREFORD
HR2 6DB
Tel: 01432 263 697

Dear Sir,

With reference to the June 2000 issue of *The WIRE* and the notes from Beverley Ex-Boys Association asking if anyone could beat **Cliffe Webb's** ex-boy service of 41 years. I joined as a boy in February 1946 and finished as a PSAO with 71 (Yeomanry) Signal Regiment in August 1995. A total of 49 years plus. Sorry **Cliffe**! As you know a 254 OBA will always take over from a Beverley ex-boy! Can anyone beat this?

Yours Faithfully…….

From: **George E. Eynon**
11 Rhind Street
Bodmin
CORNWALL
PL31 2EL
Tel: 01208 75019

Dear Sir,

May I, on behalf of the Korean War Veterans Association (R. SIGNALS), express our sincere thanks to one and all for a fabulous weekend, at the RSA Reunion at Blandford Camp on 24-25 June 2000.

We look forward to our next visit, God willing, to both see and make further acquaintances with Corps members.

Yours Sincerely.....

From: **F. Shore ERD**
1 Larchfield House
Highbury New Park
LONDON
N5 2DE

Dear Sir,

Mr K. A. Wheatley's letter (*The WIRE*, June 2000, page 299-300) raises the issue of the forgotten 'Army Emergency Reserve'.

At a recent dinner neither a Lieutenant Colonel nor his Adjutant had ever heard of the AER. Even more astounding, I received a letter from the Royal British Legion HQ, some time ago, addressed to **'Mr F. S. Erd'** - the forgotten decoration?

Yours faithfully.....

DONATIONS

RSA Chester	£ 10.00
RSA Eastbourne	£ 150.00
RSA Reading	£ 120.00
RSA Swindon	£ 50.00
Lt Col (Retd) N, Pidsley	£ 7.50
Mr R. L. Cartwright	£ 20.00
Mr D. W. L. Randall	£ 10.00
Mr F. S. Griffiths	£ 2.00
Mr S. Holdsworth	£ 9.00
Mr A. C. Keen	£ 10.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£ 20.00
56 Division Signals Association	£ 250.00
Donations in memory of Col (Retd) C. B. Masser	£ 280.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of Sgt P. H. Coles	£ 10.00
Capt (Retd) V. Dugdale in memory of Col J. F. Worth OBE	£ 25.00
Patricia Tye in memory of her father Jack Ferdinando	£ 350.00
Ron Larby in memory of George Brace	£ 10.00
Maj (Retd) Dai Rees in memory of WO2 Danny Daniels	£ 25.00

LAST POST

Bennett - Mr P. Bennett	Served 1930/50	Died June '00
Brace - G. Brace	Served 1950/52	Died 30/05/00
Catt - Maj C. W. Catt	Served 1925/46	Died 11/06/00
Cherry - Maj M. D. Cherry MBE	Served 1951/92	Died 01/05/00
Coles - Sgt P. H. Coles	Served 1926/46	Died 13/06/00
Corby - Maj N. D. B. Corby TD	Served 1951/65	Died 09/09/99
Curtis - Maj G. D. Curtis	Served 1939/46	Died 21/04/00
Edwards - Cpl R. J. Edwards	Served 1942/48	Died 1999
Ferdinando - WO1 (RSM) J. G. Ferdinando	Served 1920/46	Died 2000
Graham - Maj J. A. Graham	Served 1929/46	Died June '00
Heyes - Maj J. K. Heyes	Served 1949/76	Died 03/06/00
Love - Maj D. B. Love	Served	Died Nov '98
Masser - Col C. B. Masser	Served 1942/76	Died 27/05/00
Merkin - Sig H. Merkin	Served 1942/47	Died May '00
Moore - LCpl H. R. Moore	Served 1964/72	Died 21/06/00
Morris - Sgt R. F. Morris	Served 1962/73	Died June '00
Pagan - Col A. Pagan	Served 1944/72	Died June '00
Price - Col E. R. Price CBE, TD	Served 1933/63	Died 1999
Reece - CQMS R. A. Reece	Served 1939/??	Died 1999
Robbins - Maj P. A. Robbins	Served 1922/45	Died 11/05/00
Stevens - Sig H. H. Stevens	Served 1951/65	Died 08/06/00
Stonebanks - Lt Col A. M. Stonebanks MBE	Served	Died 27/05/00
Sutton - Sgt J. Sutton	Served 1951/73	Died 11/05/00
Thompson - Sig P. Thompson	Served WW2	Died 24/02/00
Wareing - Capt C. Wareing	Served 1940/46	Died May '00
Wiseman - Sgt R. Wiseman	Served 1939/46	Died 21/04/00

Dodd - Capt A. M. Dodd. **Alan Dodd** died shortly after his 80th birthday on 2 November 1999. Born in Liverpool he was educated at Wallasey Grammar School and Devonport High School. After obtaining a high placing in a competitive Civil Service examination he was appointed as an Assistant Traffic Superintendent in the Post Office where he began to acquire the skills and experience which led him to Royal Signals. Shortly after the outbreak of the Second World War he enlisted and was soon commissioned in the Corps. Embarking in his native city he sailed for North Africa where he fought with the Eighth Army and then on through Sicily and Italy until 1945 when he arrived

in Trieste. There he met and married his wife **Bianca**. Demobilised in 1946 he returned to UK but found life there uncongenial and he re-enlisted in 1953. He served in 2 Wireless Regiment (now 9 Signal Regiment) throughout the EOKA terrorist campaign in Cyprus and finally retired to his beloved Trieste in 1959. As a technical agent importing British made marine machinery he established a thriving and successful business in Italy. A life member of the Royal Signals Association he was a kindly man, a good companion in all circumstances and a most loyal friend of all who served with him. Those of us who knew him well will miss his cheery 'keep in touch' telephone calls from Trieste and his frequent visits to UK where he never omitted to contact his old comrades. To **Bianca** and their son **Alan** we send our deepest sympathy in their loss.

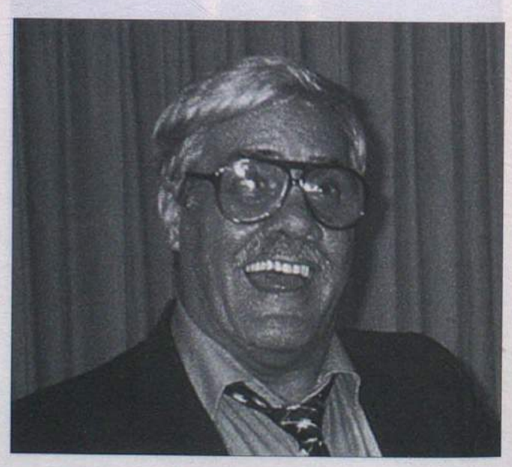
Curtis - Maj G. D. Curtis OBE Served 1939/46 and Died 21/04/00. It is with sadness that we have to report the death of **Maj Garth D. Curtis OBE.** A Royal Signals Life Member and a Member of the Southampton Branch of the RSA, he died peacefully on the 21st April 2000, one month short of his 84th birthday. **Garth** served with the 8th Army in World War II. He is survived by his three children, **Tishy, Libby** and **Roger**.

Worth – Col J. F. Worth OBE. The death of **Col Joseph Frederick Worth** on 28 February 1999 aged 95 severed the last living link between the Royal Engineer Signal Service and the Corps. He served the Army and his Corps for 40 years with gallantry and distinction, and was to become one of the Corps' experts on 'permanent' communications.
Freddie Worth was born on 20 December 1904 and joined the Royal Engineers Signal Service in August 1919 at the age of 14, because of the lack of job prospects and a strong family military tradition. He completed his initial signal training with K Company attached to the GPO. In 1920 he was posted to Aldershot Command Signal Company where he began playing football and cricket. In 1920 he transferred to the newly formed Royal Corps of Signals as a founder member, but continued to serve in Aldershot at the main W/T station. In 1925 he became eligible for overseas service and was posted to B Corps Signals in Rawalpindi where he took up hockey. After five years in India he returned to England and joined J Infantry Brigade Section, 4th Divisional Signals initially at Colchester and then in Canterbury where he acted for a year as Pay Sergeant. In 1935 he was appointed as Permanent Staff Instructor to No.1 Company, 50 (East Anglian) Divisional Signals TA at Stratford in East London. In 1938 he returned to India to join Kohat District Signals where he again acted as Pay Sergeant.
In February 1941 he was commissioned in the field and posted as Brigade Signal Officer to the Nowsherra Brigade at Peshawar in the rank of Captain. Between May and August 1941 he suffered from a severe bout of Typhoid Fever but was fit again by January 1942 when he joined a newly formed Indian Signals Lines of Communications Unit as Second-in-Command. During this time he took part in the retreat from Burma leading to the battle of Imphal. In 1943 he took over command of S Line of Communications Signals covering the Arakan sector of the Burma front. This unit had an extensive commitment covering some 200 miles building permanent line trunk routes to Corps and Divisional Headquarters, many airfields and the development of Akyab and Ramree Islands as Air Supply Bases. His Unit made a major contribution to the advance of the 14th Army in Central Burma leading to the capture of Rangoon. For his contribution to the war in Burma he was Mentioned in Despatches in 1942 and awarded an OBE in 1944. In 1945 he was promoted to the rank of Colonel to become Deputy Chief Signal Officer initially with 505 District covering North and Central Burma and later South Burma. He returned to the UK in June 1946 and in September of that year he became CO of No 2 Depot Regiment in Thirsk and Ripon.
He left the Army in August 1948 and became Communications Officer for the International Refugee Organisation in Geneva, however, he remained a Major in the Army Volunteer Reserve. He rejoined the Army in 1950 to serve as Senior Liaison Officer for Signals Work Services based with Signals Branch in BAOR where he was responsible for the overall control of the provision of Bundespost circuits for all Services and including the planning and building of communication services for the new Headquarters at Rheindahlen. In 1955 he was attached to the British Embassy in Bonn as a military advisor for negotiations on the British Army's role in Germany.
Freddie finally retired in 1959 and moved to Tewkesbury where he spent the next ten years as Civil Defence Officer for Gloucestershire. Later in life he discovered he was a talented artist and his home included many examples of his work including delightful watercolours of views of his local area. He was a life member of the Royal Signals Association, and a holder of the 50-year badge and a long serving President of his local Branch.

Noble - John Noble died suddenly and unexpectedly in Dundee on 14 April 2000 aged 86. **John** was born in the shadow of the First World War and was later to be involved in the Far East during the Second World War. **John** led a full and varied life which could almost be divided into two distinct parts. Thirty-two years was spent in the jute industry in and around Calcutta. His time in India was interrupted by his service in the Army. He first joined the Bengal Artillery in 1938 - part of the Auxiliary Force India, equivalent to the TA today. He went on to Quetta and from there to Burma. He became a Major in the Royal Corps of Signals and it was in this rank that he was present at the recapture of Rangoon. He received a Mention in Dispatches for his services. After the War he returned to India with his new bride, **Ruby**. Always a gregarious and sociable man **John's** time in India was an interesting and absorbing one. He served his time as President of the Barrackpore Club and was an active Golf and Tennis player.
After he and **Ruby** returned to their roots in Scotland in 1968, **John** began what almost amounted to a fresh career in auditing and accountancy. That was another thirty two-year period and saw **John** continuing to work into his seventies. After his retirement from India he was active in many organisations in Dundee not least being the local branch of the Burma Star Association of which he became President.
John had a happy life, ably supported by **Ruby** and by his two sons **Ian** (at present a Lieutenant Colonel in the Corps) and **Douglas** in both of whom he took great pride.
John's funeral took place in Dundee on 22 April and was conducted by **Bishop Ted Luscombe**, himself a Burma Star Veteran, assisted by the **Rev David Shepherd**, chaplain of the Dundee Branch of the Burma Star.

Merkin – Sig H. Merkin. It is with regret that the Hull Branch of the Royal Signals Association report the death of **Harry Merkin** on Sunday 2 April 2000. **Harry** served in the Corps from 1942 to 1947 as a Wireless/Operator and was wounded in Normandy whilst serving with the 4th Air Formation Signals Regiment, rejoining his unit after recovering -in England. He later served in Palestine. He was a staunch member of the Hull Branch of the RSA and will be missed by his friends. We extend sincere condolences to his wife **Pat**, his family and all his friends.

O'Shea - Terence O'Shea. It is with great sadness that the Beverley Ex-Boys Association report the death of **Terry O'Shea**, who passed away on 25 April 2000. **Terry** was born on 2 June 1934 and joined the army as a boy in 1950. He was sent to Beverley to join the 6 (Boys) Training Regiment where he made quite a name for himself in the boxing team as a middleweight under the wing of **QMSI Jameson** and PT Instructor, **Lew Cantrill**. One of the events he is remembered for is the Individual Boxing Championship held at AAS Arborfield, where **Terry O'Shea** and **Andy Fish** both won their matches. This was the first time the Regiment had entered an outside boxing contest. **Terry** served at Beverley until he was seventeen and a half where he won many trophies in boxing and putting the shot. He gained the highest aggregate of any individual competing in the All England Schools Competition, setting up a new record for putting the shot with 48ft 4ins. This record was held until 1965 when it was broken by John Savage who took the record and went on to the Olympics. **Terry** served in Egypt as a field linesman, where he was stationed at Fayid and then went back for the Suez Crisis. After he left the army he had quite a flamboyant career as a chauffeur, driving for various film stars such as Anita Ekberg, Shirley Bassey and George Peppard. George Peppard was so impressed with him that on his departure from England he presented **Terry** with the keys and logbook of the white Rolls Royce that he had been driving for him. **Terry** set up his own car hire company and also worked as a chauffeur for Sir Laurence Olivier, with **Anita** acting as housekeeper. **Terry** had been very pleased to meet up with his old comrades at our first Reunion last year, where he is seen on the left of the photograph with **Andy Hutton** (previously Fish).
We were represented at the funeral service at the Church of the Holy Apostles, Pimlico by **Tony Hull, John Beasley, Jim Mellett** and **Michael Delicata-Bennett**. **Terry** leaves five children, **Susan, Paul, Lorraine, Lisa** and **Vincent** and an adopted son, **Jason**, as well as 15 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. We extend our deepest sympathy to **Anita** and his family.



Shrimpton – Col G. H. T. Shrimpton CBE, TD, ADC. Few officers have had the privilege of raising a Regiment from scratch. To **George Shrimpton**, seemingly against all odds, it came twice. Commissioned in 1934 into AA Signals (TA) he rose quickly from subaltern in May 1938 to acting major (2IC) on 1 December 1939 on the rapid expansion of AA Command. Thereafter, however, his 'home service only' medical category caught up with him and his war was spent alternating between 2IC and company commander as more senior officers returned to the UK.
When the TA was raised again after the war, he was astonished to be asked to raise and command 11 AA (M) Signal Regiment (He recruited two Lieutenant Colonels as Majors). After two extensions of that command and a brevet colonelcy he was asked to raise and command a new Supplementary Reserve Regiment, London District Signal Regiment. This appointment was extended by four years after which he was promoted Colonel.
With his TA experience augmented by that of his SR (later AER) command he became impressed by the benefits that would stem from offering TA and AER terms of service as alternatives within a reserve unit. He was encouraged in this by the then CSO, London District (later **Maj Gen Sir John Anderson KBE**) who placed an independent TA Signal Squadron under regimental command. Amongst other innovations, this made possible limited out-of-camp training for the Regiment.
In 1963 **Shrimpton** gave the annual Signals Institution London Lecture. His subject 'The Reserve Army' gave him the opportunity to argue the case for revision of Reserve Army terms of service. The then SOinC asked him to repeat the Lecture at Catterick for the regular Corps and to discuss its substance with the TA Directorate. **Gen Swainson** also sent copies to all CSOs, inviting them to implement its recommendations where they could be applied without further reference. At about this time **Shrimpton** began to accumulate a miscellany of chores around the Corps: membership of the Corps Committee, of the Signals Association Central Committee, of the Council of the R. Signals Institution and sundry sub-committees of all three, once as Vice-President, sometimes as Chairman. At the request of the then SOinC, he wrote the TA and AER part of the Royal Signals booklet published in May 1957.
Even **Shrimpton's** last TA appointment - as CSO 44(HC) Div/Dist – was eccentric. An officer, living and working in London, his TA office was in Shorncliffe and exercises took him back to where he had had a detachment at the start of the war: in the tunnelling under Dover Castle.

Graham - Maj John Anthony Graham. John joined F Company from the Royal Military School at Dover in September 1929. He served his apprenticeship as an Operator Signals at Catterick and at Liverpool Post Office. The apprenticeship included an Equitation Course at the Mounted Wing in 1932. On entering man service he was posted to F. Troop Cavalry Divisional Signals attached to the 11th Hussars P.A.O. at Tidworth. The 11th Hussars were the first cavalry regiment to be mechanised and F Troop Signallers served as Wireless Operator Gunners in the Lanchester armoured cars. In 1933 **John** sailed in the troopship *Dorsetshire* to Chinwangtao in Northern China and served at Peking as a member of the British Legation Foreign Office W/T station (HX8). He enjoyed his time in China but, in 1936, he was sent home on medical grounds. Restored to full health at Catterick, he was accepted for the OCTU there in 1939 and was commissioned in 1940. He subsequently served in India and Burma and was mentioned in dispatches.
After the war **John** briefly tried teaching before qualifying as a barrister and solicitor. He became a well known solicitor in Sunderland with his home in South Shields, his birthplace. He brought to his practice in Sunderland the same dedicated efficiency he displayed as a soldier and tradesman. **John** was proud to have belonged to the Corps, particularly 'F Company'. I was privileged to be his friend. **John** was cremated at South Shields on 8 June. It was a 'no fuss' funeral, at his request. Our deepest sympathy goes out to his wife, **Winnie**, and his immediate family.

Brace - George Brace. He joined the Corps in November 1950 and was trained as a Radio Mechanic. He served in l4th Field RA Signal Tp in Hong Kong and Korea. After discharge in November 1952, **George** worked for BT and was well known in cricket circles in the Swansea area. **George** was Standard Bearer for the West Wales Branch of the BKVA and was a member of the Cardiff Branch RSA. **George** died on 30 May 2000.

Graham - LCpl H. T. Graham 'Harry' who died on 8 April 2000 in his 80s was a member of the Cotswolds Branch of the Association since 1979. He had a severe stroke and never regained consciousness in a Nursing Home in Cheadle. He was born in Falkirk, Stirlingshire but lived in the Midlands. He joined the Post Office at the age of 14. He was called up in 1942 and served in Cairo and for a short time in Italy. After being demobilised in 1946 he returned to the Post Office until his retirement at the age of 60 as Inspector. He served with **Norman Wisdom** (now Sir) and they met up again in Cheltenham at a reunion 'Get Together'. Our sympathy goes to his sister **Mrs Emerson**.

Robins - Maj P. A. Robins known as 'Robbie' 1 November 1903 - 11 May 2000The success story of an ordinary soldier who raised his age to join the Royal Engineers in 1921 and later became one of the founder members of the Royal Corps of Signals when it was formed in 1922. After trade training he went with a contingent to Turkey during the rising of Kemal Attaturk. After a spell back in England at Aldershot, he was posted to Kohat District Signals, India, where he took part in many border skirmishes with the invading Afghans. Here they were using huge radio sets that had to be carried on mules!
In 1938 he was posted to Putney to 5th (London) Corps Signals as their RSM, with the specific job of dividing the TA Unit to double its strength because of the imminent war. The great sadness of his military career was not to have been in action. His next posting was to a desk job at Southern Command at Wilton House, Salisbury. From there he moved quite quickly to a commission and his first job as an officer at South Western District, where he met and married **Jean**, a Junior Command, Signals, ATS Officer. During his time at South Western District in Taunton he worked to provide all the mainland fixed telecommunications for the American Forces involved in Operation Overlord. This involved providing services to the camps, the hospitals (including Odstock Hospital, Salisbury, where he was later to be three times an orthopaedic patient) and to all the hards and embarkation points along the south coast, right down to the edge of Cornwall. For this work he was honoured by the Bronze Star decoration, which he received from 'Ike' himself at the American Embassy.
As a very able general sportsman, he represented both the Army and the Corps on several occasions. As a qualified FA Referee, he refereed most of the senior football tournaments, the equivalent of the British FA Cup finals. His interest in sport led him to involvement with the Hindon Cricket Club and the resurrection of the defunct Hindon Football Club. He was a member of the Parish Council for many years and Chairman for some of that time. He carried with him his interest in village affairs when, on his second retirement, he moved to Dinton. There he was almost immediately co-opted to the Parish Council. He finally retired from the Parish Council at the age of 80.
After his retirement from the army in 1945, he was publican at the Kings Arms in Puddletown. Later he was Postmaster at Hindon where he kept the village shop until he retired. During his time at Hindon, he was for a period Chairman of the Salisbury Branch of the Sub-Postmasters' Association. While at Hindon he took a great part in all things going on in the village. He was the Treasurer and the Secretary of the Royal British Legion, resuscitating it from an almost 'dead' Branch; he remained a member until his death. He was honoured by the award of a Gold Badge for his work by the British Legion.
During his years of army service in India, he wanted to get out of Church Parades, which were carried out with military precision, carrying arms and ammunition. He asked to change his religion and called himself a 'Salvationist', (being careful not to link himself with the Salvation Army). In fact he had a Chapel background. He took a very active interest in my work with the village Youth Club. After his retirement he became an enthusiastic fundraiser for the Wiltshire Boys and Youth Clubs (now Youth Action Wiltshire), having been a member of a Boys Club in East London during his younger days. Throughout his retirement he gave unstinting support and requested that the retiring collection at his funeral, and donations in lieu of flowers, should be given to this cause. He is survived by his wife **Jean**, a son **Peter** and a daughter **Helen**. **Charles**, the youngest son, died of Leukaemia in

1988. He also leaves three grandchildren and a great-granddaughter. Since the death of **Charles** he always wished his own ashes to be buried with those of **Charles** in the churchyard at Dinton. 'Robbie' always maintained his connection with Royal Signals. Both he and **Jean** were members of the No. 1 (Salisbury) Branch of the Signals Association and for many years he was their honorary president. He was also a member of the 5th (London) Corps OCA and attended their annual dinners from 1980 to 1997. The family would be interested to hear if he was the last surviving founder member of the Royal Corps of Signals, of which he was so proud.

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

CELEBRITY AMATEUR GOLF EVENT (CAGE) 2000 – 27 JUNE 2000

A report by Colonel (Retd) Cliff Walters, Chairman, CAGE 2000

The eighth CAGE was held on 27 June 2000 at Ashley Wood Golf Club, Blandford. Its aim, as always, to raise funds for charity and on this occasion the beneficiaries were the Museum Education Project and Save The Children. The event started on the evening of 26 June with a cocktail party sponsored by Bull Information Systems. About 80 sponsors and celebrities congregated and discussed all their missed putts since last year! **Brian Close** (cricket and ex-Corps), **Don Shepherd** (cricket), **Josh White** (comedian), **Peter Larter** (rugby) and **Peter Sainsbury** (cricket) were among those determined to get CAGE off to a good start. We were also pleased to see new celebrities in our midst including **Peter Walker** (cricket), **Tony Brown** (cricket) and **Alan Jones** (cricket). We hope they will return.

For once the forecasters were right and a bright sunny day dawned at Ashley Wood. The course was in excellent condition. Alenia Marconi were our main sponsors and their two teams were out early with **Don Shepherd** and **Peter Walker**. There were varying standards of competence shown at the chipping and putting competitions. Maybe the cocktail party had some part to play! The 18th hole was the 'nearest the pin' competition and a sleeve of balls was awarded to everyone whose tee shot ended on the green. **Maj Hamish Miln** of the Alenia Marconi team was nearest the pin and also had the longest drive; a very unusual occurrence. However, he carried only the driving prize as CAGE rules state that you can only win one individual prize. On the course we had a hole in one but unfortunately it was on the Winter temporary green so it didn't count: but it took over four minutes to find the ball 'in the middle of the fairway'!! SODEXHO had kindly sponsored the drinks stations which, due to the heatwave, were in regular use.

Brig James Shaw headed up the prize-giving for sponsors to donate their well earned prizes. This was followed by a quick dash to change for the Dinner Night at which the Corps Band was excellent. Entertainment was 'CAGE TRADITIONAL' with everyone in fine tune for the four 'anthems' and a fully attentive audience to listen to **Shep Woolley** and his side-splitting humour. We are also grateful to Sodexho for sponsoring the Dinner Night and BAE Systems who donated CAGE cuff-links to everyone who played.

Sponsors	Event	Winners
Alenia Marconi (Main Sponsor)	Team Stableford	Archer 2 Sodexho 1
	Individual Stableford	Arthur Fisher (Trend) Guy Newing (Sodexho) Mike Magill (Syntegra)
	Celebrity Stablef ord	Roy Palmer Brian Close Ray East
Lockheed Martin International	Yellow Ball Stableford	INCA Trend
Cogent Defence Systems	Longest Drive	Maj Hamish Miln
Syntegra	Nearest the Pin	Steve Maguire (Trend)
Bull Information Systems (Cocktail Party)	Putting	BAE Systems RACAL
INCA	Hidden Holes	Alenia Marconi 1 Dresdner Kleinwort Benson 1
Sodexho (Dinner Night)	Course Drinks Stations	
BAE Systems	CAGE Cuff-links	

Other Sponsors:

Archer Communications	Carillion
Compaq Computers	Dresdner Kleinwort Benson
ICL	ITT
Marandon Engineering	Marconi Communications
RACAL	Systematic
Thompson Marconi Sonar	Trend
Vega	

Our celebrities this year were:

Rodger Arneil - Rugby, Northampton, Scotland and Lions
Tony Brown - Cricketer, Gloucestershire Captain, now Chairman of Cricket
Mike Barnard - Hants Cicketer and Portsmouth Footballer. 1954 - 66
Brian Close CBE - Cricketer, Yorkshire and England Captain
Alan Castell - Cricket, Hampshire. Fine bowler representing Hampshire
Ray East - Cricket, Essex. Left arm spinner and useful batsman, 1956 - 78
Nigel Ellery - Professional Hypnotist and Entertainer
Jon Fellows-Smith - Represented South Africa at both Rugby Union and Cricket during '50s. Northamptonshire CCC 1957 - 60
Jimmy Gray - Cricket, Hampshire. Opening batsman 1948 - 66 playing in 453 matches
Ron Harris - Football, Chelsea. Indestructible Chelsea defender 1962 - 80. Record 622 first team appearances
Mike Jerome - Comedian and Entertainer
Glynn Jones CBE Rugby, Cardiff and Cross Keys
Alan Jones - Cricket, Glamorgan. Record holder for runs and centuries
Mervyn Kitchen – Cricket, Somerset. Test Umpire. Somerset batsman, 1960 - 79 scoring 16,000 runs (17 centuries)
Peter Larter - Rugby, Northampton, England and Lions
Jack Mansell - Football, Cardiff City, Portsmouth and England
Phil May - Rugby, Llanelli and Wales
Arthur Milton - Football, Arsenal and England and Cricket for Gloucestershire and England
Roy Palmer - Cricket, Somerset. Test Umpire. Somerset fast bowler 1965 -70
Russell Robins - Rugby, Ponypridd, Wales and Lions
Cyril Rutter - Football, Portsmouth. 171 First Division games for Portsmouth 1953 – 62, FA Senior Coach
Peter Sainsbury - Cricketer , Hampshire most successful all-rounder in the club's history
Don Shepherd - Cricket, Glamorgan. Commentator. Off-spin bowler taking 2,218 wickets
Reg Simpson - Cricket, Notts and England. Opening Batsman for both Notts and England, 1944 - 62. 27 tests, 31,000 first class runs
Bob Taylor - Rugby, Northampton, England and Lions
Brian Taylor - Cricket, Essex and England. England Wicket Keeper and Batsman, 1949 - 73. Captained Essex for his last eight years.
Peter Walker - Cricket, Glamorgan and England. BBC Radio and TV Commentator
Stuart Watkins - Rugby, Newport, Cardiff, Wales and Lions
Shep Woolley - Entertainer, comedian
Josh White - Internationally renowned comedian

Stephen Meyler (Bull) rewards David Romer (Racal)

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

Regimental Headquarters Royal Signals encourages all suitably qualified members of the Corps to seek professional recognition by joining the Institute of Electrical Engineers at the appropriate level.

Training: Those holding the academic qualification of a second class honours degree or better from an accredited IEE course, and having completed certain engineering training may apply to become Associate Members of the IEE (AMIEE). This is normally the first of 2 elements of the qualification needed ie the 'training'. Those under going such academic courses are encouraged to apply for student membership of the IEE.

Relevant Experience: Those who have proved their training qualification and are AMIEE then go on to apply for Membership of the IEE by demonstrating that they have had at least two years of 'responsible experience' since obtaining their 'training'. Since members of the Royal Signals will have spent time at Regimental Duty where personnel management and military training, rather than engineering skill, is their normal business it is not unusual for military candidates to spread this responsible experience over a number of tours of duty. (An officer might qualify by serving at weapons staff appointments or as technical adjutant or operations officer within a unit). Once he / she has completed both the training element and the relevant experience a candidate will normally be accepted as a Member which also confers the status of Chartered Engineer (CEng MIEE). Candidates who believe that they have both the training and the relevant experience may apply directly to become Members.

Mature Candidates. Some mature candidates will have been skilled engineers for many years but did not obtain the required academic qualifications at the start of their careers. A mature candidate route exists whereby a candidate is assessed upon a paper he / she writes and an interview. This is not an academic test but a chance for the candidate to demonstrate that he / she has the fundamental knowledge expected of a chartered electrical engineer.

The IEE is recognised by Government as being the body which represents all branches of communication and electronic engineering. It is the largest body of its type in Europe and is a member of the European Federation of National Engineering Associations (FEANI). Chartered Engineers are recognised and respected by all civilian employers.

For further information contact:
Lt Col Geoff Cary OBE CEng MIEE
on 94382 - 4280 or
Capt (TOT) Phil Cutforth MBE
on 94382 - 4388
Email: hq2sigbde@dial.pipex.com

THE Wire

October 2000

The Royal Corps of Signals

'Nobody moves or the chicken gets it!'
7 Signal Regiment - 2Lt Harriet Hebblethwaite

Somebody moved!
7 Signal Regiment - Sig Brown and Cpl Wilson waiting for lunch to cook

The Royal Signals Magazine

October 2000 Vol. 54 No: 5

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 Blandford Mil 2087 STD 01258 482087

The Wire

Subscription rates 2000 (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
Deputy Editor Mrs J. A. Herring

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

CONTENTS

	Page
Editors Notes	421
Movements	424
News from Headquarters	425
News of Training	432
News from the Balkans	438
News from Northern Ireland	442
News from the Regiments	449
News from the Squadrons	488
News from the UOTCs & Cadets	498
Sport	500
The Royal Signals Association and News from the AO's Desk	503
Reunions	509
Lost Comms	509
Correspondence	509
Donations	510
The Last Post	510
Late News	511

FRONT COVER
Comes to us courtesy of 71 (Yeomanry) Signal Regiment, Bexleyheath

BACK COVER
Comes to courtesy of the Cornwall & Torbay Branch of the RSA and shows Members posing for a PR photo with the Chairman of the Association, **Maj Gen Alan Yeoman**, prior to refreshments

The closing date for copy to reach this office, in order to go in the next issue is 15 October 2000

ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1830hrs
&
DINNER 1930hrs for 2000hrs

13th OCTOBER 2000

CROWN HOTEL BLANDFORD

Contact: **Lt Col (Retd) Collins** on 01202 843990

Authors alone are responsible for the content of their articles. The opinions expressed in the articles of this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise, of the Royal Signals or the Ministry of Defence. This publication should be treated with discretion by the recipient.

© Crown Copyright

Disclaimer: No responsibility for the quality of goods or services advertised in this magazine can be accepted by the Publishers or their Agents. Advertisements are included 'in good faith'.

THE BALD EAGLE BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY

JUST ABOUT TO LEAVE THE ROYAL SIGNALS? DO YOU HOLD A TEM, BSc or other relevent qualification (such as PRINCE 2)?

Do you seek a fair reward for your talents?
Are you independent and confident of your abilities?
Are travel and variety still of interest?
Then why not consider

THE BALD EAGLE CONSULTANCY Ltd

For more details send your CV to me, Chris Harper, at Thebaldeagle9@hotmail.com

'EAGLES SOAR'

LANYARD TROPHY

3-5 May 2000 Dartmoor

Remember the Agony!

A 35 Minute video is now available from
Video Resources, Royal School of Signals, Blandford.
Cost £6.00.

Cheques should be made payable to
Central Bank Royal School of Signals

FROM THE ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM

by Col (Retd) Cliff Walters, Museum Director

Director	**Col (Retd) Cliff Walters**
Curator	**Miss Stella McIntyre**
Attendant	**Mr David Walker.**
Business Manager	**Mr Adam Forty**
Archivist	**Mr Tim Stankus**
Shop Manageress	**Miss Karin Mountford**
Assistants	**Mrs Annette Barnes**
	Mrs Erika Hunt

The busy season for the Museum is now well underway and in recent times there have been many changes in the Museum not least in management personnel. Since retiring from the Corps as Regimental Colonel in October **Col (Retd) Cliff Walters** has taken up the appointment as Director. **Maj Roger Pickard** has now formally handed over as Curator to **Miss Stella McIntyre** who arrived in July. Some of you may well know her father **Maj Neil McIntyre** who retired in the mid-1960s. For those of you who know **Roger** he continues to visit and assist us on a regular basis and we use his wealth of knowledge to good effect. **Lt Col Mike Butler** has now retired, retired and retired again. We are very grateful indeed to him for having given us his services for a year whilst we are able to recruit new staff.

The Museum Volunteer Organisation continues to thrive under the leadership of **Lt Col (Retd) Pat Soward**. Without our volunteers (approx 40) we could not operate at weekends or on Bank Holidays from February to October. Anyone wishing to join our volunteers should contact **Pat** through the Museum. The Museum proved to be very popular during the RSA weekend in June. The yardstick for this is 'shop takings' which were higher than ever before. The staff were entertained by many old soldier tales! As an attraction the Museum is proving increasingly popular both with tourists and the local population. Admissions have increased so far this year by about 30% which is creditable when the national trend is downwards. This is due to the excellent marketing by **Adam Forty** our Business Manager. But it also reflects the excellence of the Museum. We have introduced trails, quizzes and interactive games, all of which have been very popular. For those who have not managed to visit us yet I hope it will not be long before you do so – and tell your friends as well.

All soldiers undergoing Phase 2 training at RSS visit the Museum as part of their training and some of them also assist us whilst they are awaiting training to commence. We continue to provide a research facility from our archives and stores of equipment. The internet site is also well used not least of which is for a list of items available in the shop. Our latest acquisition is a 'Bronze resin Jimmy statuette' but many of the old lines are still available.

If any readers have any memorabilia, medals, books, documents, photographs or other items that you believe may be relevant to the history of the Corps you could consider presenting them to the Museum where they will be safeguarded as part of the Corps' heritage. What seems insignificant to you may be relevant to many other people.

CONTACTS

Museum Tel: 01258 482248
Web site: www.royalsignals.army.org.uk/museum
E-mail: royalsignalsmuseum@army.mod.uk

THE MAN FROM MANNING AND RECORDS

Maj S. G. Hutchinson MBE, R. SIGNALS

The past few months have seen some key changes in policy ranging from the implementation of the Data Protection Act to fundamental changes in the MS Year. Another exciting development is the introduction of a Regimental Career Management Officer (RCMO) concept that should considerably enhance the interaction between the individual, his unit and the Division. On a sad note **Maj (Retd) Pat Cole** has now left the Divison on retirement, **Capt Shane Knight** will replace him in September 2000. Breaking with traditional formats we have recently received a TOT's perspective on Foreman of Signals Selection; it makes interesting reading.

A TECHNICAN'S TALE - *A message to all Junior Technicians*

During the majority of my Service I have been fortunate enough to be a Technician, a Foreman of Signals and a TOT. Until this year I have only attended one FofS Selection Board, mine. However, in the intervening period, I have listened to several 'knowledgeable' people spouting to all and sundry a number of myths regarding the Board and what can or cannot be achieved during the event. A particular comment is whether there is any point attending as the selection process has already been carried out prior to arrival. I was privileged to be a member of this year's Board and am now in a position to confirm or refute some of these ideas. It is clear that there are still too many people who have the impression that there is some mystique to FofS selection. The aim of this article is to eradicate the myths and identify the important requirements to be successful in selection. The procedure leading to selection for Foreman of Signals training is clearly identified in SOinC Policy Document No 8. Read it!

THE WEEKLONG BOARD IS MADE UP AS FOLLOWS:

Monday: Laboratory tests conducted by the technical staff at the Royal School of Signals. The performance of the candidate during these tests is a key pointer to his/her technical capability and hence the academic risk of the candidate.

Wednesday: Discussion groups and appreciation exercises. At the same time the Board Members assemble to carry out their initial assessment of the candidates. They conduct a Promotion Board where each candidate's Personnel File, complete with all confidential reports, military course reports (most notably Sergeant's Course and RSGC) and education qualification reports are available. I will not explain the detailed procedure other than to say that a quality line is determined and a pecking order. Throughout the day, the Board Members endeavor to visit all groups and listen to some of the appreciations in order to learn more about the candidates. The final part of the Board's day is a presentation of detailed assessments on all the candidates' performances by the Directing Staff overseeing the appreciations and discussion groups. Revisions to the initial assessments are made if considered appropriate. The evening social in the Sergeants' Mess gives a further opportunity for the Board Members to get to know the candidates.

Thursday and Friday: Interviews with individual candidates. The Board consists of the Colonel MCM Division, a Regimental CO, a Lieutenant Colonel from the Royal School of Signals (normally the Chief Instructor) and a Senior TOT, this year me. There is no time limit set for an interview. It is dependent upon the candidate's performance. One of the main points of the interview is to ensure that the assessments made are not erroneous due to lack of awareness of an individual's circumstances. This gives an opportunity to strong candidates to confirm their potential and for apparently weak candidates to prove their abilities or character. A weak performance might lead to a more searching and longer interview where the candidate will be tested as thoroughly as possible. However, a strong performance may also lead to a longer interview if the candidate was considered weak before the interview. The main point to note is that your future is in your hands. The Board does not lower its standards in order to fill the number of slots available nor will it limit itself to the number of slots available, if you are considered suitable for training then you will be selected and the training organisation will have to cope with it.

MYTHS:

I am too young or too old: This year the oldest and the youngest candidates were selected for training.

I do not have long enough to do: As long as you are able to complete five years service at the end of your FofS course you are eligible for selection. (Exceptionally, candidates with less than five years will be considered).

I do not have wide enough experience: This will be dependent upon your character and performance. There will be some people who clearly need more experience but it is not a foregone conclusion.

I am an academic risk - no chance: Your academic risk profile is determined by your performance on your T1 course, the DLP, the examination and the laboratory tests. However, as one candidate found out this year, it is not a terminal disease. Personal characteristics and circumstances may be considered strong enough to outweigh academic risk.

There is no point coming back or accepting a posting to gain experience: A number of candidates are considered to have the necessary potential but require another opportunity to prove their ability academically, militarily or to develop their personality in a different environment. Failure at one selection board is no guarantee of failure at the next.

It is already decided who will be selected and I am only here to make up the numbers: This is the worst of the myths. However, it is easy to understand why it has developed. As I have stated, the initial Board activity is to read your previous CRs. You must realise that the first impression of a candidate is that given by your previous commanding officers and what they have written on you. They have known you far longer than the Board Members and in a wide variety of circumstances. Your military course reports are independent assessments of your character and abilities. Do not forget that at the end of your course you will be promoted to Staff Sergeant, which brings significant responsibilities. However, these are all merely indicators and the final decision is in your own hands. I can think of at least two examples of supposed no-hopers, one demoted to Signalman twice and one whose ability to read and write could be questioned; both became very successful FofS.

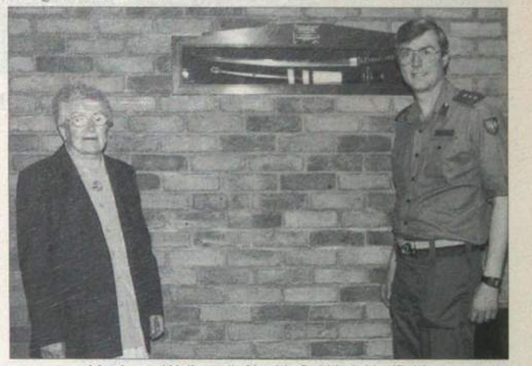
SUMMARY

The selection procedure, both before and during the Board, is designed to give all candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their potential. In assessing a candidate's potential the Board takes into account as many factors as are available to them. Be yourself during the Board, pretence is easily identified. I hope this short article will be of use in removing some of the mystique of the selection procedure. Remember that being a Foreman of Signals is the best job in the Army. Go for it!

Further information on the Data Protection Act, changes to the MS Year, RCMO Concept and proposed Roadshow dates are in the Newsletter that has already been promulgated. We will continue with an insight into Officers' Wing together with a look at Confidential Reports in the next Edition of *The WIRE*.

HEADQUARTERS MESS IS PRESENTED WITH A JAPANESE SWORD SURRENDERED IN BURMA IN 1945

At the end of the war in the Far East in 1945, **Maj James W. R. Forsyth** Royal Signals left his post as Second in Command of 25 Indian Division Signal Regiment to return home to Great Britain. The first part of his journey was to travel from Malaya to Calcutta via Bombay and Bangalore. He was tasked to present five surrendered Japanese officers' swords along the way. One was given to the Chief Signal Officer Southern Army; one was presented to the Bangalore Signal Training Centre; and the third to General Headquarters Delhi. When he arrived in Calcutta to catch the boat home, he still had two swords left to present and one, which had been given to him personally. The fourth sword was intended for **Maj Gen R. E. Vyvyan CB MC**, ex-Signal Officer in Chief India and Director of Signals who had already left India and the last was for the Officers' Mess Catterick. After demobilisation, **Maj Forsyth** decided to return to India and he left Great Britain in late 1946. Sadly, not long after his arrival, he was bitten by a small dog and contracted rabies from which he died. His wife came home to England only briefly before going to Australia with her own parents to start a new life with their baby daughter. Among his personal possessions which came home to **Maj Forsyth's** family was the sword and his father kept it for many years. It then passed on to his sister, **Irene**, who in turn held the sword in safe keeping for her niece or her new family in Australia should they ever wish to have it back. In late 1999, **Mrs Irene Wallace** decided that it was an appropriate time to lodge the sword in a suitable place where it could be seen and admired. She asked the Commander of the Royal School of Signals if he would accept the sword and display it in the Headquarters Mess. A special case was made to match the one that held the Mountbatten sword originally presented to Harrogate in 1947. The two swords were then mounted symmetrically on the wall of the reception room at the Headquarters Mess. The 9th of June 2000, saw **Mrs Wallace** formally present the sword to the Commander on behalf of the Forsyth family. She wished it to be noted that should the relatives of her brother ever wish to see the sword or indeed take it back, it should be possible for them to do so. The Commander thanked **Mrs Wallace** and assured her that her wishes were understood but that in the meantime, the sword would be looked after for as long as it remained in the Mess. The 'Forsyth' sword was now displayed with the 'Mountbatten' sword in a place where both could be seen and admired by the Officers of the Royal Corps of Signals in their home.



Mrs Irene Wallace (left) with Col K. J. Hadfield, Commander Royal School of Signals in front of the sword

!WANTED!

The Best Radio Sys Ops in the Corps

If you:
Rate yourself as a good operator,
Are adaptable and versatile,
Able to work on your own or in a small team,
Enjoy a challenge and
Enjoy foreign travel (often outside Europe),

Then
Special Communications may be for you.

Apply now, using the form in SOinC PD 206, available through your Sqn Office or YofS.

For additional information, contact the
1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) Training Wing on
(9)4240 8518 / 01908 638518
or the Sqn YofS on (9)4240 8516 / 01908 638516

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS
AUGUST 2000

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col R. D. Symonds	Headquarters AMF(L) (BAE)
Lt Col I. D. Westerman	34 (Northern) Signal Regiment (V)
Maj D. J. M. Bizley	21 Signal Regiment (Air Support)
Maj N. J. Borrill	JSCSC
Maj J. R. C. Bunce	CAST(S) LWTC
Maj M. C. Burke	HQ ATRA
Maj T. J. Carmichael	CM (IS)
Maj J. S. Charnock	HQ 12 Mech Bde & Sig Sqn (228)
Maj J. J. Cole	30 Signal Regiment
Maj I. G. Favager	Royal School of Signals
Maj C. A. Ford	PG J BOWMAN IPT
Maj N. D. Fraser	16 Air Assault Bde & Sig Sqn (216)
Maj R. P. Giles	DEC(CCII)
Maj J. C. Gillespie	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Maj S. C. Green	CAST(N) LWTC
Maj S. Gregory	1 (RBY) Signal Squadron (SC) (V)
Maj M. G. Hanson	PAN Army Tech Refreshment Prog
Maj R. J. Healey	CDA - Farnborough
Maj T. Hill	Royal School of Signals
Maj I. N. Hunter	7 Signal Regiment (Corps Main HQ)
Maj S. C. Johns	HQ Royal Signals
Maj I. G. Lawrence	16 Signal Regiment
Maj K. Mannings	16 Air Assault Bde & Sig Sqn (216)
Maj S. J. McConnell	HQ DCSA
Maj R. D. Meinertzhagen	HQNI
Maj G. R. Norton	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (204)
Maj A. J. E. J. Parsons	HQ ARRC
Maj C. S. K. Paterson	CM(IS)
Maj M. C. Roberts	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (207)
Maj D. M. Sharkey	FSAT IPT
Maj P. D. Shawyer	SO2 SANGCOM O&M
Maj P. A. Smith	CM(Manoeuvre)
Maj J. S. Stuart	Project GP3 G3 CIS HQ LAND
Maj S. J. Vickery	CM (Manoeuvre)
Maj N. A. Walker	15 Signal Regiment
Maj D. B. Warne	3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (203)
Maj F. E. R. Whichelo	8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (218)
Maj D. I. Whimpenny	HQ SoinC (A)
Maj R. P. Wilson	HQ 11 Signal Brigade
Maj S. R. Workman	MOD Centre Block
Capt A. R. Aitken	7 Signal Regiment
Capt S. J. Baldwin	101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (261)
Capt D. C. Ball	(UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt K. B. A. Barker	Headquarters 1 Signal Brigade
Capt G. Blondel	642 Signal Troop (Gibraltar)
Capt M. J. Boxhall	35 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Capt M. P. Boyle	Headquarters Royal Signals
Capt S. J. Boyne	Royal School of Signals
Capt R. W. Bousfield	Royal School of Signals
Capt N. C. Bruce	Headquarters 1 Signal Brigade
Capt A. M. Churchill	PD JCS(ICS)
Capt I. G. Favager	Royal School of Signals
Capt K. M. Fitzpatrick	16 Signal Regiment
Capt T. Hall	2 Signal Brigade
Capt R. M. Harvey	ATR Bassingbourn
Capt J. C. J. Hughes	Comms Security Trg & Advis Team
Capt S. C. Johnston	15 Signal Regiment
Capt G. E. Marsh	2 Signal Brigade
Capt G. M. McCrindle	7 Signal Regiment (Main HQ)
Capt I. McNelly	259 Signal Squadron
Capt S. P. M. Nesmith	G6 HQ LAND
Capt D. R. Parkinson	HQ 11 Signal Brigade
Capt C. A. Plumb	RSIT
Capt M. P. Purves	2 Signal Regiment
Capt N. H. Range	Comms Proj Div Army CIS SVCS G
Capt D. A. Sacree	19 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (209)
Capt H. J. Scott	ATR Bassingbourn
Capt D. M. T. Shipley	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
Capt G. E. Stratton	Joint Staff Div J6 HQ BF Cyprus
Capt K. A. Townsend MBE	ATACCS DCIS(A)
Capt P. Wilson	SANGOM
Capt M. A. Wright-Jones	3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (203)
Capt S. S. M. Youngson	Bowman Military Team
Lt G. J. Kemp	3 (UK) Div HQ & Signal Regiment
2Lt J. C. Barber	280 Signal Squadron
2Lt J. Brinn	216 Air Asslt Bde & Sig Sqn (216)
2Lt L. Clark	16 Signal Regiment
2Lt A. C. Clowes	1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (215)
2Lt S. G. Davis	1 (UK) Div HQ & Signal Regiment
2Lt V. J. Galloway	7 Signal Regiment
2Lt B. J. Henderson	4 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (204)
2Lt C. L. Jardine	21 Signal Regiment (Air Support)
2Lt P. D. Jones	14 Signal Regiment (EW)
2Lt A. F. Labram	3 (UK) Div HQ & Signal Regiment
2Lt K. Moore	7 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (207)
2Lt B. E. Norton	3 (UK)Div HQ & Signal Regiment
2Lt B. Psaila	1 (UK) Div HQ & Signal Regiment

OFFICERS
SEPTEMBER 2000

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col G. N. Donaldson OBE	RHQ Royal Signals
Col K. J. Hadfield	International Mil Staff Brussels
Lt Col C. P. Conlon	RHQ Royal Signals
Maj G. N. Addley	JSCSC
Maj T. J. S. Allen	JSCSC
Maj E. D. Bosher	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj A. D. E. Cameron	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj A. J. Charlton	RMAS Sandhurst
Maj C. D. Cook	JSCSC
Maj E. A. Davis	33 Signal Regiment (Volunteers)
Maj P. E. J. Drew	JSCSC
Maj R. J. Freeman	JSCSC
Maj D. C. Gaul	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj M. Griffiths	Director LAND Digitisation
Maj G. H. Hume	Royal School of Signals
Maj G. J. McNeill	243 Signal Squadron
Maj J. M. Norris	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj A. J. Parsons	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj A. E. Percival	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj R. J. Quinlan	G6 HQ LAND
Maj D. S. Raleigh	Royal School of Signals
Maj J. Rowley	30 Signal Regiment
Maj J. L. Smart	102 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (262)
Maj S. J. P. Spiers	JSCSC
Maj D. A. Sunderland	JSCSC
Maj C. J. Thackray	Comd Sp, DGD & D
Maj A. R. Urwin	JSSU (AN)
Maj I. A. Walton	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj P. F. Wood	ES 31 CIS/SP DGES(A)
Capt A. M. Cullen	Royal School of Signals
Capt I. R. Dobson	PJHQ J6 CIS Unit
Capt B. J. Dyer	RMAS Sandhurst
Capt M. Hanlon	7 Signal Regiment (Corps Main HQ)
Capt J. H. N. Harrington	Royal School of Signals
Capt G. N. F. Knight	259 Signal Squadron
Capt S. A. Knight	APC R. SIGNALS/Intell Corps
Capt K. H. McAnulty	21 Signal Regiment (Air Support)
Capt G. Pardew	HQ Defence Comms Service Ag
Capt F. S. Payet	259 Signal Squadron
Capt G. G. A. Reith	Falkland Islands Admin Unit
Capt C. P. Shead	16 Signal Regiment
Capt M. N. Shervington	RMAS Sandhurst
Capt D. I. Smith	JSSU(AN)
Capt G. J. Stoker	1 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt A. M. Sulivan	Royal School of Signals
Lt T. W. Day	RMCS Shrivenham
Lt K. J. Grice	RMCS Shrivenham
Lt P. D. Jones	RMAS Sandhurst
Lt G. M. A. Wills	RMCS Shrivenham
2Lt A. S. Foote	RMCS Shrivenham

ORGANISING A FUND RAISING EVENT?
WHY NOT PUBLICISE IT IN THE WIRE?
WRITE AND LET US KNOW WHAT IS HAPPENING

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

HEADQUARTERS SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF (ARMY)

Over the past nine months, two major studies have been conducted. The first, the General Staff Review (GSR), examined, among other things, the role and function of the Arms and Service Directors, and the second looked at the creation of a Command Development Centre (CDC). Both of these studies have had far-reaching consequences for Royal Signals and particularly for the future direction of SOinC(A) and his headquarters.

The GSR concluded that there was a common set of functions carried out by Arms and Service Directors, which included advice on the Statement of Training Requirement, establishment sponsorship, support to recruiting, special-to-arm policy and regimental 'ethos'. However, it also concluded that there were a number of key Army or Land Component capabilities, which required pan-Army 'proponency' - meaning predominantly leadership, or championship of user requirements and concepts of use. One of these areas was that of the provision of information services on expeditionary operations, and the responsibility for this has naturally fallen to SOinC(A).

The CDC study concluded that there was a need to establish a focus for the development of command doctrine, techniques and practices, and the command support solutions that underpin them. The study recognised that Royal Signals force development work was not only central to command support solution, but also that it needed to inform a wider Army and Defence conceptual and doctrinal development. Additionally, it was appreciated that systen support teams for current systems and trials capabilities were essential to supporting the incremental development of command support capability. To this end, it is proposed to establish a Command Support Development Centre (CSDC) in Blandford, reporting to SOinC(A) as part of a 'virtual' CDC, with a Command and Control Development Centre (C2DC) co-located with the Land Warfare Centre at Warminster. The CSDC organization will bring together elements of DCIS(A)'s Blandford-based BOWMAN and Digitization Military Team together with SOinC(A)'s existing Force Development, Trials and System Support Teams.

While the CDC proposals have still to be ratified, in recognition of SOinC(A)'s wider pan-Army role, his headquarters is to be retitled 'HQ SOinC(A)'. This, of course, will in no way diminish SOinC(A)'s responsibilities for Royal Signals, but illustrates that the Corps is at the heart of a wider, pan-Army (indeed Defence) capability. Further information concerning the reorganization of the HQ and its new responsibilities will be included in subsequent copies of *The WIRE* and RSI Journal.

FORCE DEVELOPMENT

Further to the February issue of *The WIRE* where **Maj Nick Keen** gave an overview of the work being undertaken within Force Development, it is now our intention to update the Corps in each edition on one or two pieces of major work currently ongoing. This issue will focus on the Corps After Next (CAN) Study which will mature in March of next year and MAPPS and GPTAP which will be introduced to the Field Army over the next 12 months.

THE CORPS AFTER NEXT (CAN) STUDY

The CAN Study is a major piece of work looking to shape how the Royal Corps of Signals will develop over the coming years. The Study will present its findings in March of 2001 and it is anticipated that it will recommend radical change in all aspects of the way in which the Corps carries out its business.

A major aim of the Study has been to consult the wider Corps throughout to ensure that the results of the Study fully exploit the experience and knowledge available. The initial briefing pack to the Corps was published in February of this year and resulted in a heavy response which greatly assisted the Headquarters in shaping its thinking. In the light of this, the SOinC(A)'s Conference held between 17 and 18 May focussed exclusively on the Study. The 130 attendees from around the Corps broke down into syndicates and concentrated their thoughts on the direction in which the Corps should move in a number of key areas. The full transcripts of their thoughts have been produced and disseminated to all attendees. Should anyone not have access to a copy please contact **Maj Martin Bever** on Blandford 5390. The output from the SOinC(A)'s Conference was put to immediate use by the staff within the Headquarters as they started to write the Study papers. After several study periods conducted both at Blandford and at HMS *Excellent* in Portsmouth in June and July, the papers are now nearing completion and will be submitted to the Corps Executive Board in early October for approval. It is anticipated that detailed reports on the findings of the Study will be promulgated to the Corps by February 2001.

MAPPS AND GPTAP

The Mobile Access to the Ptarmigan Packet System (MAPPS)/General Purpose Trunk Access Port (GPTAP) are two projects which have been merged and will together form an enhancement to the Ptarmigan system in the shape of the "Standalone Central" or as it is officially known, the SCRA(Switching Central) - SCRA(SC).

The SCRA(SC) will be capable of working with Ptarmigan in the traditional role of the Central but using an onboard Central Packet Switch (CPS) will be capable of serving its full channel capacity of 11 packet users. In its Out of Area (OOA) role, up to three SCRA (SC) will be capable of forming their own network providing their own secure digital voice and data circuit and packet switched communications for mobile users. The network will also be capable of terminating LDA communities. GP TAP will enable two or more of these networks to work together or to interconnect with a main Ptarmigan network.

Two versions are being provided; the standard version using the current 4 ton vehicle and box with additional equipment including an ACU and an air portable version with Steyr Pinzgauer as a prime mover. The air portable version will consist of not only a communications installation but also a support vehicle which will carry items such as generators, masts, antennae and cables. The initial introduction into service is due at the end of this year with full embodiment due by the end of 2001.

FORCE DEVELOPMENT CONTACTS LIST

Name	Appt	Contact number
Col Dennis Mills	Col Force Development	Blandford 5215
Lt Col Dick Sparshatt	SO1 Force Development	Blandford 5229
Maj Nick Keen	SO2 Force Development	Blandford 5541
Maj Phil Osment	SO2 Capability Development	Blandford 5397
Maj Martin Bever	SO2 Concepts	Blandford 5390
Maj James Langley	SO2 Concepts Development	Blandford 5269
Maj (Retd) Dick Hood	RO2 EW/Info Ops	Blandford 5918
Maj James Body	SO2 Comms/RSSST	Blandford 5324
Maj Bruce Wyllie	TOT RSSST/ OC Sys Sp Tp	Blandford 5238
Capt Norman Bain	Tfc RSSST/OC Trials Tp	Blandford 5375
Capt Jason Kennedy	OC Trial Support Tp	Blandford 5352
Capt Phil Abram	OC S Tp	Blandford 5594

NATO
NACOSA SUPPORT ELEMENT
NORTHWOOD

BALADO BRIDGE - *by Sgt Ewan Kinnear*

BALADO BRIDGE - NATO Satellite Ground Terminal F17, situated in the rambling countryside of Perthshire, 11/2miles from Kinross, approximately 30 miles north of Edinburgh in Scotland and located on a former RAF W site, the now familiar 'Golfball' with it's out stations at Cullaloe Hill and Outhmuir, forms part of the NATO Integrated Communications System, which combines Satellite and Microwave radio, PTT and commercial communications systems to provide a strategic communications network for NATO. Opened in April 1985 by our Colonel in Chief, the SGT has undergone a major modification programme keeping up to date with all the advances in communications technology. The SGT is a fully automated, computer controlled Satellite Ground Terminal, operating a multicarrier communications system within the X band. As well as intergalactic users, the main operations involve assisting in the communications support to NATO Naval Operations.

NOW YOU KNOW WHERE AND WHAT WE ARE, WHO ARE WE?

The unit has a complement of 1 + 19 military personnel, five civilians and a MOD police unit of seven. The OC of the Corps' one and only Satellite Ground Terminal is **Maj (TOT) Paul** 'Do you think my new V 12 6 litre Merc is too big for me' **Gaffney,** who is supported by his 'A' Team consisting of **WO2 (FofS) Kev** 'It's not as warm here as it was in Australia' **Moir** who is currently handing over the reins to **WO2 (FofS) Mick** 'It's just a gentle jog' **Cowie** and the Control Room Slave-Driver - **SSgt Shaun May**. The Control Room is manned twenty-one hours a day with the other three hours being left to chance, since the system is meant to be fully automated. There are four shifts of three able bodied technicians

per shift except for D shift, two driver electricians, a stores accountant, a technician day worker and a multi-purpose, multi -trade technician whose jobs so far this year have covered everything on site except for Station Commander and Police Dog!

PRINCESS ROYAL DAY

Princess Royal Day was held on site on Saturday 1 July 2000. The local Army Cadet Force were invited to an educational and fun packed Saturday with the Balado Bridge workers and the pasty eating shift 'workers'! The day started with the ACF Detachment having a guided tour of the station under **WO2 (FofS) Kev** 'The Corps Needs You' **Moir** (after he received his hastily prepared map!) which encompassed the innermost workings and technical jargon of the Satellite Ground Terminal combined with the 'Our Corps Needs You' recruiting speech. The Cadets, then, went on to investigate the hell that was our Radio Detachment stand. Being a Satellite Ground Terminal we do not have a W Detachment, this was supplied from 61 Sig Sqn based in Edinburgh by kind permission of the CO 32 Sig Regt (V). This is where they met the devil himself jumping up and down and gnashing his teeth who was **Sgt Al** 'Super Mario' **Rooney**. His being unable to receive any traffic all day caused all the anger.

After all the formalities were out of the way a potted sports afternoon was organised between one team of five from F17 and four teams from the cadets. The sports consisted of football, volleyball and a golf ball pitching stand. As the Balado Bridge Gladiators warmed up for their first football match expectations were high, to say the least, for a resounding victory. However, ten minutes later they walked off the football park with their tails between their legs having been soundly thrashed 4-2 by a team consisting of 13 year old school children. After all the sports had finished and, even though they lost the first match, Balado were victorious, (nothing to be proud of though!) and all threw themselves wholeheartedly into a massive feast of a BBQ and a few beers for light refreshments. The BBQ was lovingly burnt - I mean cooked - by the FofS 'When I was in Australia we used to BBQ kangaroos' and **Sgt** 'Taff' **Tanner's** wife **Joe**. The day ended on a high note for the cadets when they were presented with a large wooden Jimmy for the Royal Signals element of the cadet force to hang in the cadet hall in Kinross.

All station personnel wish to congratulate Sgt Ian Fincham. on his promotion and **Cpl Ian Kirkland** on his selection for promotion. On hails and farewells we welcome **Cpl Richie** 'the badger' **Kear** and his wife **Sonia** and family, and also **Cpl Ian Kirkland** and his wife **Isabel** and family. The site now looks forward to the arrival of the new **FofS WO2**

Members of Balado Bridge and the Army Cadet Force pose with the new Cadet Force Jimmy in the shadow of the 'Golf-Ball'

Besides the usual duties, station personnel are kept busy by promoting themselves within the community, with assistance provided to CHAS, the Children's Hospice in Kinross, and assistance and advice to the local Cadet Force, who are a mixture of Royal Signals and Black Watch. More mundane tasks include being forced to attend T in the Park, a music festival a mere fifty yards from the site. This is where mud and beer flows freely, with only the older members of the site (**Kev** and **Shaun**) being familiar with the likes of Iggy Pop, and Lulu, while the youngsters such as **Sgt Ewan** 'GWX' **Kinnear** and **Cpl Steve** '110mph is NOT speeding' **Dixon** strut their stuff in the Slam Tent. On a sporting note, some members of the station are quite proficient at golf with the Station Commander, **Maj Gaffney,** setting the standard and usually winning the station monthly medal. Congratulations go to **Cpl Steve Dixon** who won the Third Division title at the Army Golf Championships held recently - so we expect his handicap to be well and truly sliced! Pun intended!

Potential future Foreman and Yeoman of Signals in the HF Det loaned from 61 Signal Sqn

Mick Cowie and says a fond farewell and good luck to our old **FofS WO2 Kev Moir on** his promotion and posting to Wilton.

Sgt Al 'Super Mario' Rooney checking to see just how high this High Frequency is!

GENESIS CONSULTANCY
Providing Recruitment Solutions

TECHNICIANS, OPERATORS AND TELEMECHS REQUIRED

Genesis Consultancy specialise in placing ex-Corps members of all ranks and trades with the telecomms industry nationwide.

A wide variety of opportunities currently exist for Class 2 and Class 1 Techs, Operators and Telemechs as well as Foreman of Signals and Yeoman of Signals of all ranks who have decided to leave the Corps.

In addition to immediate requirements, we have medium and long-term requirements from our clients and can assist in all matters concerning these opportunities throughout the period running up to the date of discharge.

If you have decided to leave the Corps call us today or forward a detailed C.V.

Genesis Consultancy Ltd.
12-50 Kingsgate Road, Kingston, Surrey KT2 5AA
Tel: 020 8547 4141 Fax: 020 8547 4181
e-mail: admin@genesisconsultancy.co.uk
www.genesisconsultancy.co.uk

HEADQUARTERS 1st SIGNAL BRIGADE

WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS

October bids farewell to COS, **Maj Elton Davis**, posted with promotion to 33 Sig Regt (V). He leaves with the honour of receiving the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service, presented by **Maj Gen Sprackling**, Master of Signals. The award was for his dedicated and outstanding performance during Operation Agricola. **Maj Garth Pickersgill** said, 'Yet another leaving do and I'll spend 20 years in Germany.' SO2 COMSEC moves upstairs to HQ ARRC to some job or other and to play lots of golf. Quote, ' I'll get my handicap into single figures by the time I leave this post.' He is replaced by **Maj Pete Barron** who will work alongside another newcomer **SSgt (YofS) Logan**.**Capt Ibiza King Boyne** who has left to take up an instructor's post at Blandford. Don't work too hard! **Capt Kyle Barker** moves in to fill the SO3 G1 post. **WO1 (Yof S) Drummond** who has gone to take up an interesting job in Sierra Leone or at least it has an interesting title, as he will be a part of the British Military Advisory and Training Team and welcome to **WO1(YofS) Ferris** who takes his place. Congratulations **to Maj Mike** 'Mad Dog' **Dooley** who has been selected for Staff College. Don't get too carried away with that painting! Welcome to **Capt Nick Bruce** fresh from JCSC but not having to move too far as previously he was at 16 Sig Regt. By this stage you are probably wondering if there is anyone who has not moved on!

EXERCISES

Most of May and June was filled with planning for or deploying on exercises. Ops Offr, **Maj** 'Mad Dog' **Dooley** nearly did go mad as he managed somehow to juggle Exercises Spartan, Falcon and Cerebral Javelin. Every time I entered the Ops room I wondered if he had found some more money to try to cover the costs of the battlefield tour, as the costs changed from day to day. More on that topic below. Just for a change the next lot of exercises were not at Aryshire Barracks, which really got us excited. Ex Arrcade Spartan geared up the Brigade for Ex Arrcade Falcon. The big question for the G4 side of the corridor was, 'Would the large marquee arrive on time?' or would HQ MAIN have no where to go? During Ex Arrcade Falcon (Able Condor) the annual HQ ARRC communications exercise we were able to work alongside 11 Sig Bde and members of G6 HQ ARRC. Yes we did have comms with 11 Sig Bde or at least to their tent next door. One of the G6 HQ ARRC implied tasks was to be able to network DOOM from SO1 Plans to SO1 Ops.

EXERCISE CEREBRAL JAVELIN

After an intensive month of Spartan and Falcon Exercises it was with an air of excitement that members of 1 Sig Bde set off to Italy to study the Monte Cassino and Anzio battles. The aim was to increase our awareness of the difficulties in planning and executing operations in a total war environment. One of the key personalities was **Peter Caddick-Adams**, a Lecturer in Military and Security Studies at RMCS, who did his best to impart his wealth of knowledge to his novice historians. The other guest was **Col (Retd) John Buckeridge** (late R.Sussex Regt) who survived the Cassino battles and provided us with a valuable insight into life as a young Platoon Commander, bringing much reality and interest to our studies.

The journey to Formia was eventful; firstly the German train drivers decided that this would be a good day to take strike action. **Maj Mike** 'Carpet Bagger' **Dooley** was having kittens that we may not make the connection at Dusseldorf but luckily a willing driver appeared. The trip from Dusseldorf got a few of us overheated as we managed to occupy the only carriages where the air conditioning had failed but several pints later no one was overly concerned. We boarded the sleeper at Munich looking forward to a gourmet meal and bottle of wine, to be told there was no

restaurant! **Capt** 'Boggy' **Boynes** kept us supplied with crisps, dips and salmon rolls to see us through the journey. COS, **Maj Elton Davis** got slightly carried away with serenading us all to sleep but our interpreter **Maj Lee** persuaded the attendant not to call the police!

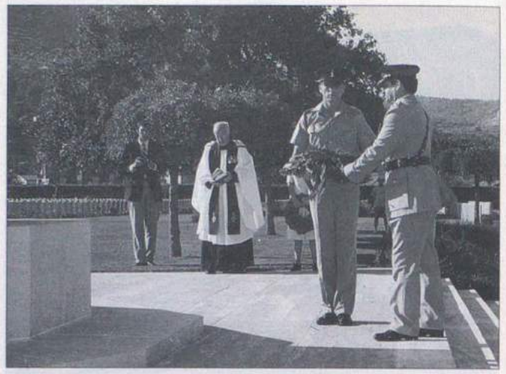
By lunchtime next day, we had arrived at Fagiano Hotel to be given very pleasant rooms overlooking the sea. On the first day of the tour we were given an overview of the ground by **Peter Caddick-Adams** from a viewpoint on the road to Mt Cassino. On our return to the hotel, we leapt from our non-air-conditioned military minibuses and headed straight for the sea.

Tuesday 4 July - We launched into our studies, looking at elements of the first Cassino battle; an overview of the unsuccessful River Rapido crossing by the US 36th Texas Division. This part of the Operation was a disaster as the Germans were in carefully prepared defensive positions. The conditions were atrocious with very heavy rain flooding the river to 30-40 yards wide. We proceeded to Point 593,where **Col Buckeridge** had been dug in with his Platoon in February 1944. This was where the second battle was centred. The plan was for 4th Indian Div, (which 1st Royal Sussex was part off) to secure Point 593 and storm Monastery Hill bypassing Cassino town. On the night of 11/12 February **Buckeridge's** 13 Platoon was dumped at San Michele in the hills about five miles east of Cassino, they then moved on foot by goat tracks to the mountains behind the Monastery and on to Point 593. 13 Platoon were the forward Platoon. **Col Buckeridge** had told us that he had witnessed the Germans using a side door of the Monastery and of its bombing from his viewpoint. The Colonel was able to recall some fascinating facts: There was no daytime movement permitted, as the German supply lines were only some 70yds away. One hot meal was provided each day, transported from the Echelon during the silent hours. Water was restricted to one pint a day, so this could not be wasted, even for shaving. Medical evacuation was carried out by mule, as this was the main method of transportation. The Colonel himself was a casualty when he got shrapnel in the bottom! He recalled the journey down the slopes, falling off the mule so many times that he preferred to walk. A laundry service was provided but there was no guarantee of receiving your own uniform back, could be interesting! It was from here that the allies attempted outflanking manoeuvres. The Colonel spent some six weeks in this location before being relieved.

Wednesday 5 July - We visited the Polish Memorial, where the Polish people gathered to sing their songs of remembrance, proud of the fact that it was their nation who eventually captured the monastery. We headed to Castle Hill to study the third and fourth battles of Cassino. Following the failure of the second battle, a new approach of heavy air bombardment was chosen. Cassino town was hit with some 1100 tons of bombs in three and a half hours. By nightfall 24 NZ Bn had secured Castle Hill. We then headed in the midday sun to Cassino where we received a guided tour of the monastery which was rebuilt after bombing by the Allies.

The Monastery rebuilt after the bombing

It is still to this day, a controversial topic as to whether the monastery was occupied or not. In the late afternoon blistering heat we moved to the British war graves in Cassino, where **Maj Kingsley Joyce** conducted a Service of Remembrance, overlooking a sea of thousands of graves. This was incredibly moving.



The memorial service held at the British war graves in Cassino

Thursday 6 July - We arrived at Anzio for our final few nights of the battlefield tour. **WO1 (YofS)** 'Where are you?' **Drummond** organised a wonderful dinner night located by the swimming pool. We sampled Italian cuisine accompanied by an outstanding jazz band. It was just a shame that we had to remain sitting as they played. The highlight of the evening or morning in this case, must be the Mess Water Polo, unfortunately the photographs from this event have been censored by one CO for some reason.

Brig McDowall dines alongside Col Buckeridge in Anzio

Friday 7 July - Hung over but happy we headed for Rome. Our last day to be filled with sightseeing, gelateries and shopping! But we did deserve it after all that hard work!

HEADQUARTERS 2 (NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS) SIGNAL BRIGADE

EXERCISE HORSE SHOE 1
PROGRESS, PROGRESS, and PROGRESS!

Linking in the important Lessons Learned during Ex Horse Shoe Forge, the Bde HQ is fully engaged in the final preparations for the full Brigade deployment on Ex Horse Shoe 1 in the 2 Division area in the autumn of 2000. This ambitious exercise, involving up to 2000 troops, will use a scenario now very familiar to the Corps; that of providing Information and Communications Services (ICS) in support of a Peace Support Operation. Horse Shoe 1 will also provide an ideal platform to trial and evaluate e-mail facilities over the National Communications Radio System (NCRS) and a fully deployable Command and Control Operations Centre. In addition to UK deployed ICS assets, connectivity will also bring in SACEUR's OOA ACCAP Bn commanded by **Lt Col Jim Dryburgh** and based in Maastricht, the Netherlands. In the words of the Brigade Yeoman, **WO2 (YofS) Jim James**, 'Exercise Horse Shoe 1 will be the bringing together of many different aspects of the Brigade forming a unified whole. The full deployment of the Brigade Headquarters and Units, including support from the ACISG, means that the Brigade is on the springboard now to deliver ICS not only to our primary customer but to the Land environment on exercise and on operations. In my first-hand experience of the situation in Sierra Leone, I cannot help but think we are on the way to filling an important gap in the Army's capability.' Newly joined **Capt Andy McCole** adds, 'The exercise will demonstrate the substantial punch the Brigade can make in the ORBAT. We are capable of taking the lead not only in our traditional role, but also in the deployment of field IS and robust HF assets.'

ROWING TO SYDNEY

The Commander, **Brig N. C. Jackson**, led a team to Salisbury Leisure Centre to participate in LAND Command's Rowathon to Sydney. The Rowathon's purpose was to generate funds for the UK Olympic Team. The Lion's share of this lean Headquarters were willing volunteers and included the **COS, Maj Tim Langford, Maj John Russell, Capt Andy McCole, Yeoman James, Cpl Pete Sears** plus two civil servants **Mr Steve Harris** and the Bde Storeman, **Mr Mick Morea**. The team spent all day one Saturday proving that in addition to providing World Beating ICS, the Bde HQ is always prepared for the hard slog! The day ended with the Brigade achieving its goal and raising money for our Olympic

athletes. It was particularly worrying however, no matter how hard and fast the Commander rowed, he never broke into a sweat!

EXERCISE ROYAL HORSESHOE

Ex Royal Horse Shoe witnessed a small Brigade Headquarters Team in Canada to participate in familiarisation training with the Canadian Army. One of the highlights was the brief on the Canadian Army's newly introduced digital Command and Control ICS system - TICCS. This affordable, cutting edge technology equipment, produced by Harris is being deployed throughout the Canadian Army to bring their battlefield ICS into the new Century. The Brigade Team was impressed with its ease of use and versatility or in the words of **SSgt Dek Painter**, ' TICCS is a highly capable digital C2 system, which seems to be affordable and has the advantage of being available now. My only concern is the amount of training required to produce sufficient numbers of Systems Managers to deploy with the 'F' Echelon but it is impressive nonetheless.' **WO2 (SQMS) Al Duncan** adds, 'Of course the Canadian Army is structured very differently from the British Army - with different Missions and responsibilities and TICCS may be suited to the Canadian Military reality. The Canadians at least have digitised their field Army whereas we still seem to be lagging behind.' **Maj Iain Brownlee** is more reflective; 'TICCS could provide a possible solution for the needs of the British Army. I know the US Army have now begun a Divisional Trial using the same technology but the Canadian system seems to rely on too few vital nodal points which, if taken out, would make the system useless. Although attractive, TICCS does not appear to have much redundancy and seems to be tailored for PSOs. To go down the route of fielding a system applicable only to the peacekeeping/enforcing environment could be the wrong move as the likelihood of higher intensity conflict for the British Army remains.'

The Brigade Team thanks the CO, **Lt Col Simms RCR** for all the support we received from 2nd Bn, The Royal Canadian Regiment and particularly the Adjt, **Capt David Lambert** and **Capt Neil Marshall** and **MCpl Thompson** of the Signals Platoon.

The COS, Maj Paul Kelly, Maj Iain Brownlee and SSgt Painter present members of 2 RCR Signal Platoon with a Corps print of a cable wagon after a harrowing experience on the range firing automatic weapons

THE PASSING OF TIME

The Headquarters have heard the very good news and wish the very best for our former SO3 T/E/G4, **Maj Dave Drinkall** and his wife **Bethen** on the birth of their first child. **Lt Col Mike Stevenson** has now taken up the reins of the G1/MS branch of the Headquarters whereas **Capt Andy McCole** is anxiously waiting for the arrival of **Capt Gareth Marsh** and handover of all the key work he has done on T/E/G4 desk.

XI HEADQUARTERS 11 SIGNAL BRIGADE

Comd **Brig J. R. B. Cook**

HAIL & FAREWELL

Maj Peter Williams has exchanged his post in the Headquarters for a post as an RO in Shrewsbury, just up the road, but fortunately, we still see him in Donnington in the guise of a TA officer. **Lt Dan Ashton** joined us for a brief period on attachment from Shrivenham and was hard at work sorting out the IT accounts and documentation for the Headquarters. A job well, done, many thanks **Dan** and all the best for the remainder of your degree. **Maj Steve Johns**, **Nicole** and family have moved down to Blandford to get in place for his imminent move on promotion. Congratulations **Steve**, thanks for achieving the appointments of both COS and DCOS whilst with the Headquarters and all the best in TDT. We also say farewell to **SSgt Mac McNeill** and **Jill** on posting to 16 Sig Regt, hope that you enjoy your tour in Germany and to **Cpl Phil Beacall**, **Kerstin** and family because we think the packers did arrive, eventually, since we have'nt seen them around for a bit. Many thanks for all the work that you did as the 11 Sig Bde travel rep, you will be particularly remembered for arranging Croatian coastal holidays. Welcome to **Maj Richard Wilson**, **Ruth** and family, who have moved to Donnington in preparation for assuming the mantle of COS in August 2000. We also welcome **Cpl Ken Spence**, **Donna** and family to the travel rep appointment.

EXERCISE ARRCADE FALCON

Background: Ex Arrcade Falcon 2000 was Chief G6, HQ ARRC's annual communications FTX, taking place from 10–23 June. The Exercise was primarily conducted on cleared land within the Nordheim Westfalen (NRW) region of Germany, with RATT detachments from 40 Sig Regt (V) deploying to Italy and Spain, and 30 Sig Regt SATCOM assets deploying to Spain and Germany.

Exercise Aim: The Aim of the Exercise was to practise the deployment of NATO Level 2 CIS facilities provided for ARRC HQs, the HQs of assigned divisions, and the Combat Support and Combat Service Support HQs.

Deployment: To achieve this was no mean feat. 11 Sig Bde deployed 11 Trunk Nodes, 10 Secondary Access Nodes, 10 SCRA (C), 4 Euromux Accecss Nodes, a Regt Ech from 2 Sig Regt along with full logistic support for all units.

Exercise Scheme of Manoeuvre: On arrival in Germany on 12 June, the Brigade carried out its Battle Preparation in Ayrshire Barracks, Monchengladbach. Here units tested all of their communications equipment, carried out crypto checks and work up training, prior to conducting a radio controlled move to initial field locations. 2 Sig Regt Trunk Nodes were placed OPCOM 1 Sig Bde for the duration of the exercise and 11 Bde HQ travelled some 200km East to Sennelager (probably the worst lager in the world!) to co-locate with HQ ARRC G6 and HQ 1 Sig Bde.

Between 13 and 20 June, 11 Sig Bde assets were moved at fast pace across the area of operations in an easterly direction, whilst maintaining effective communications. Military activities commenced with demonstrations by protesters, minor road traffic accidents, duties of a sentry, low level NBC and First Aid (to name a few), building up to ambushes, armour, plenty of bangs and enemy activity centred on the Sennelager Training Area. All of this worthwhile background training was provided by the West Midlands Specialist Training Team and 2 Sig Regt personnel under the direction of **Capt** 'Georgina' **Tynedale** and **WO1** 'Andy' **Terry**.

Apart from the long days endured by the Ops Staff in 11 Bde Main HQ, one day will stick in everyone's mind – 'Black Friday'. This is when the Brigade tasked the whole of the Ptarmigan Network to carry out recce's of given goose eggs in order to re-deploy the Trunk Network as quickly as possible from the west of the 443 area towards Sennelager. All Trunk Nodes deployed through Hobart Barracks, Detmold, but the lack of RMP assistance and Tac signs being placed in the wrong direction added to the confusion, with half of the Brigade sitting awaiting further orders. The local ice cream man did a very good business though and CO 35 Sig Regt (V), **Lt Col** 'Steve' **Potter** was the referee for the largest football match undertaken during an exercise. All assets eventually deployed and established communications in good time and this provided a good planning opportunity for 'recce SNCOs'.

BRIGADE SUPPORT GROUP (BSG)

First in and last out as usual but we were not complaining - our biennial pilgrimage to Germany was blessed with excellent weather and no major problems. From our rather spacious surroundings in Ayrshire Barracks, Monchengladbach we fed, fuelled and watered the Brigade who were doing battle on Sennelager Training Area - lucky them! We did, however, have our moments of activity. **Maj Peter Williams**, an old hand, made sure that the night shift ran smoothly and constantly harassed MAIN to pull their finger out. The DCOS, **Maj Steve Hunt**, decided we needed a spy at MAIN and so dispatched himself pronto to be at the cut and thrust of the action. (**Peter Williams** still complained) We were fortunate to have the support of HQ Sqn, 2 Sig Regt to handle all our needs and pamper the Staff which they did very well. Both the OC, **Maj Mike Bailes** and QM, **Maj Brian Dalton** are now both keen and eager to take up Staff Appointments. The Exercise went well and all agreed it was a great success. Everyone returned to the UK safely and to date not too many skeletons have appeared to haunt the Headquarters

Summary: The Exercise was a success and provided an opportunity to exercise with HQ ARRC G6 and 1 Sig Bde. Units were also able to practise and validate Brigade SOPs, which can now be built on throughout the next training year, in preparation for the next deployment to Germany on Ex Arrcade Falcon 2002.

PROJECT CORMORANT

Project Cormorant (TWACN) is currently going through the final stages of the competitive tender assessment phase. The system will enter

service within the Brigade in both 2 and 30 Sig Regts from November 2001 and will provide a significant increase in capability, particularly for 2 Sig Regt, as they expand their role to include support for JRRF deployments. The system, as well as being a technical leap, should provide an insight into Project Falcon and the shape of things to come. Work at 2 Sig Regt charged with bringing TWACN into service, is gathering pace with the Introductory Unit due to form later this year. Before that date a great deal of work will be required to mark the two bids prior to the award of a contract at Christmas. In short, exciting times for 11 Sig Bde; so if you are tired of Ptarmigan and want to work on a modern communications system – 2 or 30 Sig Regt are the places to be!

EXERCISE JIMMY'S DRAGON

For three days in July, Cawdor Barracks 14 Sig Regt (and South West Wales generally), provided dramatic backdrop for those brave souls from the Headquarters, whose pursuit of something called adventurous training was to take them not just far and wide, but dramatically up and down as well. Many thanks to Headquarters personnel from 2 Sig Regt, without whose assistance so many legends could not have been created in so short a time.

The 4-hour drive to Brawdy was accomplished under lowering skies and intermittent torrents of very heavy rain. Nature, this violent, could hardly go unnoticed, and it left the intrepid travellers anxious about the days to come and more particularly whether the Comd, **Brig Jonathan Cook**, **Maj Steve Johns** and **Maj Rab Young** were going to get their game of golf. We need hardly have fussed however, because by the time we were passing Carmarthen, the sky was blue, the sun was shining and our spirits were rising. Not wanting to waste any time (we were all secretly convinced the rain could return at any instant), we grabbed the moment, and that first afternoon set off on the 'Cycle Orienteering Route'.

Six Sturdy Cyclists
(L-R): Maj Bob Appleton, Cpl Steve Piper,
WO1 (YofS) Pierre Pardew, WO2 (FofS) Pete Stowell,
Capt (Tfc) Dick Gamble, Maj Steve Hunt

It took two of us about fifteen minutes to realise that cycling to school over thirty years previously was in no way adequate acclimatization for what the local terrain now demanded. So, following a hasty O Group we split up, with **Maj** 'Black Bob' **Appleton** and **Capt Dick Gamble** taking the longer circuitous route, and **Maj** 'Slimline Steve' **Hunt** leading **WO1 (YofS) Pierre Pardew**, **WO2 (FofS)** 'The Rat' **Stowell** and **Cpl Steve Piper** up and down the cliffs. Needless to say things did not go as planned (you cannot avoid the cliffs), and by the time we all met up that first evening for some Ten-Pin Bowling, we were all suffering with sore legs and tender undercarriage! The next morning heralded a blustery day with scudding clouds and squally winds, but thankfully no sign of rain. We boarded our mini-buses early and headed for the coast where we had a quick photo opportunity prior to commencing our coastal walk.

A Chilly Morning
Front Row Kneeling (L-R): WO2 (FofS) Stowell,
WO1 (YofS) Pardew, Maj Appleton
Standing (L-R): Capt Garrett, Capt Gamble, Maj Hunt, Maj Johns,
Maj Young, Cpl Piper

We hadn't walked far that morning before the sun broke through the overcast and started to beat down, and we were indeed thankful for the gorgeous ice-creams to be had en-route.

At day's end we again rendezvoused at the bowling ally for some serious Ten-Pin Bowling. We hadn't been playing long however when the Comd, **Brig J. R. B. Cook** joined in. Informing us that he hardly played and should not be taken too seriously, we were therefore collectively devastated when his first two balls both produced strikes...! From this moment the evening took on a serious turn, resulting in some very impressive scores being posted. The next morning we returned to our mini-buses for the journey North. We had barely been on the road home for an hour however when it started to rain; we looked at each other in silent wonderment, what secret hold can 14 Sig Regt have over the weather....

HEADQUARTERS BRITISH GURKHAS NEPAL

SIGNALS IN NEPAL

Contrary to popular belief there are still some unique postings left in the world for those lucky enough to be offered the opportunity. British Gurkhas Nepal (BGN) have the following Signals personnel serving in posts as:

AMA British Embassy - **Lt Col I. A. Noble**
OC British Gurkhas Kathmandu (BGK) – **Maj H. J. Bardell**
SO3 Coord/Comms Offr – **Capt R. J. Parkinson**

(Coincidentally they also represent three decades of filling the appointment of SO3 Coord/Comms in Nepal. **Lt Col Noble** 1978 – 1980 (Then titled Staff Capt HQ BGN), **Maj Bardell** 1987 - 1989, and currently **Capt Parkinson** 1998 – 2000 this must be a record unless you know different).

QM/MTO British Gurkhas Pokhara(BGP) **Lt (QGO) Yogesh Thapa**
RSM BGK **WO1 (RSM) Chandrabahadur Gurung** Nepal Signal Troop

NEPAL SIGNAL TROOP (NST)

Tp Comd **Lt (QGO) Mahindrakumar Limbu**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Amritbahadur Ale**

NST is a small detachment of the Queens Gurkha Signals that maintain communications throughout Nepal and also provide a rear link to UK. The Troop is comprised of an OC, four Technicians and eight Operators plus thirteen Locally Employed Civilians (Ex Queens Gurkha Signals) based at Kathmandu and Pokhara. This has been a busy period for the Troop having deployed to many of the remote areas of Nepal to test communications at the Area Welfare Centres before the arrival of the monsoon season. There have also been a lot of changes. Firstly we welcome the new OC, **Lt (QGO) Mahendrakumar Limbu** and his wife **Januka, Sgt Balbahadur Pun** and his wife **Dilkumari, Sgt Amritbahadur Ale** and his wife **Basanti, LCpl Tilakbahadur Rai** and his wife **Pasupati** and **LCpl Shankar Gurung** and his wife **Laxmi.** We hope you enjoy your time with NST.

Unfortunately we have to say goodbyes too. Farewell goes to **Capt (QGO) Rajendraman Gurung** and his wife **Bidhya** on his posting as MTO 2 Signal Regiment; **SSgt Ekbahadur Pun** and his wife **Chunimaya** and **SSgt Dharmaraj Gurung** and his wife **Geeta**. Both arrived in January, however, they have been selected for promotion and posted to 250 Signal Squadron and 2 Signal Regiment respectively. **Cpl Amritbahadur Limbu** and his wife **Komalkumari** also posted to 250 Signal Squadron and finally **LCpl Khremraj Rai** (who departs on pension) and his wife **Ushadevi**. Thank you for your commitment to NST and good luck in your new postings.

Also congratulations to **SSgt Ekbahadur** and his wife **Chunimaya** on their recent addition to their family, **Sgt Ajitkumar Rai** on his recent promotion from Corporal and **Cpls Durgabahadur Gurung** and **Rombahadur Rana** on promotion to Corporal and selection to attend class one upgrading course in July. Well done to you all.

Although its main task has already been described there is certainly more to the Troop. This year the Troop entered a team under the guidance of Team Captain, **SSgt Dharmaraj**, in the Annual 100km Riverside to Pokhara Sponsored Charity Cycle Relay Race. The team of **Cpl Amritbahadur Limbu, Cpl Durgabahadur Gurung, LCpl Suraj Rai** and **LCpl Babindra Rai** set a new record time of 3 hours 38 minutes to win the Riverside to Pokhara Race defeating the winners of 1999 by over 30 minutes. The 100 km Charity Cycle Relay Race originated after it's organiser **Capt Parkinson** visited a number of local schools in the Hills of Nepal whilst on trek. He found that although the children where content with school they where very poorly equipped with regards to recreational facilities. The children in the boarding schools had nothing to do when lessons were over. As anyone who has trekked in the hills of Nepal will know the children you meet do not ask for money but for a pen. So BGN have tried to help in a small way. The Race has now become an annual event as part of the Commanders Cup Competition in order to: Test the physical stamina, endurance and teamwork of individuals over a set distance with a time incentive. Also to raise funds by sponsorship for the purchase of school/sports equipment and toys for schools in the hills.

The race this year took place on Saturday 13 May and again started at Riverside Park, finishing at the entrance gates to Pokhara. Teams departed from the start point at 10 minute intervals - so as not to congest traffic on the road! Anyone who has ever driven from Kathmandu to Pokhara will know the hazards that may be encountered undertaking this journey. Landslides are a minor hazard when compared with Tata trucks and buses travelling at less than 10mph uphill and a crashing 60mph downhill. However, these brave competitors took it all in their stride.

The amount raised was over £ 1500 and has been used to buy equipment that will be useful and add a bit of fun to the children. In all 25 boxes have been distributed throughout Nepal via Area Welfare Officers. A typical box comprised of: Skipping ropes, footballs, pens, pencils, coloured pencils, wax crayons, exercise books, cricket bats and balls, badminton rackets, shuttlecocks, rubber balls and rings, erasers, sharpeners, games and toys. Letters received from schools have commented on how grateful they are with everything they have received from British Gurkhas. A big thank you goes to all of the participants and sponsors.

The New Record Holders

ARMY ELEMENT DEFENCE ELECTRONIC WARFARE CENTRE RAF WADDINGTON

This has been an exceptionally busy period for the Army Element of the DEWC. Our personnel have travelled far and wide in providing EW Operational Support to the Tri-service front line customers. **WO1 Billy Corner** has visited the US Intel Community on several occasions to ensure that we remain on track with our US allies and work towards a common Database. Our Operators have travelled to AAC units in Bosnia and Kosovo to ensure our Mission Dependant Data Sets are working as we would expect and are producing the results our customers demand. The introduction of the WAH 64 Attack Helicopter is beginning to impact on our training and resources, as usual, manpower is very tight and work loads are expanding. However, job satisfaction and high morale continue to fuel our appetite. **Cpl Lee Leggett** has produced some very innovative work in the development of the Centres mapping packages, which have been in great demand by all three services and Government agencies. **Sgt Chris Garrill** having developed the Enhanced Audio Training System (EATS) which has been adopted by the US, AUS, Canada and tri-services is now working hard on the development of the DEWC web site and Intranet, to mention but a few.

VISIT BY SOINC(A) BRIGADIER CEDRIC BURTON

On Friday 16 June we were all treated to a visit by the SOinC(A) **Brig Cedric Burton.** The majority of the Army element DEWC were given the opportunity to brief him on the complexities of the work undertaken by the Centre and to discus Corps issues in the margins. In summary, a very successful and productive visit which should be repeated within the next 12 months (please).

CONGRATULATIONS, DEPARTURES AND ARRIVALS

Congratulations are extended to **WO2 Martin Coleman** AAC on his promotion to WO1, **Sgt Jon Brooke** on his selection for Supervisor Radio. **Sgts Bridget Jukes** Int Corps, **Mark Eizzard** Int Corps and **Sgt Stuart McKean** AAC on their promotion to Staff Sergeant. **Sgt Tel Gardiner** on his promotion to Sub Sergeant, **Cpl Andy Bush** on his selection for promotion to Sergeant and to **Mrs Annette Clearie** (wife of **Cpl Will Clearie** JSSU Digby) on the birth of their beautiful baby daughter **Neve,** welcome home daddy!

Fond farewell's and best wishes for the future are extended to **Sgt Bridget Jukes** who is off to sunny GCHQ Cheltenham and **Sgt Janet Wakeling** who has secured a move into the bunker PJHQ.

Hello to **Sgt Hieke Rigg** from JSSU Digby, **Sgt Antony Taylor** who joins us from Romeo Tp 14SR(EW) on promotion, **Sgt Sarah Mathews** who joins us from 225 Sig Sqn, 15SR, NI, **Sgt Mike** and **Beate Webb** who joins us from RAF Digby on promotion, **Cpl Paul** and **Sarah Browne** who joins us from Romeo Tp 14 Sig Regt (EW), **Cpl Steve Morgan** who joins us from 621 EOD Sqn, Northholt and finally **LCpl Chris Bradford** who join us for three months whilst **LCpl Mick Loughran** attends the new Area Systems course in Blandford.

EXERCISE WELSH CAPERS 3-9 JUNE 2000

We arrived at RAF Valley on the Friday to quickly unpack, grab some food and head down Bangor to witness the local nightlife. Due to this the bike riding around Betws-y-coed the following day shall be known as 'Five share a hangover in Wales'. The bike riding started well enough, but then we came to the first hill. **Cpl Andy Bush** bravely led the way, while myself, **Sgt Jon Brooke,** even more bravely was the first to get off and start pushing, closely followed, I may add, by everyone else. During the ride **Flt Lt John Morfee** showed us that the Airforce could ride as well as the Army, **Cpl Vini Shepherd** showed us that the Army could fly as well as the RAF. Saturday evening arrived and **WO1 Billy Corner** and **Sgt Martin Gill** joined us. We've now gone from the Infamous Five to the Not So Magnificent Seven!

On the Sunday we went rock climbing. We met **Sgt Jason McGlade** and his girlfriend **Shell** (both from RAF Waddington), at Lion Rock where **Sgt Mark Eizzard** undertook his first ever go at rock climbing - and lived. Quote of the week from **Mark** was, 'I've always supported West Ham, yes I'm a life long Gunner.' - just your team nickname to remember then **Mark**. With our new confidence we moved onto bigger and better rocks at Little Tryfan. A successful day rock climbing and abseiling ended when a group of job-dodging students turned up. Monday saw six of us scaling the Horseshoe of Snowdon. It was very enjoyable if uneventful in the way of stories. We did however raise eyebrows when we took a short cut and 'ski-ed' down one of the scree slopes, **Vini** claims it was a misprint on his map, the mountain rescue weren't convinced! Tuesday had all of us sea-traversing. For the uninitiated this is climbing around the cliffs just above sea level and falling or jumping off at intervals. **Flt Lt John Morfee** and **Sgt Martin Gill** showed us all how to do the falling bit, then wimped out of the jumping part. **Martin** claimed that he'd done it as a younger man and had nothing to prove. After that we abseiled off the cliff until we ran out of rope then fell into the sea. **WO1 Billy Corner** and **Sgt Jon Brooke** partaking in a joint one with **Billy** just missing **Jon's** head on the landing!

Cpl Vini Shepherd - Gone.....

Wednesday had us in two man Canadian canoes on the sea. We paddled from RAF Valley beach to Four-Mile Bridge (the bridge joining Anglesey and Holyhead). On the map a mere 3kms, but with our steering ability we managed to get a good 10kms out of it. Thursday saw us heading back, on what would be an uneventful journey if it were not for the fact that the exped leader **Cpl Vini Shepherd** (UEL) managed to get us lost on the way, claiming it wasn't his fault and finally, a good time was had by all. Very many thanks go to **Cpl Vini Shepherd** for organising the event. We are all looking forward to September's outing.

NEWS OF TRAINING

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF SIGNALS

CIS WING, CISM GROUP

OC **Capt Fiona Nelson**
Trg Co-Ordinator **WO2 (YofS) Steve Buckley**
Foreman **Sgt (FofS) Si Hopkins**

INFORMATION SYSTEMS OPERATOR CLASS 1 (ISFR 1/00)

The first Information System Operator Foundation Class 1 course has been delivered at the Royal School of Signals and was considered a success by both students and instructors alike.

The course assembled on 2 April 2000 and was made up of 12 students from various trade backgrounds and whose rank range was Corporal to Staff Sergeant. The course consisted of 11 weeks of intensive training covering subjects ranging from Data Communications to Database Technologies. It included Windows NT4 Technologies, Introduction to UNIX and the ATacCS System Manager Course. Also covered were Security procedures, Setting up and running a Help Desk and Network Optimisation.

The students were continually assessed throughout the course, and it culminated in a two-day exercise where they were thoroughly tested on all aspects of instruction delivered. At the end of the course a top student was identified. This was based on both the individuals performance in the various end of module tests, their practical skills and the confidence and aptitude demonstrated and assessed throughout the course. **SSgt Mick Johnson** consistently scored over 90% in the exams and on the practical side excelled, demonstrating a logical, methodical approach to his work. The award presented to **SSgt Johnson** was sponsored by Azlan Ltd and presented by **Mr Freddie Jones**, Managing Director of UK & Scandinavia Training. The SOinC(A), **Brig C. J. Burton,** addressed the course, congratulating all of the students on their hard work and enthusiasm shown during the eleven weeks.

Transfer to the Info Sys Op CEQ is open to all R SIGNALS Class 1 tradesmen including Sys Engr Tech Class 2, although the primary feeder trade will be Radio Systems Operator (Radio Sys Op) CEQ. The Radio Sys Op will be loaded directly onto the Foundation Course. All other applicants who can demonstrate an understanding of Information Technology and who apply to be transferred, will be considered by a selection board who will recommend them for assessment on the Aptitude course if they feel that the candidate has the right skill sets. Attending the Aptitude course does not constitute an automatic place on the Foundation course. An extremely high level of knowledge and understanding, and excellent pass marks during testing, is expected from students on the Aptitude course. Those who do not demonstrate the right qualities will not go on for further training.

Training is available to the qualified Info Sys Op who wishes to specialise as a Database Administrator. Applications should be submitted to MCM Div through the chain of command. Procedures for the selection, training and employment of Royal Signals personnel with Information Systems can be found in SOinC(A) PD No 31. The photographs show **SSgt Johnson** with the SOinC(A) and **Mr Freddie Jones** after the award presentation and the students and some of the instructors involved in their training.

CORPS CAROL SERVICE

This year's Corps Carol Service will be held on Thursday, 21 December, at St Stephen with St John, Rochester Row, Westminster, starting at 1800hrs. All serving and former members of the Corps, plus their families are cordially invited to attend and to join us for sherry and mince pies in the church hall after the service.

COs/OCs of units in and around London are asked to encourage their personnel to attend.

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT

EXERCISE LIGHTNING FOLLY - *by Cpl Cross*

On Friday afternoon, 1600hrs most people are on their way home, but the soldiers of Lightning Tp, 3 Sqn, were heading for the armoury. With all their kit in tow they were ready to deploy on exercise for the weekend. The promise of rain made certain that morale wasn't high to start with. The troops collected their rifles, climbed aboard the transport and left for their five star accommodation that was Copehill Plantation, SPTA. This lovely location was to be their home for the next two nights. As the coaches approached crossing point November, **LCpl Vernon** briefed the troops on de-bussing drills and as the coaches came to a halt there was a sudden frenzy of activity as sixty soldiers burst from the transport and deployed into all round defence. Once the section commanders had been briefed they patrolled to the harbour area and quickly sorted out their routine. Unfortunately the ration trucks had broken down and they had to leave their rations at the locations from where they were recovered. The sections were quick to split into fire teams, leaving the section 2ICs to sort the harbour area, and the commanders to go and collect their rations. After several hours, and no sign of the sections, the DS deployed to find the geographically embarrassed sections. Eventually everybody was found and they all returned to the harbour area. Once back we discovered that one of the commanders had managed to get lost, even though he was in possession of a GPS. The early morning call had been booked, and with the help of Battle simulations, was delivered to the troops at 0415hrs. Within a couple of seconds there were troops leaving the woods like rats leaving the Titanic, all making their way to the ERV to meet up with their sections and await further orders. Once all the troops and their equipment had been accounted for, it was back into routine for a wash and breakfast before the day's activities started.

LCpl Reynolds checks the morning stand-to

The day was to be taken up by several stands, each lasting one hour, and consisting of Unarmed Combat, Fires and Shelters, First Aid, Navigation, and Traps. The Navigation was not as much of a challenge as expected, **Sig Tedby** found that the overall knowledge wasn't that bad, the previous night must have just been a one off! The Traps had taught everybody to turn a rabbit into an edible dish that was nearly as good as the rations, but **LCpl Reynolds** had had enough of spicy rabbit by the end of the day! However, to his credit he did attempt to teach the Squadron 2IC, **Capt Steve Jones**, unarmed combat, but to no avail as he was beaten by his opponent. After the stands were completed the troops went back into harbour routine.

Most decided to get their heads down for a few hours sleep before the approaching Night Navigation exercise. How they managed to sleep was a miracle; they must have been made of rubber. They must have been expecting things to go missing because they were trying to hold on to everything and sleep at the same time. After a few hours sleep the troops were ready for the night navigation. As they were getting ready to set off the RSM, **WO1 Kemp**, turned up and attached himself to the first group off, the motivation was increased by about 100% and surprisingly they were the first group through. In fact all the groups, bar one finished the course by 0200hrs. Again the early morning calls were delivered by **WO1 Sartorius** and **Cpl Cross**, as the troops moved to the ERV the sporadic explosions followed them, at this point they decided it would be a good idea to don respirators, and complete the move to the ERV in NBC kit. Once the attack had finished they moved back to complete the 'sniff' test and collect the gear they had left behind. After the morning's fun and games they were ready to move back to 'peace time location' and the second part of the exercise. Back in barracks, **Cpls Atherton, Rouchy, Floyd**, and **LCpl Vernon** had command tasks set up to concentrate on team work and leadership, with a little bit of blindness, and fun incorporated. Two discussion groups were also set up, one on racism in the Army and the other on the merits on OOB in the Barracks, taken by **LCpl Dine** and **Sig Tedby**. The troops were finished by 1400hrs, which gave them just enough time to get their kit ready for Monday morning's RSM parade.

EXERCISE GRIDIRON III 4–9 JUNE 2000 - *by Sgt Dave Uttley*

Ex Gridiron once again saw **Sgt** 'Dave' **Uttley** and **Cpl** 'Tony' **Brown**, of the Regimental Training Wing (Adventure Training) in action in North Wales. Due to their frequent visits, the Capel Curig Training Camp is slowly becoming their second home. The aim of the week was to take twelve Phase 2 trainees to actively promote adventure training within a service environment.

During the week the trainees were to complete a gorge descent, rock climbing and an overnight expedition in the Snowdonia Mountains. Due to the recent heavy rainfall, the gorge was hissing and spitting whitewater for most of its extent, this made for two days of excellent gorge descending. **Sig Govinda** especially enjoyed this activity even after his weary first look at the white-water bubbling deep in the gorge bottom. Undeterred by his first impression, he soon found himself leaping around like a salmon!

The trainees do their impression of salmon whilst Gorge Descending

The rock climbing utilised the area around Tryfan. Even the light showers of rain and the growing number of groups at this time of year could not stop some great climbing. This gave **Sig McKee** the chance to face her fear of heights, which she did commendably. The 2-day overnight expedition took the students high into the Snowdonia Mountains and proved quite a test for most. Although the wind got up to 50mph at nights, the weather stayed dry despite the forecast allowing for two quality days in the mountains. Overall, it was an excellent adventure training exercise. Both instructors and trainees gained a great deal from the experience and Exercise Gridiron IV is eagerly awaited.

DIRT BIKES (IN PURSUIT OF BEING TOP DOG) - *by Sig Sinnett*

Sig Sinnett of Lightning Tp, 3 Sqn, 11 Sig Regt recently participated in two major British Moto-cross events. The twenty one-year-old trainee Installation Technician took part in the 'Wulfsport' World TwinsLock Grand Prix at Hawkstone Park, Shropshire. Riding against former British and World championship riders from around the world, he achieved very creditable results. In the deep sand, with hot and dusty conditions the racing was tough. However, **Sig Sinnett** battled hard all weekend. He was rewarded with some good finishes and a quality points haul. With only a week between the Grand Prix and the British championship round at Faleigh Castle, Somerset, he was hard pushed to get his bike prepared. After many late nights work at the MT, **Sig Sinnett** and racing partner **SSgt** 'Steve' **Crawford** of MTHQ were ready. The pair shared **Sig Sinnett's** immaculately restored Honda CR250 for the weekend riding in separate classes. Again, hot weather caused extremely dusty conditions, which at times proved dangerous on this high-speed circuit.

DATE FOR THE DIARY
RACE THE SUN 2001
is planned for
10 May 2001

Sig Sinnett taking a tight corner

Sig Sinnett showing skill on his bike

Sig Sinnett, already having scored championship points put in some solid performances and added to his points tally, despite feeling underpowered on his 250cc against the other 500cc bikes. **SSgt Crawford** was unfortunate in his first two races being forced to retire, whilst being well placed, with mechanical problems. He showed great determination however, and put in a stunning final race as he carved his way through a pack of riders to be well placed at the finish. Not bad for a 38 year old! The duo thoroughly enjoyed their weekend and look forward to the forthcoming Army endurance event (Exercise 'True Grit') at Leconfield. They will also pursue their own championship during the rest of the season.

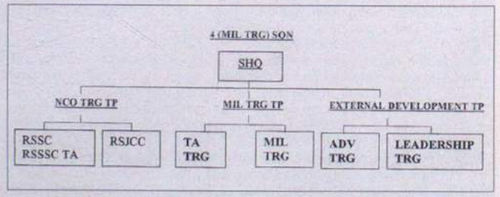
EXERCISE ROWATHON CHALLENGE - *by Sig Maxwell*

A show of hands went up as **SSM Pete Tasker** laid down his latest challenge to the troops. The challenge was to row eight hours constantly between a team of ten rowers to raise money for the British Olympic team. The first training session saw about 30 or so people attempt the first time trial. A select team of ten was chosen, after six weeks training at 0630hrs every morning and numerous time trials. The day of the actual event came sooner than most people expected and as we loaded the minibus at 0700hrs on that Saturday morning there was an air of excitement and also of anticipation between the squad. We arrived at Salisbury Leisure Centre at around 0830hrs where we all started to mentally prepare ourselves and warm up. The competition area seemed to be a sea of rowing machines that went on forever. Just before the event **WO2 Pete Tasker**, the coach and captain, called us in for a pep talk. To be honest I cannot remember what was said as the adrenaline was pumping that much with excitement. Then the clock struck 1000hrs and we were off. We rowed in 4-min intervals with 36mins rest between each leg after the first hour. We found ourselves to be in second place out of about 45 teams. As the hours ticked by some teams started to drop out but others kept going, not caring about distance just wanting to finish the eight hours. At about the 1hr 30min point we took the lead which we never really lost. We hit 50km first and hit 100km in about 5hrs 41mins. As the hours tick on we soon found ourselves with only 1hr to go. We decided to change strategy and pull for 2min sprints each. You could see from people's faces that they had nothing left but we pushed on to the finish with an overall distance of 139,900 metres, which was good enough to win. I would like to take the opportunity on behalf of the team to thank the coach, **WO2 Pete Tasker**, without his motivation and organisation we would not be able to complete this challenge. Also to our admin team who's energy drinks and constant cheering were invaluable. Cheers boys! Thanks to **Maj Andy Duncan** (OC 3 Sqn) and 2IC 11 Sig Regt, **Maj Phil Brown** who came down to give us extra support on the day. The 2IC also set an impressive 7:16mins for a 2000 metre time trial on a side-stand and we will be happy to give him a try out for our next event. The total money raised by the team was a staggering £727.10.

FROM A SMALL TEAM TO A MILITARY TRAINING SQUADRON

After the move from Catterick to Blandford it soon became apparent that, as part of our 'duty of care' there was still a requirement to provide Military and Adventure Training to the under 18's within Kohima Tp, whilst they awaited their trade training allocation. A team was formed in 1998 as part of Whitespear Tp, 1 Sqn within 11Sig Regt. Its main aim was to maintain morale and to preserve the military training knowledge they had received during Phase 1. After begging, stealing and borrowing equipment Whitespear Tp was initially located in Building 19 at Engineers Corner affectionately known as 'Compost Corner'. The Troop originally employed two Military Training and three Adventure Training Instructors. Challenging and rewarding Adventure Training courses introduced the trainees to the joys of various activities available in outdoor pursuits. Adventure Training was conducted in the local area and included navigation, rock climbing, canoeing and walking. The instructors also arranged six Adventure Training camps annually, visiting Capil Curig and the Yorkshire Dales. Many Phase 2 trainees had never participated in Adventure Training before and therefore this proved to be of great value, building upon the basics of leadership, teamwork and adaptability. The Military Training team concentrated on ensuring that all basic military skills were kept up to the required standards as well as introducing specialised training in the form of Light Support Weapon (LSW), Bayonet fighting and advanced NBC.

In April 1999, the Troop was relocated and moved from 'Compost Corner' to a building occupied by NCO Leadership Wing. Leadership Wing transferred from 11 Sig Regt to become a part of Training Operations Division, Command Training Group at the Royal School of Signals. Whitespear Tp then also incorporated the Royal Signals Training Objective 1G (RSTO1G). Due to the importance of RSTO1G and the necessity for all Phase 2 soldiers to attend the course, it was decided that RSTO1G would become the priority and all Phase 2 soldiers would complete a Military Training Package if they attended a trade course longer than 16 weeks. It also soon become apparent that Blandford Garrison required a Military Training Wing, that would also allow permanent staff to complete their Individual Training Directives (ITDs) and additional Military Training taskings. Whitespear Tp evolved and became the Regimental Training Wing moving from 1 Squadron to Blandford Support Squadron. In June 2000, it was deemed too costly to have two Military Training assets within the Garrison. Therefore it was decided that the Regimental Training Wing and NCO Leadership Wing would combine to form 4 (Military Training) Squadron under the command of 11 Sig Regt. Currently, the Squadron infrastructure consists of an SHQ and three Troops, as shown below:



Each Troop has the following responsibilities within 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn:

1. **NCO TRG TP.** Conducts the Royal Signals Sergeants Course, Royal Signals Territorial Army Staff Sergeants Course and the Royal Signals Junior Commanders Course. OC: **WO1 Gary Pickford** Blandford Mil: Ext 2185.
2. **MIL TRG TP.** Conducts the Royal Signals Territorial Army Corporals Course, Royal Signals Territorial Army Recruits Course and the Royal Signals Training Objective 1G Course, Garrison ITDs andPhase 2 Military Training. OC: **WO1 Gary Waters** Blandford Mil: Ext 2789.
3. **EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENT TP.** Conducts the Royal Signals Leadership Course and Adventure Training. OC: **Lt Tanya Noakes** Blandford Mil: Ext 2783

So there you have it, from a small team it has grown to a Military Training Squadron! Hopefully at some time in your career you will participate in one of the many courses run by 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn. Remember that most of these are career courses that you require for promotion. So do yourselves a favour and come adequately prepared. If you require any more information on the new Squadron formation that please contact one of the following key personalities.

OC	**Maj Paul Smith**	Ext 2194
2IC	**Capt John Williams**	Ext 2183
SSM	**WO2I Kev Read**	Ext 2501
FAX	**Pitney Bowes**	Ext 2193

TUG OF WAR - *by LCpl Latham*

The season started with a bit of a struggle for active participants but eventually interest started to grow. **Mr John** 'Dad' **Grey** was our trainer and he made sure that we worked hard from morning to night. Our first competition was at the Morrison Cup. The competition was difficult and we were finally robbed by 1(UK) ADSR. The team then proceeded whenever possible, to compete in various civilian competitions, which were mostly on weekends. We also started a women's team that entertained us at our regular training sessions. The highlight for the women's team was becoming the 5 Div Champions and runners up in both weights at the Armys. Also at the Armys we gained the runners up position in the 680kg category, which meant we qualified to represent the Army at the Inter-Services. This was when **WO2** 'Beast Master' **Manktelow** took over the training sessions. We trained harder than ever over the weeks before the Inter-Services. Finally the day came when we would pull against the best in the other services. Weighing in wasn't that successful so **Sgt** 'I'll break you' **McFee** took us for a gentle run to loose some excess pounds.

The team who eventually weighed in was:

WO2 'Beast Master' **Manktelow**	**Sig** 'Boy' **Taylor**
Sig Hudson	**Sig** 'Pre Madonna' **Francis**
Sig 'Upside down legs' **Maxwell**	**LCpl** 'Gwar' **Latham**
Sig 'Honey Monster' **Hughes**	**Sig** 'I'm massive' **Monk**

The team won against both the Navy and RAF teams but lost against our fellow Army team. We earned the runners up slot in the Inter-Services this time. Many sherbets were drunk that night all in high spirits of course. The next major competition was the Inter-Corps where we joined forces with 1(UK) ADSR, but we don't like to talk about that competition. Now the team is in constant training to get stronger than ever ready for the Braemar Games, which we were lucky enough to get invited to. Special thanks go to **Mr John** 'Dad' **Grey** for training and coaching us all season and **Sgt** 'I'll break you' **McFee** for all his help in organising all the administration and being so on the ball.

EXERCISE BASSIERO DRAGON

On 30 May this year, 20 members of 11 Sig Regt lead by **Capt** 'Bee' **Bryant** headed to Portsmouth to catch the evening ferry to St Malo. The crossing took about 11 hours so we had plenty of time to refresh ourselves ready for an arduous time ahead. The cabins onboard were comfortable and gave us the chance to catch up sleep that we knew we would need later. After 14 hours of driving we reached the Pradelangue campsite near Bagneres du Lunchen, where we were going to be based for the next two weeks. The first day in the mountains was used as an educational session teaching navigation and acclimatisation to the new environment. Our navigation skills from basic training were tested to the limit but soon it became second nature. The second day was far more demanding. We were taught how to walk in snow, which is a lot more difficult than it sounds. Traversing across, up and down in snow was a necessary skill to learn in case we encountered any snowfields up in the mountains. Ice and arrest training was to follow. Sliding down an ice slope in different positions and attempting to stop with an ice axe was quite fun, but only when completed successfully. The area where we were staying was also good for white water rafting, so not to miss out on the opportunity we gave it a go. After getting kitted out with life jackets, helmets, wet suits and paddles we set off with two rafts into Spain to our start point which was a couple of hours away. After an arduous morning session we stopped for lunch and a change of location to sample another river in the local area.

The expedition into the mountains was to last for five days. Our kit was checked for the right equipment and unnecessary items and then we set off for the first mountain refuge where we would be spending our first night. The path was easy at first but it soon became narrower and steeper the further we moved from our start point. As we arrived at the first refuge the weather closed in and soon it started to snow. The next morning gave us a change of scenery due to the previous nights snowfall. The mountain that we were heading for was called Montardo, and with it being one of the highest in the area, it gave us an excellent challenge. By early afternoon we had reached the summit and after a quick photo call we made our way to our next destination.

The next refuge was high in the mountains and the elements started to take their toll as two members of the party began to suffer from a mild case of snow blindness. To be on the safe side they were evacuated to the base camp where the admin party was waiting. With the casualties safe, and the party whole again, we continued with our journey. The next couple of days were completed with no further incident but a team of eight did manage to attempt the Needles of Augulles d'Armitages high in the mountains. Walking down into the Village at the end of the expedition was a great relief and also a chance to reacquaint ourselves with civilisation. The weather changed as we were preparing to leave and so most of the equipment had to be packed away wet. The journey to the ferry was broken up with a few driver changes and not soon enough we arrived. All the members of the team slept to the max on the crossing. When we arrived back at camp we sorted out all our admin and said farewell for more, well deserved rest. All members of the expedition thoroughly enjoyed themselves and can't wait for the next chance to frolic in the mountains.

Leaving the Forces Shortly?

real com

Your Future In Communications

We specialise in placing ex-service personnel within the Telecommunication and Broadcast industry. We are interested in all trades with experience of Satellite and Trunk Systems maintenance & operations.

The company is directed by ex-Royal Signals staff currently working within the industry. We provide permanent positions with telecommunications companies in the UK or abroad.

Interested?

Please contact Ed Massey or Brian O'Connor.

Tel: 01962 841 838

Fax: 01962 841 839

PO Box 288

Winchester

S022 4WW

Email: enquiries@realcom-recruitment.co.uk

CAVING CLUB

This month saw the first trip by the newly formed Blandford Caving club. Our band of five subterranean explorers left the camp after work on Friday for a seven-hour journey to Ingleton, North Yorkshire. We had arranged two trips over the two days, starting with the classic route into Allum Pot. Because it was a sunny day it seemed strange to be going underground but we all still disappeared into the dark hole in the ground. The way in is fairly open due to centuries of water erosion but it still had a few areas where a moderate squeeze was required. After a few scrambles and abseils the system leads into Allum Pots main shaft. The main shaft is a huge cavern about 100m deep, that gives a welcome view of sunlight as it opens to the sky. At the Rock Bridge near the bottom, the cave virgins were invited to look down into the base of the cavern, not for the feint hearted but a thoroughly enjoyable white-knuckled experience. The return-journey, apart from being all up hill, was quite easy. We managed to get in and out in a cool four hours. The next day we decided to tackle the Swinsdale Pull-through trip into the Kingsdale Master cave. This trip is very interesting as you start at the top of the hill and five hours later you emerge at the base of the hill. The initial route in was very small and wet but when it did eventually open out, it afforded us some great abseils down the waterfalls inside. **Sig** 'Snail boy' **McCann** should be thanked for his speediness in the cave, as he let us enjoy the experience for that little bit longer. Not for the feint hearted but thoroughly enjoyable, it was a weekend to remember and all that attended are looking forward to the next trip. Thanks to **Cpl** 'Tony' **Brown** for the organisation and local knowledge both underground and in the surrounding area.

REGIMENTAL ATHLETICS

The Athletics squad at 11 Sig Regt has achieved some outstanding results so far this year. But not having been in a competition for weeks, it was quite a shock when all of a sudden it was time for the Army inter-unit finals. The Master at Arms, **Capt Dupree**, had been training the team along with **WO2 Tasker** and **SSgt** 'Chippie' **Chapman**. Every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday we had a good session at the track or some general strength and endurance training exercises.

On the day of the competition we were all up at 0600hrs for breakfast before setting out on the long journey to the Aldershot Army athletics stadium. The journey seemed to fly by as most of the team slept but all too soon we arrived. When we got there we knew that there would be some stiff competition from the other units. 3 CS Regt (RLC), who had been the previous year's winner, were there so the challenge was on to see who was now the best. The field events were launched first. **Sig** 'Go With' **Noakes**, who was competing for the first time, made a valiant effort in the pole vault but was outclassed by the opposition and came third over all. In the

long jump 'A' string, **Sig Morancie** came seventh which was excellent considering the quality of the other competitors. Meanwhile the women's team gained an excellent second in the long jump due to the skill of **Sig Scott**. The best field event result for the women's was by **Sig Tagilala** who achieved outstanding results and won both the javelin and discus. Meanwhile on the male team **Sig Crank** beat his opposition and won the high jump. The track events were not so successful, mostly due to the competition from 3 CS Regt (RLC). **Sig** 'Sid' **Siddall** came third in the 100m and **LCpl Kent** gained a second place in both the 110m hurdles and the 200m. However, yet again it was the women's team who won the day. **Sig Cartwright** won the 400m and the team won the 4 x 100m relay. At the end of the day the men's team were third with a total of 179 points with 3 CS Regt (RLC) winning with a massive 272 points. However, it was a great day for the women's team. The competition leaders changed position three times during the day but we finally won with a close 94.5 points to with 3 CS Regt (RLC)'s 91 points.

To applaud everyone's outstanding achievement we had a celebratory meal at the Gurkha restaurant on camp. The CO, **Lt Col Nicholson**, joined us for a few drinks to congratulate us on our success. By the end of the night the team were merry and ready for the most arduous endurance event so far, the speeches. We would all like to thank the MAA, **Capt Dupree**, **WO2 Tasker**, **SSgt Chapman** and **Sgt Thwaite** for their hard work and dedication during the season.

The highly successful 11 Signal Regiment athletics Squad

ARMY TRAINING REGIMENT BASSINGBOURN

CO **Lt Col I. A. J. Condie**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) J. Roberts** RE

1 TRAINING SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. M. Norris**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) A. V. Slaney**

TOP CORRIDOR MOVEMENT

Firstly the Squadrons hierarchy is going through a major change with the imminent departure of the OC and his sidekick – the 2IC. **Maj John Norris** is going back to college – Staff College, while **Capt Mick Boyle** is moving to Blandford to take up position as the new PSO. The Squadron wishes them and their families the best in their new postings and welcomes **Maj Fred Hargreaves** and **Capt Adrian Scott** as their replacements.

TRAILWALKER 2000

It was a cool 0530hrs in the morning that the intrepid 1 Squadron Trailwalker Team left the cosy confines of ATR Bassingbourn to embark on a 100km journey across the South Downs. I say *across* but it was more a case of *up and over*. The team consisting of **Capt** 'Cylume Legs' **Jeeves, Capt Rhidian Jones, Sgt Roy Turner** and **Cpl Smith** arrived in good time at the start in Petersfield ready for our 1000hrs start. Once in location the team began its lengthy warm up, two of the team burst into flames while I had a banana and a quick kip. Two of the team had completed Trailwalker in previous years and indeed for **Cpl Smith** it was his third effort, so they at least knew what was in store, but it was two naïve officers that stood on the start line as **General Cowan** got the race underway.

Our preparation had been both intense and comprehensive and consisted of **Sgt Turner** and **Capt Jones** buying new trainers before the event and **Capt Jeeves** giving up alcohol for a week. Anyone who has done Trailwalker will know that one of the most important aspects of the event is the team administration that was conducted, this year, by our very own SSM, **WO2 Slaney** and his trusted sidekick – **Sig Foster**. The standard of our Admin was second to none and all the team agrees that without the help of the SSM none of us would have completed the course. Our main aim had always been to complete the course with all four team members; in the previous year 1 Sqn team had lost one of its number along the way, so we were determined that we would not lose someone by overdoing it at the start. This thought was always in our mind as we gradually ticked off the miles and checkpoints. **Capt Jeeves** had his own particular goals and distances to reach, and gleefully called out as we passed the marathon point, only to be shot down as he was reminded that we still had another six miles to go before even being half way! Gradually the day passed by and each checkpoint was reached with us still in good spirits and I believe that it was once we had reached the three-quarter way mark that all of us realised that we would, come hell or high water, finish as a four. This we managed and at 0300hrs after being on the go for 17hrs and completing the last 5hrs of the competition in darkness, using head-torches, we crossed the finish line.

Finishing was not the exhilarating sensation that we had expected, instead I think it was one of relief and pure exhaustion. However, the team had achieved its aim, we all finished, we can all still walk, some of us have even tried running again and we all vow that we will be back next year. Once again I would like to take the opportunity of stressing to any Trailwalker potential that you should never underestimate the importance of having a proper admin set-up and I am extremely thankful that ours was so good. Congratulations to the team for coming a respectful 52nd out of over 200 teams.

The 'elated' team at the finish

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt S. Gunson**
Tp Sgt **Sgt P. Matheson**

At the end of another course B Tp faces the disruption of its established training team. The new Troop OC, **Lt Stuart Gunson** has arrived with **Capt Karl Jeeves** moving on to become the floating 2IC. Hello and Goodbye to **Cpl Steve Halpin** who has been with the team for just over half the course and is now moving on to his drillers course. Promotions abound with **Sgt Paula Matheson** awaiting her Staff Sergeant – and her posting. Congratulations to soon to be **Sgts Dave Langridge** and **Harry Ramsden** who came off the last board.

BRAVO TROOP CHARITY EVENT

Bravo Tp recruits have been involved in their usual charity event in support of the Great Britain Wheelchair Basketball Association. None of us knew exactly what to expect in a game of wheelchair basket-ball as we had never done anything like this before. On the day we were introduced to **Gordon Perry** who is the Development Officer for the GBWBA, an ex-Signaller who had lost a leg and is now involved in promoting the sport and raising money for equipment. For the competition we broke down into five teams with the training team making up one of them. The competition worked as a league system with each team playing each other. When we started it was hard to get used to the wheelchairs as they were very easy to tip backwards. As our confidence increased, so did the number of fouls. The worst offender was **Cpl Ramsden** who never seemed to get punished. Also **Tpr Lomax** who nearly knocked out **Gordon** as he pulled his chair over backwards and left him sprawled on the floor. The most consistent winners of their games were the 'A' Team consisting of **Sig Keegan, Tpr Lomax, Spr McBride, Sig Belshaw** and **Sig Kingan** who won their first four games. The Village People are also worthy of note for loosing their first four games. It came to a showdown match between the training team and the 'A' Team. This game was a very close battle with both teams locking horns with equal force. At half time the scores were level and there was everything to play for. As the game drew towards a close there was a sudden flurry of points with **Sig Keegan** scoring two of the final three baskets to win the competition. At the end of the morning everybody had enjoyed themselves and had learnt something new about a sport we had never really heard of before.

'After the Match.'

CHARLIE TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Alex Clixby**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Dave Honeyman**

On Friday 9 June 2000, another Troop passed-out of Phase One Training, with the largest downpour known to man. Despite everyone getting soaked to the skin it was a good day enjoyed by all. The Troop Prize Winners were **Sig Sam** 'Bacon' **Richards** who won prizes for Best Recruit and Best at Physical Training. **Aled** 'Friend of Sheep' **Holland** won the prize for Best Endeavour with **Sig Terry** 'Onions' **Johnstone** scooping the prize for Best Rifle shot, a total of 43 recruits from the Troop passed-out.

During the 2-week training break there were a number of changes in Permanent Staff. We give a warm welcome to **Cpl Paul Conroy** who arrived at the Regiment, from 30 Sigs. **Cpl Smudge** 'War Stories' **Smith** and **Cpl Lindsey** 'Hair' **Payton** both moved to Delta Tp. Coming the other way from D Tp was **Cpl Mark Brenen**. Later this month we are sad to lose **Sgt Dave** 'I'll be in at 7.30' **Honeyman** who has been Charlie Tp Sergeant for the last year and a half. He is posted to Dundee to work with the TA. Thanks to him for all his hard work and best wishes to him, his wife **Julie** and the kids in the future! Congratulations to **Cpl** 'Taff' **Baynham, Cpl Paul Conroy** and **Cpl Smudge Smith** on being selected for promotion to Sergeant on the recent board. Well done to you lucky blokes. Charlie Tp have now started another Phase 1 Course, with 30 recruits fresh into the factory. There is just over a week until some very well deserved Summer Block Leave! Eight days and counting….

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd **TBC**
Tp Sgt **Sgt S. Parke**

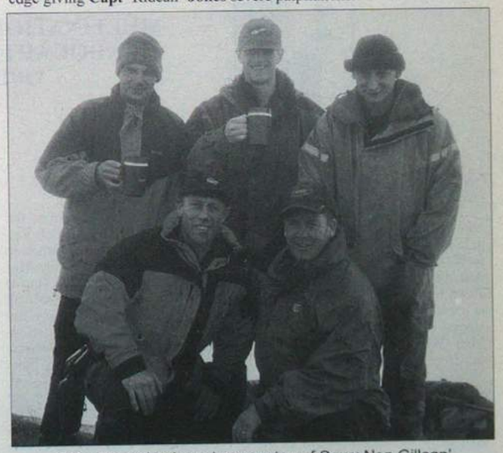
Another day, another recruit, the joy of ATR Bassingbourn continues with each day throwing up its own unique problem. On average, there are around 40 of them every 12 weeks, both male and female. Since the last issue the Troop has raised over £4400 for charities such as Leukaemia research, Army Benevolent Fund, and Special Care Baby unit in Cambridge. The events ranged from running, cycling and rowing. Having just completed another CMS(R) and sent 30 recruits to 11 Sig Regt, we are now starting all over again, joy! The last intake, which passed out on the 23 June 2000, was **Lt Kate Simmonds** tenth and last intake. She has escaped, fully unscathed and still with two pips to undergo Pilot Trg at Netherhaven, hot on her heels is **Cpl Sid Cleworth** recently back from his Class 1 at Blandford, **Sid** is looking forward to 249 Sig Sqn. At the same time, welcome to the new Troop Commander, **Capt Scott** and family who join us from Latina, Italy. Congratulations to **Sgt Sam Parke** and **Cpl** 'Smudge' **Smith** on their recent promotion, both are now eagerly awaiting posting orders!

ECHO TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt R. Jones**
Tp Sgt **Sgt R. Turner**

Echo Tp would firstly like to say farewell to **Cpl** 'Daz' **Kidd** on promotion to Sergeant and wish him and his family all the best at 21 Sig Regt (AS). The Troop also welcomes **Cpl** 'Mark-Mosquito' **Collins** and his wife **Marissa**, not forgetting **Cpl** 'Angie-Big Bird' **Twist** on arrival to the Troop and passing her OASAA. After successfully sending more troops onto Phase Two, Echo Tp training team decided to deploy on Ex Black Cuillin Tiger on the Isle of Skye. After a long drive, we finally arrived in Skye and found a campsite that would take us, we then set about building our homes for the next few days.

The first day brought a refreshing wake up call from the ever persistent midges and led us on to move to Kilt Rock Falls so we could practice our abseiling in preparation for the ever daunting Pinnacle Ridge on the Black Cuillins. Wednesday brought a bright and breezy start as we set off on our bid to conquer the ridge. What started as being a gentle climb rapidly progressed to a typical wet challenge, however, Echo Tp managed to conquer all and reach the third 'inaccessible' ridge that led us to a 25m abseil before we could continue. Unfortunately during the abseil **Capt** 'Mag to Grid' **Jones** camera battery decided to leave **Sgt** 'Roy' **Turners** hand and make its own way down the mountain. With the forth pinnacle finally completed we continued to the summit of Scurr Nan Gillian to be greeted by smiling faces of fifteen students at the top who were all roped together. Emphasis however should remain with the various and continuing scary moment throughout the climb, especially at the top when **Sgt** 'Highlander' **Turner** decided to stand slightly too close to the edge giving **Capt** 'Ridean' **Jones** severe palpitations.



'Echo Troop having a brew on top of Sgurr Nan Gillean'

Cpl 'Jimmy' **Frew** who was too busy singing and dancing to his CD Walkman lovingly ignored the daring decent. After our hard day on the mountain the Troop took in some sight seeing followed by a nature-walk and sea fishing where Echo Tp's resident fishers **Cpl** 'Wayne' **Bramwell** and **Cpl** 'Jimmy' **Frew** nearly put the fishermen on Skye out of business by catching the total of - one fish. After our long journey home, we look forward to more recruits, a good time had by all and a thoroughly enjoyable and recommended expedition.

CHARITY EVENT – THE THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE.

The Recruits of Echo Tp embarked on a challenging charity event in order to raise money for Marie Curie Cancer Care. The recruits, under the safe guidance of **Sgt** 'RCP' **Turner** were to climb the equivalent of the three peaks in England, Wales and Scotland on the indoor climbing wall at ATR Bassingbourn. After coming in off their mid term exercise, and still suffering from tiredness, the recruits managed a total of 3600m, 194m over the required amount in a time of four hours and twenty-two minutes. The total sum raised amounted to £1135.78. Which was greatly appreciated by the staff at Holme Tower – A Marie Curie Cancer Care Center.

FOXTROT TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Jackson**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Purdon**

The Troop have now passed their Week 5 inspections and disappeared on a well deserved long weekend which has left the training team thinking where has all the time gone. Huge congratulations go to **Cpls Paul** 'Smudge' **Smith** and **Gav** 'Boy Wonder' **Wilson** who have both been selected for promotion leaving Cpl **Amanda** 'Beryl' **Verrall** as the sprog of the training team. F Tp have a mix of Signals, Engineers and RAC so it has taken a while for them all to gel together. **Sigs Lyon** and **Walker** joined in Week 1 after already spending several weeks here on the injured list, whilst **Sig Arnold** got all the way to Week 6 before injury struck and he has now joined the most metropolitan Troop in the Squadron. It is quite a shock to many members of the Troop when they first arrive but as the course goes on they soon get the hang of what the pet hates of the training team are. We welcome back **Sgt Craig** 'It's not ginger it's strawberry blonde' **Purdon** who has spent two weeks away on a recruiting road show. He also claims that he spent a week preparing his speech however the only thing that improved was his golf handicap. We are all looking forward to foreign holidays during summer leave except for **Capt Dave** 'Lend us a quid' **Jackson** who still claims that his pay is messed up.

1 SQUADRON ROADSHOW

On behalf of the Commanding Officer, OC 1 Sqn was tasked to conduct a Roadshow for the major and minor units of the Royal Signals in order to brief the Field Army on Phase 1 training and promote the Regiment within the eyes of the Corps. In addition there still seems to be a degree of ignorance about Phase 1 establishments and exactly what they do and the Roadshow's purpose was to dispel those myths. Finally ATR Bassingbourn is on the lookout for the high quality potential instructors to come and train recruits. The humble task of running the Roadshow, OC 1 Sqn entrusted to one of his faithful officers, **Capt Jeeves** and a team of three others, **Sgt Purdon, Cpl Ambury** and **Cpl Lythe**. With only four weeks to prepare the presentation and organise all the admin for such an undertaking, time was certainly a factor. The week leading up to deployment was punctuated by rehearsal after rehearsal and last minute checks. On Monday 10 July 2000, the team departed ATR Bassingbourn in a minibus, on a journey that would last two weeks, see them present to 13 regular units a total of nine times, travel 2200 miles and eat ten Big Macs each! Did the presentation achieve its aim? The aims of the presentation were met on all levels, 13 Units are now better informed about Phase 1 training and what it involves both for the recruit and instructor. The Regiment currently has a number of high quality instructors many of them are now being posted as Sergeants around the Corps and the future holds more of the same for ATR Bassingbourn.

REGIMENTAL ATHLETICS

The Regimental Athletics Team has recently competed in the Army Team Finals in Aldershot, coming an excellent second in the Minor Units Competition. This rounded off a very successful year in which the team also won the Morrison Cup and the 4th Division Championships. The following personnel from 1 Sqn gave worthy performances in the Army Final.

Maj Norris – Long Jump(3rd)
Capt Jeeves – Triple Jump(3rd)
Sgt Clark – Shot and Hammer(both 1st)

Sgt Clark receiving one of his gold medals ffrom SOinC(A)
Sgts Kidd and Park in the background about to receive their gongs

NEWS FROM THE BALKANS

MULTINATIONAL DIVISION (SOUTH WEST) HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT OPERATION PALATINE

Sqn Comd **Maj A. H. Campbell-Black**
RSM **WO1(RSM) D. W. Craig**

The Squadron Headquarters will be seeing quite a turnaround in the coming month of August just before the unit handover to the Dutch Signals Battalion. Within this very busy month we loose firstly on promotion to WO1, **WO2 (YofS) Neil Ferris** to 1 Sig Bde closely followed by **Maj Adrian Campbell-Black** as Chief of Staff 1 Sig Bde then **WO2 (FofS) Dean Briers** on promotion to WO1 posted to RRST. It has been said there is a pattern. We also loose **Capt Paul Buck** who has escaped early and sloped off back to Osnabruck as OC rear party, releasing **Capt** 'Kiora Man' **White** to take over the Squadron as 2IC. The execution of the draw down is looking good to get the Signal Squadron out of the Banja Luka Metal Factory, off the HTS's and RLD's and downsize to a Signal Troop. The HTS's and RLD's are the Squadron's next main effort to extract and backload both equipment and personnel. A warm welcome to our new Ops team of **WO2 (YofS)** 'Gaz' **Tabor** and **WO2 (FofS) Steve Moore** who will be in the capable hand of **Sgt Steve Tressider** who will be easing them into the ops.

WO1 (RSM) Dougie Craig
with his locally promoted technician mate Sgt Brian Brown

OSCAR TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Paul McTurk**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Ollie' **Oliver**

RESUP TEAM - *by Sig Sheppard & Sig Smith*

Since deploying on Op Palatine on 28 May we have been busy resupplying the outdets in theatre. Happily, the number of dets is decreasing as the handover to the Dutch Signal Battalion goes on. We have been working hard and had a lot of support from everyone else, because they have realised that the sooner the handover is done then the sooner we can go home. There are not many incidents to report, apart from **Sig** 'Mad Dog' **Murdoch** deciding that if a local cyclist wasn't going to move out of the way for him, then he would move him…….. with his bumper. Nice one mate! Congratulations to **LCpl** 'Mac' **McKenna** for finally getting on his Class 1.

Our deepest sympathies go out to Lisnia West and in particular to **LCpl Glen Hislop**, because by the time you read this 'Simba' will be in that big luxury dog kennel in the sky. **Sig** 'Dinger' **Bell** has been getting plenty of practice milking the local cow. **Sig** 'Woggle' **Moran** still assures us that he is human but that may be a fantasy. Gola P has the old hermit **LCpl** 'Old Git; **Forsyth** along with **Sig** 'I'm so interesting' **Evans** who is still seeing his Dutch bird along with all Amsterdam. **LCpl** 'The Pest' **Robertson** has been doing his best to learn some new chat up lines and trying to impress. Up at Ljubija, **Sig**'I'm even more interesting' **Adshead** has been doing his best to look like one of the Gallagher brothers. **Sig** 'Scotty' Walker has taken up running which is a bit of a surprise but then again it is with **Cpl** 'Lycra' **Huby**.

The FRT sort out problems at COMMCEN Ljubija (C2 BG)
Cpl 'Lycra' Huby, Sig 'Scotty' Walker, Sgt Brian Brown,
Sig Shephard, Cpl Tim Keyworth

Up at Corralici, **Cpl Andy Morris** and **Sig Rob** 'Houdini' **Trotter** have been bored to tears by **Sig** 'No Neck' **Parrot** and her jackanory stories. The Canadians celebrated when COMCEN Corralici closed down. Cries of 'No more stories', were heard as they finally got rid of her. **LCpl Tim Stanton** has been having his fair share of problems down at Sipovo. However, his excuse of 'No Power', when asked why his kit wasn't working wasn't quite believable, as he was sat playing his Playstation at the time. **Sig** 'The grey man' **Scott** has been busy in the prone position although not upto the standard of **Sig** 'That immaculate soldier who belongs on a recruiting poster' **Ward**. Sipovo has seen not only **LCpl** ' The stinging ….'**King** along with old man **Phillips**, not as old as **Charlie** though. Almost forgot about **Sly** 'Hercules' **Found** who has been busy trying to impress the Dutch with awesome physique.

The Rog has seen an eclipse in the arrival of **Cpl Paul Lomas** whom with his razor sharp wit and GSOH will no doubt keep the det amused! **Sig** 'Daz' **Kirby** and **Sig** 'Jammie' **Masters** are still ready to rumble over who is best RR Op on the det. By the way 'Daz' we will not come and do a 10 hour round trip so you can play five a side, coming from Liverpool doesn't mean that you can play footy you should know that. Radilica boasts the happiest det in theatre always quick with a smile and friendly banter it is a must to see. The show has humour in **Sigs** 'Cannon' **Collins** and 'Ball' **Cooke** with the compere **LCpl** 'Manning' **Rose**. At MG there is **LCpl McKay** a **Sig Parrot** lookalike and **Sig Smith 352** who have now witnessed the arrival of Super Op, **Sig** 'Braveheart' **Crawford** who has taken the Department by storm and will now put it back on the map or into oblivion. All in all things have not been bad but we are looking forward to getting the hell out of here.

PAPA TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Mike Parke**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Paul Davis**

Over the last month Papa Tp has been deployed on various tasks providing comms (or not in **LCpl** 'Barry Chuckle' **Moffats** case). Those not providing comms have been using the excuse of crypto guard to improve their tans, as **Sig** 'Wacker' **Walker** can testify with the locals regularly mistaking him for one of their own. Those left behind have been surprised by the lengths at which **SSgt** 'Hopalong' **Davis** will go to ensure that nobody feels left out, to the extent of throwing himself down a set of stairs to cheer **LCpl** 'Tommo' **Thomas** who's leg is in plaster. Three members of the Troop descended down to the party island of Brac for some really 'adventurous' training, where they participated in some canoeing and trekking. The troublesome trio were **Sig** 'Too Keen' **Brittain, Sig Jim** 'Nice but dim' **Burgess** and **Sig Dan** 'Paul Chuckle' **Tooke.** One of the highlights of the week was taking in the sights of the local nudist beach with some strategically placed photos of the water and scenery. All activities were set upon with great enthusiasm .

On a serious note, after six weeks hard graft the Troop is finally up to standard. The Troop has performed well in all tent erection exercises under the watchful eyes of **2Lt** 'Will the baggage party come on me?' **Parke**. Our congratulations go to **Cpls** 'Maurice' **Pay** and 'Charlie' **Henson** on coming off the board, Well done lads. The Troop says farewell to **LCpl** 'Baba' **Samuel** who's on route home. All the best **Jimmy** and **Steph** and we can't wait to see Jimmy junior in four weeks. Finally a special mention to our resident REME **LCpl White** who was upset at never getting a mention in *The WIRE*.

ROMEO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt** 'Ben' **Howarth**
SSgt **SSgt** 'Paul' **Buckley**

After arriving in the Banja Luka Metal Factory some seven weeks ago the pace is certainly picking up. As the Troop enters its Betty Ford phase **Lt** 'Plastic Ken' **Howarth** is ensuring that wherever possible the Troop take their 96-hour pass or five day adventure training period at Brac. **Sig** 'Nikki' **Earl** clearly learnt a lot, informing us that Brac is an island off the coast of Split and it may be small but beautiful. The two man rooms are no different from the CoRiMecs on camp insisted **SSgt** 'Laughing Boy' **Buckley**. The adventure training is a chance to try scuba, trekking, climbing, canoeing, windsurfing and to rebronze the body (for those who care about such things).

The Systems Controllers congratulate **LCpl** 'General Jackson' **Eden** for just being around and making the rest of them feel younger. Welcome to **Sig** 'Frazer' **Anderson** who is getting to grips with answering the phone like a real pro. Welcome back to **Sig** 'Quark' **Mockett** from his two week trip to the Continent (Osnabruck). Hello to **Sgt Wright-McCarthy** and his merry men fresh from their southern England jolly. The Powermen have been frantically sent on jobs to support the coffee in Tommy's (CIT) boys. **Sig** 'Where's my razor' **Humphreys** particularly enjoyed his 96 hour break. **Cpl Christopher** 'Brews-up' **Heap** could not understand why he hadn't been sent, but probably because no one could track him down.

The COMMCEN said a sad farewell to **Sgt John Swanston** who has handed over to **Sgt** 'Jelly - Please can I be a Yeoman?' **Smith**. **John** is now brushing the Foreman's boots to a high shine and his brew making skills are outstanding. The other operatives struggle into the light on occasion but seem to prefer their dingy hollow. The ISM investigation team led by **Cpl Dave Harding** is relieved to report they have completed their theatre equipment survey. A little exaggeration, but only to be expected from troops led by the silver tongued **SSgt Tony May**. Finally many congratulations to **LCpl Chittick** on the birth of a baby boy. Those in the Troop blessed with children have already appraised him of a future of sleepless nights and nappy changing. What are friends for ??

MIKONJIC GRAD (MG) MOUNTAIN HALF MARATHON

by LCpl Mallison. (Attached BRITFOR Sig Sqn (204))

At 0400hrs we dragged our tired, limp bodies from their cocoon like state. Already the air was stuffy and warm. Transport was set for 0500hrs. 0610hrs, time running low and moral was beginning to fade, still no bus. Finally 0620hrs, **Sgt Brown's** happy bus.

On arrival at MGBD we were confronted by a mass of 300-400 contenders. Five minutes until the start; best get a move on. A quick briefing and we're off. The mountainous peak loomed in the near distance. Hard to believe we'd be ascending it in less than 15 minutes. The harsh sun was already taking its toll, sapping strength from even the fittest contenders.

The first ascent was steady, but long, very long. 'Just around the corner and it's all down hill,' was a frequent call made at the water stops. The corner they spoke of never came. 'Why am I doing this?' ' I can't believe I paid DM 20 for this,' was running through many contenders' minds. At last onto a long open straight. The never-ending road, a vast heat trap, meant that the sun took its first victim. On the approach of the second peak, the shape of a limp body became clearer. Oh well, better push on. The second peak was even less forgiving than the first. As we rounded the corner at the base of the ascent, we began to wonder where the ropes and karabiners were. It seemed to go on forever. Finally it was 4km to go and it's all down hill from there on. A new lease of life for everyone as they bounded with the ease of mountain goats, down the unstable track which crumbled beneath every step. A local boy decided to tempt the runners into purchasing a cycle by taunting them as they ran. Finally the home straight, the finish line visible in the distance. The racing snakes giving encouragement to the normal runners.

Finished, a wide smile, plenty of fluids and a T-shirt to reward my accomplishment. Prize giving, congratulations to **Sgt** 'Mo' **Pay** who came eleventh over all, and also to **LCpl Berridge** who came in 12th and received first under 21 position. The Squadron team attained seventh position out of a possible 26.

The bus was silent on the way back. Only the driver could be heard grunting. His legs had taken a beating on the run, and would seize up occasionally whilst he was driving. Oh well who is ready for the TSG HALF MARATHON on 20 August…

GOOD NEWS TRAVELS FAST
Publish it in The WIRE
the Editor is always pleased to receive interesting articles

The Mikonjic Grad Mountain Half Marathon Team
Back Row (L-R): LCpl Saxton, Cpl Williams, Sig Schafer, LCpl Mallison, LCpl Gerrad, Maj Campbell-Black (OC)
Middle Row (L-R): Sgt Pay, LCpl Byane, LCpl Moffat, Sgt Laxenby, Sig Hardy
Front Row (L-R): LCpl Lane, Sgt Brown, Lt Howarth, Sig Preston

LCpl Berridgen collects the runner-up's trophy in the Under 21 race

QUARTERMASTERS DEPARTMENT
QM **Capt (QM) Pete McElwee**
RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Shaun Day**

The Department is well into the backloading phase of our tour on Op Palatine. Within the Banja Luka Metal Factory the Squadron's major mission is to withdraw all equipment and close down all Royal Signals manned Hill Top Sites (HTS) and implement the new Commercial systems provided by various civilian contractors. Project Molyneuex Phase I saw some 65 vehicles and 105 various equipment's and plant make the June sailing along with over 6000kgs of freight. The heat is on to get some 159 Green fleet vehicles and 45 pieces of plant onto the boat in September. To add to the organised chaos, the day to day running and life support provided to the BLMF and its 2000 transient occupants of varying nations continues, with the odd language problem, so if there are any Tech Sup Specs out there that can speak Dutch, Czech, Italian, Norwegian or Serbo Croat please let us know, we can manage with the Canadians, Aussies, Kiwis and the odd Geordie.

During this busy period we said a sad and fond farewell to **Sgt** 'Spike' **Hughes**, who we thank for his sterling work and wish him, **Sarah** and the girls all the best in Haverfordwest. We extend the hand of friendship to **Sgt** 'Scholly' **Christle** and 'Scott' **Martwitch** recently arrived from 1 ADSR, welcome to the family. During our deployment we have had a plethora of individual replacements from many cap badges and two Dutch Army soldiers, serving within the Department. We must thank them all, whole heartedly, for their assistance. Were it was not for these willing volunteers, from the Territorial Army or Reserves, the regular Field Army would be stretched even further so for your assistance we thank you.

The Commercial Project moves along with pace and **Cpl Dez Lang** has joined the team from CIT, he is currently sitting writing SSRs for some 350 lattice, 50 logan satellite phone terminals and seven containers full of IT equipment from PCs to Servers to racking and cabling. Once complete all equipment is to be signed over to the Dutch who will take over the deployable HQ for the MND. Overall the team is working hard and time is flying by. Sadly we will be the last Royal Signals Quartermasters Department deployed on mass to the BLMF so for those of you previously deployed here you will glad to know that you will not have to breath in the fumes and dust within the factory any more.

HAVE YOU RECENTLY MOVED OR BEEN POSTED?

DON'T FORGET TO LET US KNOW YOUR CHANGE OF ADDRESS, SO THAT YOU CAN STILL RECEIVE YOUR COPY OF The WIRE

MULTINATIONAL BRIGADE (CENTRE) HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (207)

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS
Sqn Comd **Maj Mark Roberts**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Mark Tivey**

This month, a special feature on the tour of 7 Armoured Brigade Headquarters and Signal Squadron (207) in Kosovo on Op Agricola 3. HQ MNB(C) is heavily augmented to cater for the nature of operations in Kosovo, it is now divisional size. All together the HQ MNB(C) site, including the Signal Squadron, is home to over 500 people, and of course the Squadron is responsible for it all. The communications and echelon responsibilities are wide and varied. To assist there is augmentation from other regular forces, TA and reservists. The Force Signal Squadron also includes EW and satellite comms detachments. The resulting unit is tri-service and diverse; it is a challenge, but a rewarding one. The Squadron has had its armoured headquarters in theatre and deployed several times. Maintaining and running these detachments was hard work, but life would not have been the same without them. Other commitments on the Squadron have included an HQ LAN, a telephone network, Internet access, commercial radio as well as the ubiquitous Ptarmigan and Combat Net Radio. Our predecessors in Kosovo will remember the university site well, but that has now been handed over to the UN in order that it can be used for something very important! HQ MNB(C) is now located in the Temporary Field Accommodation located in the site of the old VJ barracks Pristina. One could say many things about the accommodation, but it is not temporary and it is not field. Standards of accommodation are very good, or at least they were when we left. The three nights a week outdoor cinema, quiz nights, barbecues and karaoke nights have all been written into Camp SOIs in eager anticipation of our return to Pristina next summer. Over the last few months, the Squadron has witnessed the departure of many of its favourite rats; too many to mention, we wish them and their partners well in their new posts. The picture shows the new RSM, **WO1 (RSM) Mark Tivey,** taking over from **WO1 (RSM) Colin Milne** outside the TFA. **WO1 (RSM) Tivey** is smiling, as he had no idea what he was taking on!

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Adam Corkery**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Dave Sloane**

With our six month tour nearly over, the Troop is actively looking ahead to our return to Hohne. However, first a look back at Op Agricola 3 and our part in it. The role of the Troop has been to provide communications support to the Brigade Headquarters in the form of Combat Net Radio, Ptarmigan and Information Systems as well as maintaining two armoured headquarters, with one permanently on a short notice to move. With a Troop of 40 people, the individual roles have been extremely varied with everything from manning a computer help-desk to maintenance of the armoured headquarters with a myriad of jobs in between.

The Armour rolling through Pristina

New challenges arise daily; supplying communications for the Brigade reserve back to HQ MNB(C), backing up 2 RRF in house searches and the Scots DGs in patrolling are just a few examples. We have deployed on a number of operational test exercises during the tour, providing a break from the tasks within camp but also a vital way of maintaining our drills and war-fighting skills. Life continues to be full of activities right until the end with the RSIT team arriving in our last fortnight, a full headquarters deployment and then the small business of moving the Troop complete back to Germany before a well deserved summer leave.

ROVER TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Andy Hill**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Andy Buckle**

Having arrived in mid-February, Rover Tp has been dispersed in ten locations. One of the Troop's main functions was to provide nine Rear Link Detachments (RLD's) to support the Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian, Czech and the three Canadian ops rooms. These three-man teams provided SCRA(T) and secure VHF communications. In order to achieve all-informed comms, the Troop also controls the two hilltop sites of Goles and Suvi Bunar where we have Rebros and Centrals. The remainder of the Troop has remained at the Brigade Headquarters where they man Spec Task FFR's in support of Brigade taskings.

The Serb Engineering Faculty - 'home' for half the tour

How not to do it - Sig 'Magic' McDermott

In early May, the Brigade finally moved into the new TFA, allowing a greater control of our Troop's assets. The Spec Task crew became involved in many operations, providing secure Ptarmigan and VHF comms to the local commander. The Operations ranged from search ops to riot control. The Spec Task crew was also used to conduct recces for potential comms sites. These involved a lot of cross-country driving, which inevitably lead to one or two recovery tasks. Well done **Sigs McDermot** and **Muers** for your overnight stay in the field! The Troop has been largely made up of augmentees from 1 ADSR who have fitted in extremely well with the Squadron. We will be sorry to see you go when we return to Germany in August, but we're sure we will see you all again before you know it.

SUPPORT TROOP
QM **Capt (QM) Dave Wilson**
RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Eric Udell**

Arriving ahead of the main body of the Squadron, Support Tp took up residence in the 'Bread Factory' which was a couple of kilometers away from the University building where HQ MNB (C) was located. The first task was home improvements, as the location was particularly badly appointed. All of the individual sections of the Troop settled in well. They were found turning their hands to everything from the plumbing in of new showers, to the complete rewiring of the electrical infrastructure of the factory.

The month of May saw the long awaited move to the Temporary Field Accommodation, (very posh portacabins). The initial plan was to move the G3 Whizz Kids in - and then a month later - move the G4 Scum. Not a chance! Unbeknown to the Headshed the Troop moved before the Brigade and the transfer of location was seamless. The Troop's performance in respect of sporting achievements has been exceptional. The events that the Troop have been involved in include: the Norwegian 30km Endurance Race (The Viking Run), the Pristina 10km Road Race, the Batlavsko Half Marathon and of particular note, the Dover to Paris Charity Challenge which raised in excess of DM4000 for various charities.

The Pristina Road Run Team

The Troop has worked extremely hard since February and has received many plaudits during the tour. We are now looking forward to our imminent recovery to Hohne and being safely Reunited with our families.

Battlefield Tours
for
Regimental Associations, TA's & Serving Units
Regimental Battle Honour Tours 4 days **£149**
Ypres, Somme, Arras, Cambrai 3 days **£99**
Normandy & Arnhem 4 days **£149**
Tailor-made & Self Drive Itineraries
Galina International Battlefield Tours
40 Bridge Street Row Chester CH1 1NN
Tel: 01244 340777
Official Tour Operators to the Normandy Veterans Association

NEWS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

XV

HEADQUARTERS NORTHERN IRELAND AND 15 SIGNAL REGIMENT

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS
CO **Lt Col G. J. T. Rafferty**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) A. Balsdon**

HQNI AND 15 SIG REGT SWIMMING AND WATERPOLO
by WO2 (FoS) A. G. Jenkins

The time of year was upon us once more; we had trained hard and we were ready for the competitions to begin. The swimming and waterpolo season was a short sharp shock, with all three major unit competitions being completed in the space of just one month. As holders of all three major unit waterpolo trophies we were expecting some tough matches. The usual round of postings had seen the departure of some quality players; notably **WO1 (SMI) Shaw** who left to join AFC Harrogate. We had, however, been fortunate enough to persuade a few elder statesmen to don their old rubber trunks again, and our squad reached a high standard. The NI Championships took place on 9-10 May 2000. Unfortunately only three major unit teams entered and we won both competitions very convincingly.

ARMY UK SWIMMING AND WATERPOLO CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Army UK Championships were a different matter, with the waterpolo being held on the 13 June and the Swimming on the 14 June. Eight waterpolo teams had qualified and two leagues of four were established, playing a round robin system. The teams in our league were 21 Sig Regt, School of Electronic and Avionics Engineering (SEAE) and a Nomads team made up of the referees and officials. We played SEAE first and certainly hit the ground running! They were a very strong side who were extremely fit. This was our first really competitive match of the season and we gelled instantly, running out 8-1 winners with notable goal scoring performances from **WO1 Duncan Grassick,** GREN GDS and **WO2 (FofS) Tony Jenkins.** A comfortable victory over 21 Sig Regt and our place as League 'B' winners was assured. In the semi-final we played the runners up of League 'A' who were ATR Bassingbourn and again we managed a fairly comfortable victory. SEAE played AFC Harrogate in the other semi-final and ran out worthy winners to set up a final of HQNI and 15 Sig Regt v SEAE. Unfortunately we were unable to repeat our earlier performance and lost out by 7-5 despite notable goal keeping performances, including a penalty save by **Capt Mark Proctor,** INT CORPS. This meant that both SEAE and ourselves had qualified for the Army Finals.

The swimming proved to be 'an event too far' for our aging squad. Nine major units entered and the standard was very high. We finished a creditable sixth place with the one notable performance by **Capt Ian Hargreaves** who won the individual backstroke.

The Army waterpolo finals were held at RMAS on Monday 19 June 2000. The competition is meant to be between the top two teams from both the UK Army and Army Germany competitions. However, only 16 Sig Regt had made the journey from Germany so AFC Harrogate became the fourth team. The competition took the form of two semi-finals followed by a final. The semi-final line up was SEAE v AFC Harrogate and HQNI and 15 Sig Regt v 16 Sig Regt. The first game saw AFC produce an outstanding performance and they ran out 12-8 victors. Our semi-final was a closely contested match; the large pool at RMAS meant that fitness was always going to be paramount. We ran out 7-4 winners to set up a final against AFC Harrogate. The final proved to be a superb encounter with AFC Harrogate having the upper hand for the whole of the game until a stirring fight back in the final quarter saw us draw level at 7-7. This led to two extra periods of over-time. AFC Harrogate again took advantage and went 10-7 up after the first period. A spirited fight back during the second period saw us close to 10-9. However, it was not to be and that final goal eluded us. AFC Harrogate ran out worthy winners in what all agreed was one of the best finals in recent years.

So the season has now ended - unfortunately we have relinquished our hold on the Army Championship but we will be back again next year. As a final note our illustrious team captain, **Capt Chris Lamb** INT CORPS, is leaving us for pastures new. After three years at the helm he will be sorely missed and we wish him all the best for the future.

TUG O' WAR - *by Cpl Max Wall*

The Tug o' War season had a slow start with most of last years' 'pullers' having been posted. This left only myself **Cpl Max Wall**, **Cpl** 'Trigger' **Meeds, Cpl Dave Hill** and **Sig** 'Paddy' **Grills** from last year's team. However once **WO2 (SSM) Rob Dunsieth** took the helm as IC Tug o' War the interest level increased. The first real sign of interest was the Inter-Squadron Competition which was also a good opportunity to select a team for the Herfordshire County Show in Redbourn and the Princess Royal Show at Windsor. Unfortunately due to commitments at work we could only take a limited team with us which included new comers **WO2 (SSM) Rob Dunseith, Cpl Karl Hannah, LCpl Jim Quinn, LCpl Shaun Barton, LCpl Tony Wressel, LCpl Steve Boyd** and **LCpl** 'Mini Me' **Smith.** The new team held its own well on both occasions and it was good experience for all - at times it felt like we were water skiing rather than pulling due to the mountains of mud and rain that we were pulling in! However, we managed to beat 11 Sig Regt at the Windsor Show as well as getting a rare photo with **HRH The Princess Royal**. The next event took place at Thiepval Barracks at the Station Summer Fair with teams from 39 Inf Bde, 26 Sqn and two teams from 2 RMP. This time things looked a lot better with 15 Sig Regt winning the competition. Our final competition was the Northern Ireland Championships which was held at Omagh on 25 June 2000. We finished as Runners-Up - second to 4 R IRISH but still qualifying for the Army Championships. Unfortunately, once again due to commitments in Province this is one event we will not be attending but the team look forward to hopefully competing at the Braemar gathering in September.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj J. Mullender**
SSM **WO2 S. Russell**

COMMCEN TROOP - *by Sig Mallinson*

Farewell to **Sig Henson** who is off to 249 Sig Sqn, **Sig Huish** to 1 (UK) ADSR and **Sig Rodwell** and **Neesam** to 30 Sig Regt - the Troop will be a lot quieter and smaller without you.

This month Lisburn station held its annual Summer Fete and COMMCEN Tp took part by providing a Pitch and Putt Stall. All available COMMCEN personnel gathered early in the morning to set up the stall which offered alcoholic prizes for adults and sweets for the children. Whilst setting up we realised we were in stiff competiton with the Archery Stand that had set up at the end of our pitch. After we had set up the stall each of the Troop members had an attempt at chipping into the umbrellas - with little success! Some of the balls strayed resulting in a few near misses of innocent bystanders that had gathered at the archery stand! A few of the Troop members were very keen on winning a prize for themselves. **Sig Dave Green** spent about £20 on the stall without any success and **Sig Huish** was pushing for a prize when he hit a rather expensive car parked by the Archery Stand. Promotion of the stall involved **Sig Andy Cunningham** holding a bottle of whiskey, **Sig** 'Mally' **Mallinson** carrying a bottle of vodka and **Sig Dave Green** carrying a board with the details of our stall. There were also a few humorous moments when **LCpl** 'Nanny' **Bird** was smacked on the forehead by **Cpl Richie Evans** - he may be good at PT but he has no talent with a golf club. **LCpl** 'Nanny' **Bird** had to go to the Med Centre to get her forehead glued. A wayward ball hit by **SSgt** 'Icky' **Gratrick** struck **Sig Adam Ryan**; luckily he escaped with no injuries. Even though the weather was typical of a normal day in the Province raining all day, COMMCEN Tp managed to make some money for some very worthy charities.

COMMCEN TP and their PITCH & PUTT STAND
Cpl Richie Evans, Sig Adam Ryan, LCpl Sam Skyvington, Sgt Shameem Newman, Sig Mally Mallinson, Sig Dave Green, LCpl Nicky Bird, Sig Lynda Shields and Sig Huey Huish

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Jeremy Tod**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Downie**

SUPPORT TROOP

The Troop has seen a big changeover in hierarchy over the last few weeks. Welcome to all the new faces: **Capt Paul Griffiths, Capt Pete Kennedy, Capt Chris Gore, WO2 (SSM) Thorne,** and goodbye to the old: **Capt** 'Pineapple Rings' **Murphy, Capt** 'Chippy' **Carpenter, Capt Lamb, WO2 (SSM) Downie.** The soldiers within the Troop managed to get away on some good courses and sports recently despite the pressures of marching season. **LCpl James** and **LCpl Pullen** both attended a rigging course and **Cpl Deas** escaped to Blandford on the Royal Signals Golf Championships, but would not disclose his final position! In addition **LCpl Quinn** successfully completed a fork lift course recently. The Seniors v Juniors football game was won by the Seniors with a score of 8-1. The rumour within the Squadron was that the Juniors let the Seniors win to make them feel good. **LCpl Lafferty** even fell over and broke two of his ribs, having collided with the smallest man on the Seniors' team. The Squadron is in a state of shock since the new SSM arrived and introduced three sessions of PT a week. Support Tp maintain their morale on these arduous sessions just watching **Sgt Al Bolton** in his technicolour lycra cycling shorts. The Troop would like to say farewell to **LCpl James,** and **LCpl Lafferty** who are both off for two years hard labour in their respective TA posts. Their comradeship will be missed!

ECHO TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Fi Stewart**
Tp SSgt **SSgt (Supvr R) Paul Dunn**

Another busy period for Echo Tp, exaggerated by manning levels getting worse with many leaving and fewer arriving. As usual each watch has been trying to out-do the others with their activities during their days off. The best effort of recent months was Bravo watch who went on a three day parachuting expedition – thoroughly enjoyed by all. Alpha watch enjoyed a rain free and sunny day at Bangor on a fishing trip – well done to **LCpl Jo Saw** who beat all the blokes in catching the biggest fish! A big farewell to **Cpl Dave Hill** and his tribe who move on to JSSU Ay Nic, for some well deserved sunshine. How dedicated of him to arrive two months in advance of his family – just to make sure everything is in order! Goodbye to **Cpl** 'Shane' **Hodgson**, one of the longest serving members of the Squadron – good luck with the Royal Signals Presentation Team in Blandford. All the best to **LCpl** 'JC' **Smith** and **LCpl Matt Wooton-Jones,** both leaving us to discover the joys and tribulations of civvy street. Welcome to **Lt Stewart** and **SSgt (Supvr R) Rowlands** who have both recently arrived from 14 Sig Regt (EW). Also a busy time for the wives from Echo Tp - congratulations go to **Mrs Scanlan** and **Mrs Sharpe** on the births of **William** and **Stephanie**!

GOLF TROOP
Tech Adjt **Capt Ian Hargreaves**
FofS **WO2 (FofS) Tony Jenkins**
Supvr IS **WO2 (Supvr IS) George Murray**

Once again it is a busy period for the Squadron's technical and IT Support Troop. New equipment trials and the additional demands of the Marching Season have caused a very high level of activity for us. The 'busiest' Troop in The Province will be pushed even more to the limits after saying farewell to **WO2 George Murray, Sgt Richy Gathercole** (posted on promotion), also **Sgt Chris Warren, Cpl Geordie Cranston** and **Cpl Alex Jelly,** who have all decided to try their hand in civvy street. **Sgt Richie Cleminson** is posted to Blandford on his Foreman of Signals course. Five more technicians from the Workshops are studying hard and hoping to join him next year. Congratulations to **Sgt Phil McLeish** who has just been promoted and will command the Installation Technician Section; congratulations also to **Sgt Ryan Lang** on his promotion. Finally, some more great news for the Troop. The Troop will finally be getting rid of **Cpl Matt Williams, LCpl Lee Stafford** and **LCpl Gaz Stokoe** who have all passed their T1 Entrance exam and are awaiting their posting orders to Blandford.

CHEVIOT 2000 FELL RACE - *by Cpl Steve Price*

On the 17 June, **SSgt (Supvr R) Kev Fogg, Cpl Jay Aldred** and **Cpl Steve Price** from Delta Watch suffered a brief bout of insanity and took part in the Cheviot 2000 Fell Race. The 'race' consisted of 200 teams drawn from elements of the civilian emergency Services and armed services who, in teams of three, had to successfully orienteer 14 checkpoints over a distance of 22 miles encompassing the Cheviot Hills. Having undertaken the final part of our cutting edge training regime by carbo-loading on kebabs and Grolsch an early night was called for ready for the 0730hrs race start time!

Our finely tuned team reached the start line with seconds to spare, although with much evidence of the hairy country land dash by the road kill advert horning the bumper. As the starter shouted go, the grim reality that some people actually thought it was a race dawned on us! With little need to check the map and with our bergans ladening us down we followed the crowd to the first check point, a mere 5km away, however a daunting 800m up! **Cpl** 'Mountain Goat' **Aldred** had little difficulty negotiating the ludicrous gradient. I followed wondering what I was doing here only being on the watch for two weeks. Then came **SSgt** 'Plodder' **Fogg** checking that we hadn't dropped anything. We reached the first checkpoint with a sigh of relief only to remember we had another 13 to negotiate! Oh how I thanked my new Shift Staff Sergeant for this repeatedly during the day.

Cpl Aldred plodded around the course as if on an afternoon stroll, **SSgt Fogg** after a 'steady' start found some Duracell batteries after the first few checkpoints and told me to ensure I mentioned the numerous times that he broke into a jog/run. I myself, after putting in a strong first half came to realise that my pre-training should have included more pies as my kidneys screamed for nourishment. With thighs now like 'Garth', a feeling of achievement along with relief was felt by all completing the course, even more so upon seeing the final results as to all those who didn't complete it successfully. At the finish line the hot cup of tea with an unusual amount of sugar, was welcomed along with the large dish of pasta later on and some post race carbo-loading of the fluid variety during the England -v- Germany game.

Delta Watch on The Cheviot 2000 Fell Race

225 SIGNAL SQUADRON SUMMER BALL

The New Forge Country Club was the venue for this year's Summer Ball, held on 9 July 2000. A Caribbean theme had been chosen for the evening, which probably had something to do with it being the easiest and cheapest form of fancy dress. After a slight hitch with the transport, which involved an impromptu tour of Belfast for some of the guests, everyone arrived and was welcomed with a cocktail and flower garland. Everyone had done their bit with the costumes with **Capt Helen Murphy** out-doing everyone with her amazing Carmen Miranda head dress. She was, however, very upset when everyone actually thought she had come as Hilda Ogden! The entertainment for the evening was provided by the very un-Caribbean 'Bizarre Company' with **LCpl Lee Stafford** doing a sterling job as compere. Congratulations to **Sgt Al Bolton** and **Sgt Rich Cleminson** for winning the raffle and money tree respectively. The evening continued with a fabulous buffet provided by the New Forge and then on in to the early hours with the help of **Sgt Sarah Mathews** burning the wheels of steel! Thanks go to **SSgt** 'I'll just go on leave and then adventure training for the five weeks before the event' **Jacklin,** his trusty 2IC, **Sgt** 'No honestly, its no bother doing everything!' **Cleminson** and the rest of the committee for a superb night out.

233 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Richard Giles**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Rob Dunseith**

While the heads of sheds focused on the Marching Season, the normal tasks (ie monitoring Province wide communications) continued. The shenanighans out on the streets were disruptive for all those living here. Having extra troops on the ground has increased our work-load but life for the majority goes on as normal. The long anticipated move into the new building has been delayed while the contractors try to drain the water – it is more of a paddling pool than a comms construction. We have enjoyed some excellent Leaving Dinners for the many Seniors moving away, superbly hosted by the WOs and Sgts' Mess. One of the final tasks for **Maj Richard Giles** before he moves to MOD has been to skipper one leg of the Squadron Adventure Training Expedition. We wish **Richard, Tracey** and the children the best of luck in the future, and thank **Richard** for his hard work and long hours he has dedicated to the Squadron. It has been a busy tour, and he has contributed significantly to the restructuring of Province communications. He leaves a far more robust, structured Squadron than he joined. In his place we formally welcome **Maj Nick Walker**, who has had the benefit of doing his MSc here so is not completely new – we will have to be cunning if we want to bluff the new OC!

INDIA TROOP - *by LCpl J. Quinn*

Things are changing within India Tp. Hopefully our colleagues throughout the Squadron will have noticed that our days of coming last in Squadron sports are over. We were just pipped to the post by Rodeo, sorry Romeo Tp in the Inter-Troop Potted Sports thanks to **SSgt Craig Marlowe** failing to carry the baton (ash pole) correctly in the 4x400m relay. The tug-of-war was a surprise to us all - we lost miserably thinking we would do well having half the Regimental team within our Troop. At the moment the Troop is seeing a lot of departures and a lot of arrivals, so the social side of life has never been busier. Congratulations to **Sgt**

McArthur on his promotion. The remaining personnel would like to say a fond farewell to the following: **Cpl Chris Kearsley,** off to 'Civ Div'; **SSgt Si Graham** to 21 Sig Regt; **SSgt John Ramsdale, SSgt Eddie** 'I love life' **Jacobs** to Italy; **WO1 Ray** 'No you can't have a sports afternoon I'm working' **Neal**; **Sig Jamie Goulty** to 12 Mech Bde, **Capt Gareth Oliver** to 16 Sig Regt and finally to our brilliant old Troop OC **Monty** 'The Dog' **Oliver!** India Tp says hello to: **SSgt John Heaton**; **Cpl** 'I cant believe it's not' **Butterfield**; **Cpl Billy Beaumont**; **Cpl Ross Menzies**; **Lt Tim Grey** (filling Monty's slot) and finally a big welcome back to **WO2** 'Q' **McHugh.** Q loves this place so much he's decided to come back and bless us with his scouse humour, (great!).

ROMEO TROOP

First of all we would like to congratulate NIEW, on inheriting our advanced driver section (the Surveillance section). They will now come under the command of NIEW at the end of July, leaving the remainder of the Troop to carry on with its normal taskings. Goodbyes go out to **Sgt** 'Sandy' **Sanderson** and his family, who are moving across the road to JCU(NI) and **Cpl Gordon Dunderdale**, his wife **Kath** and son **Louis**, who are moving to 11 Regt EOD, in search of pastures greener and things that go bang. Goodbye also to **WO2 Stu Meldrum, Jayne** and the kids who are off to sunny Blandford and to our resident hairdresser **LCpl Jane Barkshire** who is off to sort out leave passes and flight details for the penguin population in JCU(FI). Finally congratulations and goodbye to **Cpl Kev Joyce** who is promoted on posting to sunny Cyprus - all the best to you and your family. The Hellos go to **Sgt Steve** 'Taff' **Hamblin, Sgt Steve Mayell**, wife **Lucy** and the boys. Also to **Cpl Dave Weatherstone**, **Helen** and children and last but not least **LCpl Kev Alford** and wife **Kelly.** Congratulations go out to **Sgt Justin Woollen** and wife **Karen**, on the birth of their baby daughter **Ciara**, and also to the newly promoted **WO2 (FofS) Jim O'Donnell**.

Despite all comings and goings, the Troop has been engaged in its normal daily taskings, which were increased over the celebratory season recently. Even so, **Cpl Craig Richardson** and **LCpl Nick Jenkins** were able to compete in a local half marathon, raising nearly £150 for charity. The farewell to Surveillance Section was marked by a Fun-Day on the ranges, consisting of a pistol and clay pigeon shooting competition. The Troop was split down into teams of four for the competition and the results were as follows; Pistol Best Shot - **Sgt Steve Mayell**. Shotgun Best Shot - **Sgt Steve Mayell,** Overall Best Team went to Team Six **(Sgt Justin Woollen, Cpl Nick Clift, Cpl Tony Davies and LCpl Nick Jenkins).** The worst shot of the day was held jointly by **SSgt Steve Bartleet** and **LCpl Mat Thomas** who both scored 49 on the pistol and just 1 point on the clay pigeon shoot. The day's proceedings were completed with a BBQ and a few sociables in the evening. For this, many thanks from the rest of the Troop go to **Cpl Steve Armstrong** for organising the days activities, **Sgt's Justin Woollen** and **Steve Hamblin** for doing the BBQ and **LCpl's** 'Bede' **Burrows** and **Si Wellstead** for running the bar.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Elisabeth McLellan**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Bri Gillies**

It has been another busy month in TM Tp with the Brinton withdrawal and other ongoing tasks as well as keeping up the sporting excellence of the Troop with members participating at Army standard in Fencing, Shot put and Discus, as well as lots of new arrivals. Welcome to **Cpl Wood** again, returning after flying a desk in NCC Tp also **LCpl Rice**, **LCpl Lohse**, **LCpl French** and **LCpl Fox** fresh from the factory and **LCpl** 'Mary Doll' **Pillans** on return from maternity leave. Congratulations are also in order for **Cpl** 'Spike' **Milligan** on promotion to Sgt, **LCpl** 'Tanya' **Ballard** promoted to Corporal and **Cpl Hannah** on completing his RSJCC. Also **Cpl Smith** and **Cpl Walsh** on completing their arduous EFP1.

SQUADRON SUMMER CAMP

This year the Squadron Summer Camp took place over a two-week period in the nether regions of Scotland based around Mount Bendonich. At 0600hrs on Monday 17 July 2000 there was a very motley collection of people in all states of morale from 'ready to sign off' all the way up to 'no morale at all'. After a quick head count (one each in most cases) the two mini buses were loaded up and were off to the ferry port in plenty of time to make the silly o'clock boat. Most people had packed their bags full of warm kit - imagine the shock when not only did the sun show its face but stayed out all week! So trousers and jumpers were gleefully changed for T-shirts and shorts. It was not long after this that the first midges came out to play with us. No problem we thought, however these were followed in short order by what appeared to be every midgy in Scotland, and after much slapping and swinging of arms we adopted the tried and tested method of standing next to someone who was smoking!

The intrepid participants were split into four groups to cover the different activities of mountain biking, sailing, canoeing and hill walking over the week. **SSgt Brian** 'Sleep Walker' **Gillies** ran the mountain biking, he turned up on his many thousand pounds swish bike to issue us with the hired bikes. Unfortunately three of these were classed as unusable, so it took much swapping and borrowing of bikes before we were eventually ready to start and risk life and limb. The hill walking was run by **Sgt Micky** '0/10' **Mann**, and the highlight of this activity featured going through the eye of 'The Cobbler' which is a hole at the top of a mountain that you can climb through. The 60ft drop convinced more than a few people that they didn't really want to. Sailing the high sea's in a 35ft boat was **Maj Richard** 'skipper' **Giles's** game. All was well until the three-metre depth alarm sounded, when he turned from relaxed to very hyper active and worried.

Maj 'Skipper' Giles and crew

Each group was made up of people from mixed abilities and fitness levels. Unfortunately this nearly caused two of the novice mountain bikers to have heart attacks! **LCpl Danny Tutton** and **Sig Michelle Rayner** were under the watchful eye of **SSgt Brian Gillies** who at one point was offering kind words of wisdom on a particularly steep down hill section. **LCpl Adie Fields** then came flying down the hill on his multi thousand pound bike straight between the pair without attempting to slow down, and this caused them both to fall off into ditches! On one evening a night of entertainment was arranged for us at a local pub with free food, beer and even Karioake. After a few quiet beers some 'reluctant' singers decided to perform. Chief amongst these was **Cpl Si** 'in the style of a club singer' **Mason** who impressed everyone with his singing and chat up techniques, he had to work hard as he was wearing T-shirt, shorts, flip-flops and shades. Even though there was the expected reluctance at having such early starts a great time was had by all on summer camp. A big thank you must be said for all the people who worked so hard to organise it. A special thank you must go to **Sgt Paul Alfer** who booked the sunshine!

PRINCESS ANNE DAY 'POTTED SPORTS' COMPETITION

28 June was Princess Anne Day, and what better way to celebrate the day of the Colonel in Chief of the Royal Corps of Signals than with an Inter-Troop Sports Competition between all of the Troops in 233 Sig Sqn. The Competition was organised by **LCpl Mick Partridge**, and the events included: 'Crab Football', Tug of War, 'Shooting Baskets', a Jerry Can carry and a Relay Race. The first event was Crab Football, which I'm sure was just a way to clean the sports hall Floor. There were a few dirty bottoms after that one! The Tug of War was next and India Tp, who usually have a good Tug of War team, didn't do as well as expected. TM Tp on the other hand, did surprisingly well. The 'Basket Shoot' followed and then came the Jerry Can Carry, in which **WO2 (FofS) Gorman** participated, looking a sight running around in circles, carrying two full Jerry Cans! The last event was the Relay Race, which was basically a 4x400m Relay with a difference. The baton was an 'Ashpole', which had to be carried horizontally in one hand. **SSgt** 'Bri' **Gillies** ran the first lap for TM Tp, and they were in the lead by the third. **LCpl Lee Khair** ran the final lap for TM Tp after being quickly rescued from his guard duty! Ultimately TM Tp won the competition, but a good time was had by all and we all then retired to the bar!

DON'T BE DISSAPPOINTED!
THE CLOSING DATE FOR ARTICLES FOR DECEMBER'S *WIRE* IS - THIS OFFICE, 15 OCTOBER

3 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (203)

Sqn Comd **Maj D. B. Warne**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) A. M. Maxted**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

The Squadron has been busy over the last few months with many of the hierarchy changing over. So we will start at the beginning. February 2000 - Handover/takeover of Regimental Sergeant Major.

Farewell to WO1 (RSM) Stu Cheslett
Welcome to WO1 (RSM) Andy Maxted

The Squadron is now returning to normality after a busy three weeks supporting the Brigade over the Drumcree period. SHQ have now moved into their new office at Brigade Headquarters. The Squadron has seen a change of Squadron Commanders and we say farewell to **Maj S. K. MacRostie** and his family and welcome to **Maj D. B. Warne** and his family

A big turnout for the farewell to Maj MacRostie
(they're just round the corner, honest!)

Handover/Takeover - Maj MacRostie to Maj Warne

OPERATIONS

The Operations teams were as busy as ever in the run up to Drumcree. They have also seen a change of personalities. We say farewell to **WO2 (FofS) Mick Cowie** and wish him all the best. We would like to welcome **WO2 (YofS) Steve White** and **WO2 (FofS) Jim Ross** and wish them both a successful tour here.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Andy Parfitt**
Tp SSgt **SSgt R. Wallace**

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

A warm welcome to the temporary Troop Commander, **Capt Parfitt**, newly arrived from completing his degree at Shrivenham. He's only Troop Commander until October when he takes over as 2IC Squadron. Welcome also to **Sgt Andy Lloyd** and family from 16 Sig Regt, **LCpls** 'Adie' **Bennett** from Cyprus, **Tony Ramwell** from 20 Bde and **Nick Watson** from the factory. Farewells go to **Sgt Gary Mathieson** who is off to Cyprus on promotion, **Cpl** 'Tosh' **Pope** who goes to 30 Sig Regt also on promotion and **Sig Albert Finney** who is going to Civvie Street. We would all like to offer our congratulations to **Cpl** 'Si' **Link** and **Cpl Don Garner** on their selection for promotion to Sergeant.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Lord**
Tp SSgt **SSgt R. Wallace**

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

As you fellow *WIRE* readers have not heard from us for such a long time you will not be aware of all the comings and goings within the Troop, so here goes.

Farewells to: The Troop would like to say farewell and good luck to **Sgt** 'Billy' **Boston, Cpl** 'Gaz' **Hobson** and **Cpl** 'Dean' **Morgan** whom have all deserted the Troop for a so called better life in Civ Div. Other Troop losses have been **LCpl** 'Moggsie' **Morris** to 259 Sig Sqn, **LCpl** 'lad' **Pearce** to 243 Sig Sqn, **LCpl** 'How High?' **Stainer** (Jiz) to 252 Sig Sqn and last but by no means least **LCpl** 'Para Rigger, Charge 9, Doggsie' Barker to ATR Arborfield.

Hellos and Welcome to: The Troop would like to welcome into it's Fraternity the following geezers: **2Lt Lord**, straight from the officer factory as the new Troop Commander, **Cpl** 'Si' **Hurst** and family from 249 Sig Sqn, **Cpl** 'Ed' **Chwieseni** from 21 Sig Regt, **LCpl** 'IDT' **Good** from the Tech production line, **LCpl** 'Matt' **Dawson** and family from 252 Sig Sqn, **LCpl Murray** 'With an A' and family from 232 Sig Sqn.

EVENTS

Firstly we as a Troop would like to offer our congratulations to the following people, **A/SSgt** 'lad' **Noble, Sgt** 'Lee' **Calvert** and **Sgt** 'Gaz' **Mathieson** for all coming off the Sergeant to Staff Sergeant promotion board. The same again to **LCpl** 'Matt' and 'Mickey' **Dawson** for the birth of their first child, a baby Rigger called **Kayla-Jayne.**

The Troop has had an influx of Signallers who were formally 15 Sig Regt Systems FRT, and now are being highly trained in the art of sqiggley, up and downy waves instead of on off stuff. As of the 1 May 2000 they came under the very big protective wing of **FofS Cowie**. These newly trained, half Rigger trained Techs are as follows, **Cpl** 'Jase, I will climb one day' **Craddock, Cpl** 'Matt Failed Rigger' **Cree, Cpl** 'Oscar I want out of here' **Searle** and **Cpl** 'Dave only rigger' **Knox.** Welcome aboard lads!

The Troop were recently let loose in Scotland for a three day 'Andrew' Course in Dumfries. This course, apart from showing us how to live like kings in a four star hotel (cheers AO), allowed us to see how things are done by our counterparts in the real world, not as in our stone-age case. As usual a few stars came out to shine, hey **Sig** 'Jim' **Wright** who insisted he would show all the other guests in this expensive hotel how to behave in the dining room. Fag in gob, Celtic top on, and two pints in his hands walking back to our table which was hidden away in a back room well out of the way of all the other paying guests. All credit to the hotel though, they got their own back by trying to charge two of the crew for room service. The two very embarrassed lads who won't be named (**Cpl** 'Bones' **Balkharn** and **Cpl** 'Sean' **Hunter**) had to blagg to the party leader, a **SSgt Ian Noble** that it was a load of rubbish and that they would never dream of doing anything like that, especially as you told us not to Staff. One thing they were insistent on, was that we paid the bill.

Hotel Receptionist - 'Sir that will be £1400 please'
SSgt Ian Noble - 'Do you take VISA?'
Hotel Receptionist - 'Yes sir, but not yours'.

How about that then Staff, rescued by a Tech Cpl's bank account with a spare £1400 sat doing nothing in it? (wallet).

ARE YOU READING YOUR OWN COPY OF *The WIRE*?

SSgt Noble and his team

The Drumcree silly season has been upon us with the section being split between Armagh and Portadown. The hard workers, **Sgts Mathieson** and **Tribbeck, Cpls Balkham, Chwieseni, Cree Knox, Hunter** and **Pope, LCpls Bennett, Good** and **Watson** and **Sigs Brock, Finney, Pyrah** and **Wright** spent the Drumcree period in Armagh. Their role was to cover all the sites within the TAOR. The Portadown crew of **Sgts Calvert** and **Lloyd, Cpls Birch, Craddock, Hurst** and **LCpls Dawson** and **Murray** were responsible for all repairs within camp. The Armagh crew worked a 7-day week without any barbecues (unlike the Portadown crew) and achieved a lot of worthwhile results with continuing maintenance and projects. The highlight of the period occurred when one of the Forward Repair Teams was deployed to a site that had a fault reported. When they arrived, they discovered that the hut had been petrol bombed. All they could do was to rescue the kit and attempt to bring it back to life in the workshops, which unfortunately failed. The Portadown crew were much quieter and had very few problems, except with the injuries sustained playing 5-a-side football.

B SHIFT

Departures - Sig 'Chris' **Moore, Sig** 'Fatboy' **Marshall** - A fond farewell for two outstanding members of the COMMCEN and good luck to them and their families in civvy street. The local 'Chinky' would also like to extend their regret for a sad loss of **Sig Marshall** they are now looking at a way to supplement the income that he gave them.

Arrivals - Cpl Sean 'Mad Dog' **Hunter** from 1 (UK) ADSR, **Cpl** 'AK' **Akkulugadu** from 3 Div, **LCpl Matt** 'Little Hitler' **Page** from 2 Sig Regt and **Sigs Ruston** and **Squires** from Depot.

Credited Performances - All members of Syscon and the COMMCEN would like to extend their congratulations to **Sig Lee Shaw** on his creditable performance in the NISAAM Competition, unfortunately **Sig Shaw** injured himself during the events and was therefore unable to attend the forthcoming Cadre Course. Sympathy is with **LCpl Matt Page** who was also taken off the Cadre Course after falling down a set of steps on the day he was informed that he would be attending the Cadre Course. 'Lucky Break'.

C SHIFT

'C' Shift 3 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn would firstly like to welcome **Cpl** 'Don' **Garner, Sig** 'Richie' **Squires.** We would like to wish all the best to **LCpl** 'Dicko' **Dickenson** and his wife **Penny** on their posting to 20 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn. Last but not least farewell to **Sig** 'Getting down' **James Brown** and his wife **Samantha** on his posting to Lisburn.

SYSCON/COMMCEN

It was that time of year again for us to vacate our comfortable accommodation in Armagh and gather together to live in a single room in Portadown. There were exceptions to this though, as some people managed to worm their way into some of the pads. The most notable of these were **Cpls** 'Don' **Garner** and 'Si' **Link**, who became house Corporals for the BTLO, **SSgt Carl Hindson.** The other exception was **SSgt Bob** 'Bushtuckerman' **Wallace**, who in keeping with his usual character, decided to basher up outside his office. Jumping onto this financial opportunity, **Cpl Dave** 'Butch' **Tweddell, Sigs Lee** 'No License' **Shaw** and **Richie** 'Who am I?' **Squires**, decided to make up a sign that **Bob** 'Bushtuckerman' **Wallace**, was homeless and in need of financial support for his wife and two children. They also supplied him with some refreshments in case he became peckish during the night. Drumcree 2000 ran very smoothly and with few problems to tax our experienced team and a big vote of thanks goes to our operators for their professional attitude and dedication to supporting the Brigade Staff.

SUPPORT TROOP

QM **Maj Payet**
RQMS **WO2 Strudwick**

The Troop has been very busy as normal. The MT has been running a Road Safety Campaign and Drive Alive Exercise, which finished in the Squadron bar with drinks and a BBQ! Both the MT and QMs took part in the NISAAM held at Ballykinler. **Sgt Steele**, 'Team Leader' had a week out in the sun with the Squadron team getting a sun tan, and a good week's shooting! The QMs have just finished its board of officers where all went well. The Troop are now looking forward to yet another Drumcree and then adventure training on the Isle of Wight. In the QM's own words:

'You work hard. You play hard or I will kill you!'

Hellos - LCpl 'Daz' **Owens** from 1 Div, **Cpl** 'Gaz' **Harris** from AFCEM and **Cpl John Blowes** from 14 Sig Regt

Farewells - Cpl Si Ferrer who is off to 14 Sig Regt. Also to **Cpl Paul Gaddas** who has moved all the way upstairs to the Training Wing. Well done **Paul!**

Resettlement almost civvies - LCpl Andy Nunns, Sig 'Albert' **Finney, Sig Phil Wise, Rfn Mick Cambridge**

All the very best to the lads about to join civ div - Good luck!

With the little matter of Drumcree to keep us entertained for a couple of weeks and the normal day to day tasks we have to carry out, Support Tp has been very busy. The Troop split into two for the marching season with half of the QM's Department working in Portadown providing essential services to the front line troops, by the way could the RQMS tell me if there is a copy of 101 Dalmatians available.

The MT also had a section working in Portadown providing the team to cover the Mobile Sucking Unit duties or otherwise known as the portaloo boys. The team comprised of **SSgt Frank Crowhurst, Cpl** 'Pat' **Paterson, LCpl** 'Daz' **Owens, Sig Stevie Brown, Sig Andy Hall** and **Pte** 'Pat' **Jennings**. All the remaining members of the Troop were kept busy in Armagh. What with moving offices and all the other short notice tasks they kept getting. I'm surprised they managed to stick to the two can rule. Mention must be made of **Cpl** 'I am the only Pioneer in the Sqn' **Thomas** for mastering Colin McCrae Rally 2 in such a short amount of time. We also had our chefs scattered around the two locations who did a sterling job in providing the best packed lunches the army has every seen! Keep up the good work and same again for the range days, 'I think not'.

Other activities that deserve a mention are the team from the Troop that entered Trail Walker 2000. It consisted of **RQMS Andy Strudwick, Cpl John Blowes, LCpl** 'Taffy' **James** and **Pte Stevie Wilkinson.** A very good effort was made by all with the team coming 80th overall. Also we would like to congratulate **LCpl Stevie Kite** on winning the best driver award and being part of the best team in the MT (we would not be biased) run 'Safe and Skilled Driving' competition.

The Troop would like to say some hellos firstly to **Cpl** 'Alex' **Higgins** and **Sig** 'Happy' **Gilmour** all from units unknown to the writer. Goodbyes go out to the QM, **Maj** 'Fred, touch the Jet Ski and I will kill you' **Payet** who is on his way to sunny Cyprus, no I mean Tidworth, only joking Sir. Also they go to **Sgt John Leadbeatter**, off to HQNI and last but not least **LCpl Wayne Rickard** who has gone to 11 EOD Regt. Good luck to you all. Finally congratulations must go to **Cpl** 'Pat' **Paterson** and **LCpl** 'Oz' **Osborne** on gaining promotion to Sergeant and Corporal respectively.

NISAAM 2000 - *by Sgt Danny Steele*

Out of 100 personnel I was the one nominated to train and lead the Squadron team at NISAAM. It was a difficult task to organise a team, given that everyone was on 'operational' requirements (even though Drumcree commences in July), in the month preceding the competition, I had no fewer than seven changes in the team with people going on courses, leave, etc, etc - the team wasn't actually finalised until two days before the competition: myself (team captain), **Cpl Bremner** (weapons instructor), **LCpl** 'Ginge' **Owens, Pte Wilkinson** (AGC) and **Sig Shaw** (a late volunteer). The competition consisted of four days' shooting in beautiful, warm weather (strange for NI) at Ballykinler. There were teams from all Units present in NI (including ones which had more than two days in which to practice) and the competition was well contested. Due to the Unit's 'operational' requirements, my team went out and gave it their best effort -especially in the 'March and Shoot' in very hot conditions - the hottest day so far this year. Unfortunately I wasn't able to enter this event as I am currently suffering an injury caused at 'Tough Guy 2000'. We did our best, and after all, its the taking part that counts……

ROVER GROUP A PERSONAL REFLECTION

by LCpl Bruce Morrison

The Brigadier's Rover Group was brought together from all parts of the Squadron for the Drumcree period. I had to get used to carrying weight again - as Radio Operator I have to carry three radios, spare batteries and ancillaries. It started off quite slowly, with only a few disturbances and some stone throwing. It didn't take long for the tempo to increase, with a parade every night. The Commander, **Brig Graham** decided on a key approach, which resulted in only the Bodyguard and myself following him around like sheep. As he is a very fast walker and this meant that I was soon 'hanging' whilst attempting to keep up. There were particular problems when trying to get over the wire obstacles as I ended up having to get help from the Brigadier. This caused tremendous amusement among the press, who took great pleasure in photographing my predicament. Whilst all this was happening, the vehicle party were sat on their bottoms doing the bare minimum. **Sgt** 'Rob' (captain admin) **McCorkell** only bothered to get out of the vehicle once we were back on camp, which left **Cpl Paul Gaddas** to run the show. Things went seriously wrong for me when C-in-C Land, **General Jackson**, came for a visit to the church. This meant a feeding frenzy for the media which resulted in my face appearing on BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Sky news which, considering we were fined a slab each time you appeared on TV, meant I was well out of pocket. Once the Crowd Control Obstacle was in place, the fires, blast bombs, fireworks, stones, ball bearings and, at one point, golf balls, came across the wire on a regular basis. One of the Rovers even had it's windscreen shattered by a ten year old throwing bricks as we were driving back to camp through one of the local estates.

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

Sqn Comd **Maj A. R. Knott**
RSM **WOI (RSM) S. M. Lockwood**

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

It is with much regret that the Squadron bid farewell to **Maj Nick Borrill**, who with his wife **Chris**, has supported the Unit so well over, the past two years. We all hope they enjoy their next posting to RMCS Shrivenham and wish them well for the future. Welcome to **Maj Andy Knott** who has moved across from JCU(NI), swapping jeans and a T-shirt for the more military olive green. We also say goodbye to. **WO1 (FofS)** 'Sid the Snake' **Sideras** departing for JCU(NI) on promotion. Well done and farewell, the calming influence you had on the Ops Team can never be replaced. Not while the Yeoman is still here anyway.

'I'm not too sure about this uniform lark Nick, although my beret IS better moulded than yours.' Maj Andy Knott on taking over the Squadron

A welcome is extended to **WO2 (FofS)** 'War Dwarf' **Cook** replacing 'Sid', arriving during the busiest marching season of the year. Due to his unending visits into the SYSCON, the guys thoughtfully lowered the camera so that more than the top of his head was visible. The Squadron would also like to welcome, on attachment from 15 Sig Regt, **SSgt Richmond** who replaces **SSgt McIntyre** as the BOTLO.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Richardson**

OPERATIONS SECTION

As always Ops Section has seen many changes in recent months, along with being involved in extra-curricular activities such as marquee erecting and litter sweeping. Initially congratulations are given to **Cpl Dave Rimmer** and **Cpl Tony King** on recently coming off the Sergeants' board, your gain will be our loss. Well done also, to **Sig Ireson** for obtaining his stripe at last, it sits well. The Section imparts a warm welcome to the following new arrivals to the SYSCON environment: **Cpl Matt Delaney, Sig Kate Griffith, Sig Billy Wallace, Sig** 'Grommit' **Philips** and **Sig** 'Cunning' **Fox**. A welcome also goes to **LCpl Andy Nolan**, who married **Pte Sarah Booker** last month, congratulations. Rover Group would like to welcome **LCpl Martin Kennie** and **LCpl Paul Howard**, who have joined the Group as the new Bde Comd Rad Ops and bid farewell to **LCpl Kev Brown** who left the Army in June. The Section would like to wish **LCpl** 'Hop-a-long' **Moran** a speedy recovery and are looking forward to seeing her back in SYSCON tripping everyone up with her pot. Finally a fond farewell goes to **Cpl** 'Tank' **Wharrier** who is leaving the Province to take up a post with RADEX Tp in Blandford. We wish you the best of luck for the future.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE SECTION

The last few months have seen several new faces arrive in the TM side of the Troop The section would like to extend a warm welcome to **Sgt** 'Maddog' **McAdam, Cpl Jools Roberts** and **LCpl** 'G' **Uppal**, who have joined the FRT, and also to **LCpl** 'Scott' **Tomlin**, recently posted to the Rigging Team. There is also a big welcome back to **Sig Billy Ellam**, who after signing off in the Unit, shortly before being posted, left on pre-post leave and was re-called to the Squadron to finish his time here, rather than in Germany. A sad farewell is also bestowed on SSgt 'Rennie' **McIntyre** has decided to give up his afternoons in the gym and undertake some proper work. His large presence is warmly welcome in his new role as Troop Staff Sergeant and sailing guru. Congratulations are in order for **LCpl Ali** 'The Ginger Whinger Warrior' **Temple** on his promotion to Corporal and to **LCpl Tim Davies** on his impending marital plans - the boys are just waiting for you to name the day. Finally the Section would like to give its congratulations but also say goodbye to **Cpl** 'Piggy' **Lee-Davis** who is leaving on promotion to Sergeant with 259 Sig Sqn. Well done and good luck.

RECENT TROOP EVENTS

The Troop had to put in a months hard work. in preparation for the marching season. The'Techs, FRT and Riggers were sent all over the Bde area of operations by **Yeoman Brudenall** installing, repairing and maintaining communications assets. **Sgt Michael Jones** nearly disappeared up his own exhaust with the number of taskings but coped extremely well under increasingly difficult circumstances. The return of Broadway and Templar Towers to the Housing Authorities required a lot of work by TM section. All comms equipment had to be withdrawn during a hectic couple of days.

Rover Group conducted their monthly training in conjunction with the Brigade Public Order Training. They were kept in role as Rover Group for OC D company, 9 Royal Irish Regiment and had to face the wrath of the 40 Commandos. **LCpl** 'Killer' **Kennie** was the winner of the day, with one Marine down with a split open head, courtesy of some over zealous swinging of a baton stick'. As **LCpl Jim Bowers** was heard to remark 'They're not small guys are, they? Each time we hit them, they get back up and run at us again, and don't even seem to notice the blood!' **Sgt Paul Parkes** and **Cpl Gordon McWilliams** had a marvellous collection of bruises due to the somewhat worrying decision of the Group to take the battering like men and not wear the protective padding. However, a successful days training was had by all and the rumours did not reach the other members of the Troop who were deploying the next day **Cpl Rik Sheriff** had a testing time trying to control 1RGJ as Civpop among an F Company 9 Royal Irish base line. Both he and **LCpl Emma Dignall** threw themselves wholeheartedly into the situation, escaping without major injury.

Well done to all the shift workers in the COMMCEN/SYSCON for coping so well during the recent busy weeks. Their work had been increased by the amount of incidents being reported in the Brigade area and their diligence and professionalism has not gone unnoticed. The Troop are now entering a fortnight of relative calm before August's events. To see how.they fare, watch this space.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt G. Maddison** RLC

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The OC Troop/AO/WO/QM/Supervising Officer has finally put his cards on the table and left the Army. **Maj Eddie Spence** RDG has moved to 40 Sig Regt as a PSAO; yes the hardened Cavalryman has seen the error of his ways and joined the Royal Corps. We are delighted to have him in our ranks and hope his transition is 'Swift and Sure'. Into his shoes has ably stepped **Capt Gail Maddison** RLC, who joins the Unit on a two year stint as the AO. The Squadron welcome her and hope her in-tray never overflows.

REGIMENTAL QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

The Dept would like to say farewell to **Pte Faye Edwards** who has recently been posted to 16 Sig Regt. Her presence in the stores was as refreshing as an oasis in the middle of the Sahara! The Dept has been busy recently, coping with a lengthy and complex Board of Officers, keeping the whole Squadron occupied when not carrying out normal daily taskings. The majority of checks went quite smoothly due to the diligence and care taken by all the account holders in keeping the books up to date, so well done to you all. Huge congratulations are extended to **Sig Pack** and his wife **Rachel**. on the birth of their second baby boy **William**. Unfortunately this now means that **Sig Pack** must give up his beloved Mini and purchase a more family orientated car. So if anyone is interested ... ...

MOTOR TRANSPORT

The boys and girls in the MT bid a fond farewell to **Sgt Neil Shaw** who left the Brigade on promotion to join FIU. His replacement **Sgt Andy Eley** will be entering the fray in the next few weeks.

CLOSURE OF 39 INF BDE MESS

On 31 July the 39 Inf Bde Mess closed its doors for the final time and all its members moved into the Station Mess. The closure was not without its rewards, two local charities, Lagan Valley Maternity Unit and Lisburn Station Creche, both received cheques for £1000.

Where are the other nurses, moans Sgt Richmond as Lagan Valley Maternity Wing complete their Millenium Project to buy a Mobile Premature Baby Incubator

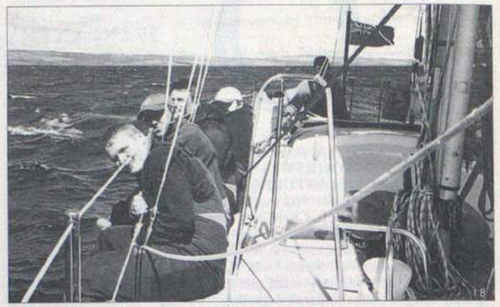
Lisburn Station Creche receiving £1000 from 39 Inf Bde WOs & Sgts' Mess, The children look less than thrilled!

Congratulations must go to **SSgt Don Anderson** and **Sgt Michael Jones** for the clinical way in which they dealt with the Mess accounts during the closure period. Thank you to **WO1 (GSM) Bill Mott** WG who has welcomed the 39 Inf Bde Mess members into his Mess and made everyone feel welcome. His opening gambit on the first meeting of 'You are only as good as your outside areas' sums up our move!

EXERCISE GERONA FINN 15 - 28 MAY 2000

Ex Gerona Finn was an Offshore Sailing Expedition for members of 39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn taking place in and around the waters off N. Ireland and the West Coast of Scotland. The aim of the Exercise was to introduce novices to Offshore Sailing as well as identify students for further training at JSASTC Gosport. The expedition was split into two phases, with a crew change around being incorporated after the first week.

Phase 1: After arriving at Bangor Marina, the yacht was victualed and all gear stowed prior to the obligatory safety brief conducted by our able skipper, **SSgt** 'Terry' **McIntyre**. We then set sail for Portpatrick in *Gerona*, our vessel and home for the forthcoming week. After the crew had fine tuned their 'man overboard' drills, we came alongside at Portpatrick and treated ourselves to the delights of the local hostelries. Due to the tidal conditions we could not depart for Girvan until early afternoon. This suited the crew as an Easterly gale had passed over us during the night and the previous evening's entertainment had left us all a little worse for wear! We set sail in a decreasing Force 6. The gale, however, had left the sea a little choppy to say the least! This gave **Sig** 'Ships Cat' **Richardson** and **Maj** 'Charlie' **Herbert**, the mate, an ideal opportunity to feed the fishes!



Despite the fine weather Sig Richardson still grasped the railings and hoped that the rocking would stop

Day 3 involved a 35 mile passage further up the coast to Largs. Despite several showers, the sun finally shone and raised the crew's morale. The following morning we slipped Largs and headed Northwest for Tarbert via the Kyles of Bute. The crew was introduced to 'Rules of the Road' and put into practice our tacking skills as we got involved in a friendly tacking duel with a local yacht. The sail around the Kyles was the highlight of the week; the scenery was breathtaking. After safely negotiating the Burnt Isles at the North end of the Kyles, we hoisted the genoa and reached down the West Kyle before rounding up and beat our way into East Loch Tarbert. All in all a magnificent days sailing was had by everyone, shore leave was granted and we sampled the delights of the beautiful town of Tarbert.

Despite the previous nights entertainment, which left **Cpl** 'Chaz' **Charnock** feeling a little delicate, we rose early, had breakfast 'on the hoof' and headed South towards Campletown with a freshening Easterly breeze. Again the weather was kind to us and with the help of the tide, we completed our 32 mile journey in just under five hours. The next day we decided to sail back to Portpatrick, however, we arose slightly later than expected and had great difficulty against the tide. After a 45 mile sail to Portpatrick, and a record breaking stint on the helm by **Cpl** 'Arnie' **Renforth,** we arrived a little later than anticipated. Due to the falling tide the decision was made to return to Bangor. This gave the majority of the crew their first taste of night sailing. After a scrumptious meal rustled up by **SSgt** 'Robbo' **Robinson**, (oatmeal blocks, processed cheese and boiled sweets!) we donned harnesses and life jackets and returned to Bangor marina. After a wash and scrub up the yacht was handed over, crew changed and the new yacht made ready to take us on Phase 2 of Ex Gerona Finn.

Phase 2: Due to the success of the previous week, it was decided to follow the same route as week 1. The crew met, prepared the yacht and set sail early noon. This week we had chartered *Moyle Maiden*, a brand new Dufour 35 Classic. She was noticeably lighter and faster than *Gerona*, but how would she treat us in a blow? We didn't have to wait long as a strong Sou'westerly breeze took us on our merry way across the North Channel to Scotland. Again, 'Man overboard' drills were practiced, much to the dismay of **Capt** 'Dewi' **Winkle**, who after several attempts at rescuing 'Freddy Fenders' finally managed to haul him aboard! After a hearty Scottish breakfast of haggis, black pudding and soda bread we set sail for Girvan. The weather was atrocious; torrential rain, 30 knots of wind on the nose and a strong tide against us! However, after a long day in our oilies and life jackets and a fantastic impression of the Incredible Hulk by **Cpl** 'Russ' **Craig** (very green!) we arrived alongside at Girvan early evening. The following day was a shock to most of the crew. They had expected shorts, sunglasses and a G & T on the foredeck! Four of the crew was sea-sick and all began to realise why Offshore Sailing is a challenging Adventure Training activity. The rest of the week followed the same route as for Phase 1 and we were fortunate enough to be blessed with better weather. **LCpl** 'Ships Cat' **Ireson** excelled himself at brewing up at the crew's command and even ascended the mast to sort out a few problems with the wind instruments. A dolphin was spotted during our return leg to Bangor by **Cpl** 'Shippy' **Ship**, whilst we 'goose-winged' our way into Belfast Lough.

All in all a successful fortnight was had by both crews, with many participants vowing to go afloat again. Plans are now afoot to enter a team in the Royal Signals Regatta next year.

Change of address?

DON'T FORGET TO LET US KNOW.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS
CO **Lt Col I. Cameron Mowatt**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. Keilty**

AGC DETACHMENT
RAO **Capt Steve Potterton**
AGC Det Comd **Capt Julie Richardson**

We say farewell to **Capt Marvin Bargrove** and wish him the best of luck with the Guards. Left, Right, Left, Right……. We wish a warm welcome to Ex-**YofS Steve Potterton**, who was commissioned into the AGC (SPS) in 1997 and returns to the Corps as the RAO.

Capt Bargrove shakes hands with Capt Steve Potterton on the HO/TO of the AGC Detachment in June

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj M. Bailes**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) P. McGarry**

EXERCISE EBOR DRAGON - *by SSgt D. Evans*

The annual adventure training for HQ Sqn took place at Brawdy South Wales in the first two weeks of July. The activities covered included the usual walking expedition and mountain biking and also an overnight kayak expedition and surfing.

On arrival at Brawdy the party for Week One was split into groups. The group headed up by **Sgt Ed Green** was the first to sample the overnight kayak expedition, which involved an early evening paddle of some three hours to an isolated beach, where they spent the night with only their bivy bag for cover, then continued along the coastline the following day to be collected and brought back to camp in time for a late breakfast. The idea that some of the group had of pulling onto a secluded beach, setting up a hammock between two palm trees and sleeping under the stars was soon dispelled when in reality they emerged at a beach full of rocks and seaweed along with a sewage outlet with a few heavy showers thrown in, that's adventure training. Some of the groups were given the opportunity for a bit of cliff jumping at the end of the kayak exped. The drop was some 20 to 30 feet, although in the bar later it became 50 to 60 feet. **LCpl Helen Caplin** was one of the first to go and amazed everyone with her use of the English vocabulary as she let out a string of unprintable expletives in the couple of seconds that it took her to reach the water.

Day One for the group headed up by **Sgt Enid Blyton** was the trekking expedition which involved a walk along the coastal footpath to an over night stay at a camp site, continuing the following day back to Brawdy. **Sig Jaz Jaruszek** made an error in selecting suitable footwear for the walk where he opted for a pair of shoes instead of boots. A pair of shoes that was more suited to a Saturday night out and best described as 'dancing shoes' which cost in excess of £150. Consequently after 14 miles of hard walking his shoes and his feet were somewhat worse for wear. **SSgt Pete** 'The Charmer' **Mills, Sgt Graham** 'Who's nicked my tent poles?' **Norris** and the newly qualified **Cpl Steff Sabuda** ably led the walking phase along with **Capts Lifton** and **Richardson** for Week Two.

The surfing was enjoyed by most and when equipped with the top of the range wet suits and surf boards the individuals involved looked extremely professional, that's right up until the point that they entered the water where it was found that it is probably far easier to catch a bout of hypothermia than a wave.

Week Two brought more entertainment for the staff notably **LCpl** 'I'm too young to die' **Surya** in a sea kayak and **LCpl Karnu** falling out of a kayak.

All told the adventure training went well and was enjoyed by those involved, a big thank you goes out to the admin party made up of **Cpls Clarke, Findlay, Graham** and **Warren, LCpls Davidson** and **Edmondson** and **Sig Wilkinson,** for all their efforts.

EXERCISE ARRCADE FALCON 7 JUN – 22 JUN 00
RADIO ERV & URS(T)

During the Exercise build up the young techs were getting excited, you would have though that it was Xmas rather than a deployment to Germany. However, **Sgt** 'Been, seen, done, got the tee-shirt' **Pagett** entertained them with stories of exercises, until it was high-lighted that he'd only been on three exercises in his time. During the sailing from Hull to Zeebrugge **Sgt** 'You don't need a beret on' **Milligan** was re-educated in the error of his ways and became 'shark watch' for the night's drinks on the boat. **LCpl** 'Fog horn, Leg horn' **Calam** attempted to beat **Sgt** 'No arms' **Pagett** at clearing tables of women and failed.

Once in location **LCpl** 'I'm a little bit tired' **Abbott** made it clear he was after the 'Golden Maggot' award and was woken up for Endex. **LCpl** 'I am old enough to drink' **Thomas** tried hard to get out of going running with Tiffy, **SSgt** 'Murrey Walker' **McNairn,** including volunteering for pan bash. When some work did arrive at the ERV from a young female TA signaller **LCpl** 'Woof, Woof' **Calam** asked for fault details, however, we had to inform him later that asking for vital statistics and a home phone number was not required for the 1045.

This was the final Ex for **Sgt** 'Now you see me, now you don't' **Milligan** as he is posted to 21 SAS and we all wish him well.
PS: Don't worry we will black you out of the Troop photos.

Members of HQ Sqn

214 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj J. Compston MBE**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) K. Smith**

EXERCISE MARINE EBOR 2000 - *by Lt J. Noble*

The time of year had now come across us where the Regiment deployed to various places around the country to participate in the years Adventure Training Camps. Some squadrons were going to Wales and others to the South Coast, but 214 Sig Sqn had opted for the idyllic little town of Barnstaple in North Devon. After the confusion of the Exercise in Germany the plan was to have a relaxing time passing the days walking and rock climbing, that was the intention anyway. The recce that had taken place weeks before, confirmed that Barnstaple was situated excellently with Dartmoor and Exmoor just a short drive, various surf beaches and most importantly the Royal Marines Barracks at Chivenor with their water resources centre. The scene was set for a perfectly planned and run camp with no hitches but we forgot to add the unknown factor of forty soldiers.

On the Sunday afternoon of 3 July 2000 the bus containing 214 Sig Sqn (or at least half of them) arrived at Fremington Training camp at Barnstaple. When the soldiers debussed I could already tell what they were thinking about the accommodation. Like any other training camp in the country we shared the accommodation with various spiders, bugs and trainees from ATR Pirbright. The troops were split down into five groups of around six or seven and had a rotation system, which meant that all of the groups attempted the activities. The activities consisted of mountain biking, rock climbing, hill walking, canoeing and orienteering. We had also managed to slot in a few extra activities to break up the two weeks, these included the Royal Marines assault course and a day out with the search and rescue helicopter squadron at Chivenor. The instructors for the camp consisted of myself and **SSgt Chris Symonds** who were going to take the hill walking, **SSM Smith** and **Cpl Morrison** who were the rock climbers, **SSgt Neil Cooper** for the canoeing and finally **Cpl Tony Orange** for the mountain bikes.

Early the next day people started to filter through for their breakfast with various looks of anticipation and fear. Adventure training to some people means having to climb heights and hills that they severely dislike but to others it can mean other more fluid filled activities. Whatever they were expecting the instructors were expecting as well and just after all of the groups disappeared to their respective activities the heavens opened and it began to pour. I was taking my particular group onto Dartmoor for a full and hard days walk. The group consisted of various new faces but was led by **LCpl Sibley** who marched off into the distance and left everyone including myself in her wake. The only problem was that she didn't really know where she was going. The day went well and by around the 16 mile point the only person who was left smiling was **Sig Prem** who hadn't even broken into a sweat. We had decided to finish at a pub which was the only thing that was spurring on some of the walkers at the end, but unfortunately to our disappointment when we arrived the landlord had just shut up and wouldn't even consider opening up for seven muddy, sweaty soldiers. Upon returning to camp, various stories of how the groups had got on had started to float around camp. **Sig Forster** had a fish jump out of the water over his canoe and smack him in the face. **Sig Vint** had mistaken a wetsuit for a dry suit and left his socks and pants on only to complain that he thought he had a hole in his suit. Finally there were various people in the Squadron that had shaky disco legs as soon as their feet left the floor. Throughout the week the activities were going well and we had already been up in a RAF search and rescue helicopter, which circled and blew the canoeists over. The highlight however, of many peoples camp was the visit to the Royal Marines assault course which had thankfully been organised by the SSM who was an ex boot neck himself. The night before had been quite a heavy one with a live band playing in one of the pubs and as we began to warm up for the day I thought they were still playing in my ears. The assault course was brilliant and really showed us how fit the Royal Marines had to be to pass the course. The final part of the course was named the water pit, and it was a five-foot deep pit of water with three ropes stretched across it, everybody had a go but was ordered not to complete it by going across all the way because everyone was going in. At the end of the day I looked in front of me and saw around 40 smiling soaking wet faces that had all enjoyed attempting something that they will probably not do ever again.

Other stories of various peoples courage and adventurous training prowess were now circling, from **Sig Forster** being so scared of climbing up the cliff that in the end three people had to pull him up. For the rest of the week there was a 60 foot long black rubber mark up the wall where his trainers had dragged. **LCpl Nikki** 'bionic woman' **Hancock** had moaned about how hill walking was the worst thing in the world and when it came to actually walking she was always at the front shouting at everybody to keep up. Again I feel that had something to do with their being a pub at the finish. The two weeks went by in a flash and if it wasn't for the weather raining every single day I am sure I could have classed it as my summer holiday. Even now some three weeks later there are stories and tales about Barnstaple and the adventure training. 214 Sig Sqn thoroughly enjoyed their camp at Barnstaple and would like to say sorry to the town, 'We will give you more notice to prepare next time!'

3(UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISONAL SIGNAL REGIMENT

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS
CO **Lt Col Neil Couch/Lt Col Phil Davies**
RSM **WO1 Gary Stoker/WO1 Chris Kidd**

Spot the odd one out.The RHQ has suddenly become knee deep in posting orders as the CO, the Adjt and the RSM all pack up their pens (RSM excluded), papers and photos of their loved ones and make a mad dash to the door. The Adjt (although by far the slowest) will no doubt reach his destination first since he only has to cross the road to 202 Sqn in Wing/Ward Barracks. Whether he actually finds his new office this time is of course another matter! The RSM's rank has finally caught up with his dress sense as he gets his commission and leaves Picton Barracks to become the Unit Welfare Officer in 1 (UK) Armd Div. What's that job all about ? He is essentially the **Capt Terry Crane** of Herford without the Geordie accent. The good news for him is that he might be able to wear his 'Chinos' to work. The Commanding Officer is also taking the money and running. This time it is back to London to be SO1 Army Equipment Plans. I'm not exactly sure what that entails but it sounds very important and I'm sure he'll be terribly good at it. Seriously though 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt is a pretty big ship to sail and needs a firm hand on the tiller.Congratulations on your promotion, thanks for all your hard work and direction and we wish you and **Rachael** good luck in the future. The Ops Officer has decided to hang up his pips and is now faced with the dilemma of which £50K a year job to go for? For those of you who remember a **Capt Nick Deacon**, yes it is the same bloke .....he acquired an extension to his name tags with his wife and again we thank him for all his hard work and wish him and **Debbie** all the best wherever they settle down.

LADIES HOCKEY AND SPORTS UPDATE

Action from the Tri-Service Ladies' Hockey Final

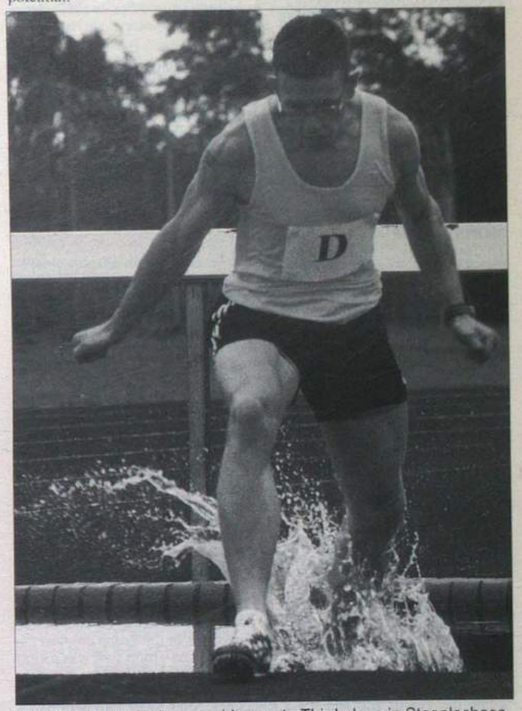
Cpl Tracy Hoffman is presented with the first Ladies Tri-Service Hockey trophy after two emphatic wins against both the RAF and Navy Champions

The All Conquering 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Ladies Hockey Team.
5 Div, Army, & Tri Service Champions 99/00

The Sportsmens Dinner was orchestrated by **Capt** 'The Players Player' **Terry Crane** and **WO2 (QMSI)** 'Sports Weak' **Dave Taylor.** It was held on the evening of Tuesday 18 July 2000 in the Sergeants' Mess and they are probably still there now! It was a tremendous success and a chance for the Colonel to acknowledge the success of his sports teams. The night will be remembered for the Commanding Officer's speech, not quite so much for the content but for the background activity!

The Regimental Team with 16 Air Asslt Bde guest that achieved Fifth place in the Cheviot 2000 Fell Race on 17 June 2000
Lt Toby Courage, Lt Gary Irwin and Maj Nick Bateson
(Now who was the strongest)

Amongst the Squadron Summer and Battle Camps the Regiment still had time to reach the finals of the Army Athletics Competition in Aldershot on Wednesday 26 July. Despite our training being limited to the qualifying rounds both the mens and ladies teams acquitted themselves well and finished in Fifth and Sixth places respectively. Special mention must go to our Female Army athlete **LCpl Jackie Davies** who was the Ladies' Captain and won the 100m in a PB, to **SSgt Castle** and **LCpl Conlon** who were only denied maximum points in the 5000m by the professionals from 3 CS Regt RLC, and to **LCpl** 'EJ' **Easterby Jackson** for his outstanding performances in the 400m, the Steeplechase and the 4x400m relay. He is an athlete with enormous potential.



LCpl Easterby Jackson on his way to Third place in Steeplechase in the Army Major Units Team Championships at Aldershot

202 SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj R. J. Quinlan**
SSM **WO2(SSM) J. McNaught**

It seems as if there is always too much to do and not enough time to do it in Bulford, and these past weeks have been no different. The Squadron have faced RSIT, CO's day and Exercise commitments as well as the impending Battle Camp on Dartmoor in July. Nonetheless morale remains high, and the mail continues to get through. The Squadron is looking forward to some well deserved leave in August.

WATERLOO TROOP
Tp Comd **SSgt Tony Wringe**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Nav Elliott**

Half way through the year having just successfully completed RSIT, the Troop find themselves 'looking forward' to Battle Camp. The Troop would like to welcome (just in time for the fun and games) **Sig** '2' **Thompson** and **Sig** 'Barney' **Barnett**, although word has it they have already discovered the delights of the local town of Amesbury. Farewells go to **Cpl** 'Si' **Elliott**, who is off to civvie street, **LCpl** 'Scotty' **Scott,** off to 11 EOD and a farewell to **Gnr** 'Paul' **Knapp**, who is off to try his hand with the 'booties'! Special congratulations go to **Cpl** 'Flo' **Watts** for being best presented detachment of the Troop on RSIT.

OVERLOON TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Gary Irwin**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Joe Rowe**

After a long month of preparation for our successful RSIT visit the lads of Overloon Tp decided enough was enough and that it was time to have some fun! We arrived at the idea of going to Alton Towers. We booked a Thursday off and boarded the coach around 0700hrs and were on our way long before the rest of the Regiment were up and about. The journey seemed to drag on a bit but we all arrived in high spirits. After a hard day on the Oblivion, Nemesis, Congo River Rapids and many more we hopped on the bus for the long journey back; the fun did not stop there as the second half of the day out was to be held at the local

nightclub where we all had a good laugh over a few beers.

Overloon Tp would like to welcome its new members…**Sig Brigden** who has come from the dark side (Waterloo Tp), **LCpl Smith 571** - 21 Sig Regt, **LCpl Lawrence** – 20 Armd Bde, **LCpl Dodgeson** – 4 Bde and **LCpl Johnson** another one successfully turned from the dark side. We have lost **Cpl Fazackerley** to the evil empire of Waterloo Tp (sadness debatable). Also a farewell to **Sig Harper, Sig Fowler** and **SSgt Oliver** who is off to the Globe Trotters 30 Sig Regt. We would also like to congratulate **SSgt S. Rowe** on his recent promotion and extension of his stay in Bulford.

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Capt Odling**
SSM **WO2(SSM) Smith**
SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

The change of personalities within SHQ continues with the handover of **WO2 (SSM)** 'Lanyard Trophy' **Archer** to **WO2 (SSM) Smith** just back from the Falklands. Good luck to **SSM Archer** in Sierra Leone with the BMATT. Best wishes also go to **WO2 (FofS)** 'I wish I was back at Hereford' **Paton** and **SSgt (YofS) Simone Rouse**, who hopefully will have got crowns sewn on her No2 dress by next year's Regimental Weekend, both are off to pastures new but staying in the Regiment. Congratulations also go to **LCpl Kirsty Kidd** for being selected for promotion.

MONS TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Gardner**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Fairfield**

Since Easter leave the Troop has undergone one of its busiest periods, this year. From the beginning of May we have found ourselves on continuous exercise until June when we remained on a leave/course ban, to allow us time to concentrate on preparation for RSIT inspections at the end of June. During this time many of the Radio side of the garages found themselves being employed as Systems/Radio Relay operators to assist the Ptarmigan side of the garages with the preparation of their detachments. **LCpl Andy Ackers** (RR Op), asked that **Sig John Hart** (TG Op), be re-traded to Radio Relay, as he was beginning to outshine the other Radio Relay Ops within the Troop. Needless to say the Squadron did very well. The workload didn't cease with the Radio side of the Troop participating in Exercise Penguin Pleasant (a long range HF JOCUMEX Exercise), and the Ptarmigan side of the Troop doing much needed Pinzgauer driver training to enable them to drive the Air Portable SANs.

Life hasn't been all work and no play, we still managed a Families Bar-B-Q organised by **Sig Ross Harley**, assisted by **Sig Scott** 'DJ' **Mawer**. Also **LCpl Si** 'Big Smudge' **Smith** organised a farewell smoker to say goodbye to **WO2 SSM Stu Archer**. The Troop managed to fit in a thoroughly enjoyable day out to the Corps Museum and Poole (via a Bowling alley), as a well done for all the hard work achieved both before and during RSSIT 2000. Finally many members of the Troop enjoyed the various activities of the Regimental weekend. The Troop stall was a Golf pitch and put (Brainchild of **LCpl Paul Whenman**), and many members of the Troop assisted with that event, also the Troop was well represented within the Tug-of-War and It's a Knockout. **SSgt Sean Fairfield** had a very good day, finding himself leading for the prize on the Golf stall most of the day, much to the frustration of **Lt Ollie** 'I'm a bit of a Pro Golfer' **Gardner**. Also **SSgt** 'Naked Chef' **Fairfield** baked 2 x chocolate fudge cakes for the wives club and they were snapped up straight away.

Welcomes to the newest members of the Troop, **LCpl** 'Abbo' **Abbott** from 21 Sig Regt, and **LCpl** 'Dodge' **Dodgson** from 30 Sig Regt. Congratulations on being selected for promotion to Sergeant goes to **Cpl Matt Kutzner**. Once again it's time to say congratulations to **Sig Steve Blake** on his marriage to **Tracey**. Congratulations to **Sig** 'Taff' **Macleod-Needs** on his marriage to **Gillian** and to **Sig Lynn Draper** on her engagement.

INKERMAN TROOP
Tp Comd **SSgt Angove**

We have said goodbye to five members of our small community; two of which were major influences to us all. Firstly we said farewell to **Lt Gary** 'Psycho' **Irwin**. He was a brilliant boss with a sense of humour to match. He has gone to 202 Sqn to play with the armour. Enjoy! Next, it was the turn of our mentor **Cpl Phil** 'Daddy' **Oulton**. He has helped us all in one way or another over the years. Words couldn't sum up how much he meant to us. He has been posted to 2 Sig Regt as a Sergeant. Congratulations **Phil**! **LCpl Steph Catney** is also leaving us, she is transferring to the Dental Corps. **Sig Ben Andrews** is going to 39 Bde, if anyone there has any moneyboxes keep them away from him; due to his crazy fetish. **Sig Wayne Kennett** is going to that somewhat larger unit Civ Div. Welcome to **Sig Phil** 'Guppy' **Baxter** who has joined us from 30 Sig Regt.

We have just returned from a three-week Cadet exercise. Teaching 14-18 year olds. Nice work if you can get it. We have all been taking advantage of the short spell of sunshine lately with a BBQ and a couple of quiet beers (followed by lots of loud ones!). Congratulations to 'Daddy' **Oulton** who is our new 'Nails' Champion. Commiseration's to the runner up (Loser) **SSgt Mick** 'Councillor' **Angove.** You would think by now with all the practice we have had, our Troop members would be able to handle their ale. Lastly, we would like to wish Inkerman Tp an amazing summer leave. Keep out of trouble. See you on the plain in September!

222 SQUADRON
ADEN TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Emma Fawcett**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Sean Littlefield**

Aden Tp is finally all back together as one big happy family after Ex Lion Sun. Two days back and they were straight out on Regimental and Divisional Exercises. All went smoothly and we moved into our home for two weeks, Sidbury Hill. Nice and close to all those hills for Staff's PT sessions!!! Aden Tp broke its long record of not crashing the switch, thanks **Cpl** 'Spike' **Milligan** or was it your willing apprentice **Sig** 'Jimmy' **Baguley**? Whoever, they made such a good job of it that **Sgt Simmons** had to take it away back to camp! Though we were not the only ones and it did mean a whole day of silence in node command, bliss!

On the weekend standdown the trusty volleyball net was erected. We discovered the new version - header volleyball. **SSM** 'Choo Choo' **Roberts** and myself had not seen anything this funny since **Lt Grice** Waaaad the OC. The exercise resumed and the evenings off-shift were soon filled with several levels of amusement, **Sig** 'Matthew Kelly' **Elston** gave a top 'stars in your eyes' version of **SSgt Littlefield**. 073 were lucky (yes I'm sure that's right) enough to get a visit from two researchers from the BBC. This opened up **SSgt** 'Devilfield' **Littlefield** to a wind up, which he fell for hook line and sinker. Though when the mention of make up came into play we were rumbled, only after he had got the Sergeants' Mess silver out in the field! An eventful day really as the chef, **Pte** 'I can even burn beans' **Hoodless,** decided that a tasty addition to the CO's lunch would be the end of his finger.

The joy of RSIT descended on the Troop and meant a lot of elbowgrease required, not withstanding the Troop OC who was duped into volunteering to clean pallets on the RR's while slightly inebriated! Cheers lads! **SSgt** 'Small garden' **Littlefield** won his bet against **Cpl** 'Jack' **Russell**, though his integrity was brought into question with the amount of time he spent with the inspectors! **LCpl** 'Robo' **Robertson** has been strutting his stuff with the Corps Pipes and Drums Band in London on the Military Tattoo with **Lt** 'Whaaaaa' **Grice**. Most of the Troop deployed on Ex Eagle Strike, taking a temporary dip in standards and working with Sharjah Tp! All that needs to be said is **LCpl** 'Crusher' **Carlisle** - get the beers in.

Finally, hellos and good-byes. Goodbye to **Cpl** 'The Love Muscle' **Russell** to civ pop, we wish you all the best, I'm sure you won't need it. Hellos to **Sig's** 'Softlad' **Copeland,** 'Stevo' **Stevens** and 'new girl' **Walker**, feel better that you are now amongst the best trunk node in the Regiment, welcome. Welcome back to the Troop for **LCpl** 'Mac' **McCulloch** from the sunny Balkans. The Troop looks forward to block leave and Staff deploying to Canada, only joking Staff.

OMAN TROOP – 222 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Tp Comd **Lt Imogen Mulholland**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Daph Clash**

Well, it's been another interesting period for the Troop. Following a whole day in work after returning from Lion Sun, off we were on a two-week exercise on the plain. Just to add to the thrills, we had a top location just outside the impact area. This was excellent and benefited everyone – the artillery gun line behind us were able to use the SCAM 12's as goalposts, **Sig** 'Paddy' **Alcock** (on another magical mystery tour around the plain in the canner) could find us at night by heading towards the illum and everyone got social from walking into each other while watching the sky for drop-shorts. Just when we'd settled down to a M*A*S*H-type acceptance of close proximity incoming, we handily had to relocate to II (our absolutely favourite location due to the inevitable 'hovering helicopter gunship in the shot' routine). Good news though, because The Bustard hostelry was getting a bit predicable by then. And how many times have you spent weekends on exercise like that? After the exercise, the ever-popular RSIT preparation raised its ugly head, followed closely by the Regimental Weekend, where the Troops 'Welly Whanging' Challenge resulted in plenty of near misses and a suspicious win for **Sig** 'Chaquille' **Hemming**. Nice co-ordination from **Cpl** 'Bassingbourne' **Knapman** there too! Interestingly enough **Sig Hemming** and **LCpl Aanes** managed to sqeeze in a quick Regimental Cadre, which **Sig** 'Drills' **Amis** escaped by the skin of her teeth, having been the Top Soldier on Ex Lion Sun.

Around the time of Lion Sun we were suddenly inundated with a whole lot of new faces, although we lost some of the old and bolds. Hellos to **SSgt** 'Kalashnikov' **Clash** (back into the green army – lucky her), **Cpl** 'Medals' **Manaton** (straight out to Lion Sun a week after his arrival), **LCpl** 'Yan' **Aanes** (not quite in time for Cyprus), **LCpl** 'hasn't been seen since' **Bowring**, **LCpl** 'Another Scouser' **Kelly** and **Sigs** 'justin from Blandford' 'John' **Steed**, 'Top Driver' **Payne** and 'No relation to Ray' **Laing**. A very fond fare well to **Sgt Andy Hayler**, who has left us for a financially welcoming Germany posting, along with **Mandy** and **Alex**. We wish them all the very best, and hope that they remember us when they reach their first million. Shortly, we'll also be saying goodbye to **Cpl** 'Chimps' **Christison** and **Sig** 'Matt' **Mortiboys** – **Dave** to the Real world and **Matt** to Germany. So we'll be looking forward to a bit of peace and quiet in the garages – although the amazing repertoire of phones-on-hold tunes will be sadly missed. **Sig** 'Hope I get to stay longer this time' **Miller** disappears to HQ MND in August for a sneaky six-monther, and mostly all singlies get married! **LCpls** 'Short and Sharp' **Wall**, 'Old Lady' **Brady** and 'Naked Organist' **Milton** will all be married by Christmas, along with **Sig** 'Backbone' **Evans**. Good luck to all of you, and congratulations to **Cpl** 'Leroy' **Wilson-Cochrane** and **'Mrs' W-C** on their wedding in June – a superb day despite **Sig** 'Bandsman' **Leach** being best man! Speaking of which, there's only been one stag night to date – but anything that makes **Sgt** 'Seen it all before' **Hamlet** laugh that much has got to be worth it! Eyes on stalks (**Mr Wall**), my Dear (**Mr Catney**), Fireman and friend to all tramps (**Mr Milton**), where is he now (**Old Lady**), shopping trolley stuntman (**Mr Webster**), how much for two cokes (**Mr Knapman**)and oddly enough 'Wizbit' **Fearns** too! Anyone with information which leads to a successful prosection of any of the above will be eligible for a community action cash reward.

SHARJAH TROOP – 222 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Tp Comd **Lt Kelvin Grice**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Bru' **Baker**

After recovering from the mayhem that surrounds the RSIT preparation, the Troop relaxed for a week before beginning preparations for Ex Eagle Strike in Scotland in support of 16 Air Asslt Bde. July in the Otterburn training area provided snow and searing temperatures. **2Lt Lumley** 'on loan' from 202 Sig Sqn acted as Troop Commander for the exercise, while **Lt Grice** was away playing his bagpipes for the Corps Pipes and Drums for the Royal Military Tattoo 2000 on Horseguards Parade in London. The Troop wishes to extend warm greetings to **2Lt Smith** who has just arrived from completing his Troop Commanders Course. He is due to take over Sharjah Tp in mid September when **Lt Grice** moves to RMCS Shrivenham to start a three year degree course. Greetings also to **Sig Robson** who has arrived from Blandford taking on the mantle as Troop Liney. She has big shoes to fill, as **Sig Buttery** leaves the Army for Civvi Street. Adding to the losses in the Troop are **Cpl Ward, Sig Scrafton** and **Sig Bunt** who are all off into the big wide world. This completes the number of goodbyes and the Troop wishes all those leaving warmest regards. The Troop is looking forward to the summer break that starts on July 28. We are away for three weeks and then look forward to a week adventure training at Penhale Camp in Newquay.

7 SIGNAL REGIMENT

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON BATTLECAMP
by Lt Jay McLeary (RNZ Signals)

Weeks of secrecy had preceded Battlecamp and even in the week prior to deploying -still no instruction had been promulgated to those attending (though I'm told that's pretty normal from Ops). Rumours had been rife to this point, and rumour had it that it was to be an escape and evasion exercise. In typical New Zealand Army style, I tried to pre-empt and prepare as best as possible, and having participated on numerous similar exercises back home, I had a few tricks up my sleeve.

After having been called in on Sunday night (2230!!!) and told we were now at thirty minutes notice to move, we were told to take our kit upstairs and await further instructions. I could see what was going on here… Minutes passed, then hours. Those who were smart got their heads down and tried to sleep. It was obvious that sleep deprivation was to be a key part of this Exercise. Awoken at some ungodly hour to the roar of 'Right, first section grab your stuff and move down the corridor!' - off we went. Now we would find out just how sneaky the Kiwi was… Within minutes, the ground was strewn with kit as the Directing Staff began their 'sterilisation' phase. Yes, they found the weighted down Mars bars in the waterbottles and yes - they found the DM20 taped under the insole of my boot, and believe it or not -even the lighter taped to my privates.Damn! These guys were *good*…

Sterilisation complete, we were bundled off with only the minimum of kit (ie: survival kit, waterbottle and the one set of combats) onto the back of a truck destined for who knows where. After a freezing cold journey across the German countryside, the truck stopped, we were hauled off and told, 'Right lads, you're to be at this grid by 0700 hours, stay off the roads -and don't be late…' and off they went. Eighteen clicks to cover as the crow flies, flat German terrain and about four hours to cover it in - easy. Yeah right! Who would have thought there would be so many German vehicles on the road at that hour of the morning, and that they all sounded just like Landrovers - and with us unsure as to whether there was a hunter force out there, let's just say there was a fair bit of diving for cover in drains and hedges -all of which had ample quantities of stinging nettles! (Sorry guys). Needless to say, we made it to the RV in time (just), much to the amazement of the OC. 'Unbelievable -all three Sections with the Officers managed to navigate their way here without losing themselves or their Sections, so where the hell are all the others?' Nothing wrong with this Kiwi's ability to read a map and use a compass Sir…

From there it was straight into the training phase. This period spanned two days covering lessons such as construction of shelters, obtaining food, fire lighting and other combat survival skills that would be needed in the coming days. The nights were spent freezing our butts off, as most Sections shared two to three doss bags between five to six people, some awaking with bruises after attempting to wrap arms around the person next to them for warmth. Good on you **Cpl White**! One particular Section decided not to kill the fowl they were given for the day's meal - probably thinking that if they left it alive for a day or two, they might get some eggs from it. Bad news **Hattie** -Roosters don't lay eggs… (The rooster disappeared mysteriously in the night and was never heard from again, though unconfirmed reports say it now earns a large salary in the employment of the Iraqi Secret Police). After again being bundled into the trucks, it was off to RAF Bruggen for a lesson on 'The Dogs of War." Here we got to play with the nice doggies that had names like 'Crusher", 'Mauler' and 'Cujo". Some of the lads and ladesses donned the padded suit and showed us all just how hopeless it is trying to outrun 50kgs of muscle and teeth. Impressive dogs, so long as you weren't on the receiving end of one wanting to tear your arm off…

Training and practise phases complete, it was now into the nuts and bolts of the Exercise - the testing phase. It was now confirmed that there was indeed a hunter force out there. Rumours had it they were Paras, some said Danish Rangers, others reckoned it was the boys with the black strips over their eyes. One thing was certain - the general reaction was 'Please not the dogs, *anything* but the dogs…' A couple of hours head start and then it was, 'Coming ready or not!' Some took to the trees, some used the trees for throwing knife practise - my Section, we decided that the only way was DOWN, and with one e-tool between us, began furiously digging a tactical shelter. After deforesting another part of the woods some distance away for foliage to hide our shelter, we stood admiring our efforts. Not bad! We were ready, and not a moment too soon. Off in the distance shots were heard. One of the Sections was now definitely in the pooh!

The four of us remaining bundled into our meagre accommodation with what little kit we had, covered over our entrance and prayed like hell we wouldn't get found. One thing is for sure. Having to spend eighteen hours squeezed in a hole in the ground with three smelly thugs -you sure learn tolerance, that and humour! Darkness came, and with it sleep for four tired little teddy bears. We were rudely awoken at zero-dark hundred hours with torch lights, rifle barrels pointed at our heads and screams of 'Get out -now!' Hooded and plasticuffed, we were bundled into the back of a Rover. The hunter force later confessed the only reason they found us, was they heard the wobbly tin flex after they walked over the top of our hide! Some of us *attempted* to escape only to be crash tackled to the ground after a couple of yards (sorry about the jaw **Sgt Yendel**, to this day I thought you were **Sgt Topps**…).The ex finished for my team with a stint of tactical questioning and a good dose of roughing up. A special thanks to the lads of two section -**Sig** 'Lee' **Taylor, LCpl** 'Phil' **Brown**, **Sig** 'Jimi' **Pearson, LCpl** 'Dan' **Depport** and **Cpl** 'Robby' **Richardson** for keeping me entertained throughout the ex with their twisted humour and never divulging anything about their officer under the duress of interrogation. Shear madness shall always overcome!

From the point of view of a Kiwi Officer attached to 231 Sqn on Ex Longlook, the Exercise was superbly run and enjoyed by all, thanks to a lot of hard work by the SSM and his team. All the best to all those deploying to the South Atlantic next month. Take care and cheers for the good memories I take with me…. Ake Ake, Kia Kaha!
(FOR PHOTOS SEE THE INSIDE FRONT AND BACK COVERS)

REGIMENTAL FOOTBALL REPORT - *by WO1 (FofS) Steele*

An end of season football report from 7 Sig Regt is nothing but good news! Having run two sides all season with over 60 people representing the Regiment in either the first or second team, football is very much alive and kicking in Krefeld. The season started late for the first team. When the Regiment returned from Kosovo in October 1999, the season was in full swing and we had some catching up to do. Luckily in our absence some talent had already been found during a couple of friendly matches. The team had recently lost **Maj** 'Rik' **License** to ATR Basingbourne, so up stepped **WO1** 'Tommy' **Steele** to take over the reins as player manager. Added to our problems the first team coach **SSgt** 'Daisy' **May** was also lost on a posting back to Aldershot. In came **Sgt** 'Bob' **Kirby** to fill that role. Our first game was against 16 Sig Regt (arch enemies) way back in November 1999, not only had the guys just finished their post op tour leave but I decided that we would play in the dreaded 3,5,2 formation. It seemed to work, and with some excellent play we destroyed 16 Sig Regt and were 5-0 up by half time - all change after half time though, a couple of substitutions and suddenly we lost our shape and with only 10 minutes to go 16 drew level at five apiece. To the lads' credit we scored two goals quickly to wrap up the points and send 16 Sig Regt home once again….well beaten !

The season was up and running, and our next game was against 2 GS Regt (one of the hot favourites for the league). In a tight game the Regiment came away with a hard fought draw - with a little bit more luck we could have stolen the points, but a draw was a good result, and more importantly the team was beginning to get used to playing under the new system. Things were looking up. This was certainly confirmed with our next match against 1 Bn Reme, who were well-beaten 3-0. This led nicely into the first round of the Army Cup where we were hosts to 1 Irish

Guards. In an excellent match we ran out winners 2-0, however, we had a fright in the first half which saw us struggle to contain them, like so often in football we scored on the break and then we went from strength to strength and completely dominated the second half. Having played only four matches the Xmas break was upon us. After the break the Regiment went from strength to strength. Having beaten the Green Howards in the Army Cup and winning two further games in the league it was the next match which would see our first major test, the semi-final of the BA(G) Army Cup against the current holders 3 Bn Reme. After some skulduggery from our opponents manager, fixing the game for a Saturday claiming that they were all on Bn Block leave (Funny that, some 20 footballers were seen full time training during the whole week prior to the game!). In a very tight game and with only two minutes plus stoppage time to go, the scores were level at one each. With the Regiment hanging on for extra time, catastrophe struck, as our keeper fumbled a simple cross in to the path of their striker. In real slow time the ball rolled agonisingly over the line just as the keeper managed to get hold of it. With everyone thrown up front to try and equalise, they scored again just before the final whistle. The lads were gutted, we did not deserve to lose and they knew it, but that's football.

From then on the Regiment never looked back, we won every single game, and more importantly we were to get our revenge against 3 Bn Reme. Having won the BA(G) West league convincingly, it was in to the BA(G) Premier Cup with the winners and runners up of the BA(G) east league. In the semi-final we were drawn against 28 Eng Regt (who had just won the Army Cup against the Cheshires). This game had it all. Right from the start the Regiment pressured the ball. 28 Eng Regt looked very classy, moving the ball on quickly to feet, but in the end it came down to the will to win, the system and above all team work. The Regiment took a fine scalp here winning 2-0 with goals from our two strikers, **Sig** 'I'm the Man' **Scott** and **LCpl** 'Stevo' **Stephenson**. In the final the Regiment reaped revenge on 3 Bn Reme, the guys thoroughly deserved to win the game running out victors by two goals to nil with goals by **Sig** 'Ruby' **Murray** and **LCpl** 'Stevo' **Stephenson**. The celebrations were fantastic - we had beaten 28 Eng Regt the Army Champions of this season, and now 3 Bn Reme, the Army Champions for the last three seasons.

The end of season function was held in a local Italian restaurant where the boss handed out the season's honours as follows:

Young Player of the Season - **Sig** 'Coxy' **Cox**
Players Player of the Season - **Sig** 'Ruby' **Murray**
Managers Player of the year - **LCpl** 'Stevo' **Stephenson**

We also bade a fond farewell to **Cpl** 'Phil's the best' **Hughes** (**Sig** 'Craig' **Harris's** best mate) who is going to Civvy Street and **CFn** 'Frannie' **Morrison** who is posted back to Paderborn. Finally I would like to thank my team captain **Sgt** 'John' **Brady** for leading the team so well all season and all the lads who have played for the Regiment this season.

Season 99/00 Results

a. BA (G) West v 16 Sig Regt (H) Result Won 7-5
b. BA (G) West v 2 CS Regt (A) Result Drew 2-2
c. BA (G) West v 1 Bn Reme (H) Result Won 3-0
d. BA (G) West + Army Cup v 1 Irish Guards (H) Result Won 2-0
e. BA (G) West v Arrc Sp Bn (A) Result Won 9-1
f. BA (G) West + Army Cup v 1 Green Howards (A) Result Won 3-2
g. BA (G) West v 1 AAC (H) Result Won 4-2
h. Army Cup Semi-final (A) Result Lost 1-3
I. BA (G) West v QRL-A (A) Result Won 4-2
j. BA (G) West v RDG's (H) Result Won 7-1
k. BA (G) West v RASU (H) Result Won 3-0
l. BA (G) West v 4 Regt RA (A) Result Won 4-2
m. BA (G) West v 21 Eng Regt (H) Result Won 6-1
n. BA (G) West v 6 Sup Regt (H) Result Won 6-1
o. BA (G) League Semi-Final v 28 Eng Regt (H) Result Won 2-0
p. BA(G) Premier Cup Final v 3 Bn REME (A) Result Won 2-0

TOP SCORERS

LCpl 'Stevo' **Stephenson**	25	Played	16
Sig 'Scotty' **Scott**	14	Won	14
WO1 'Tommy' **Steele**	7	Lost	1
		Drawn	1
		Scored	65
		Conceded	22

Next season can't come quick enough, anyone who wants to play good football should seriously consider a posting to 7 Sig Regt.

Sgt 'John' Brady receives the BA(G) Premiership Cup

7 Signal Regiment BA(G) Champions 99/00

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj** 'Wally' **Drain**
SSM **WO2** 'Steve' **Bovan**

It has been another busy period for the Senior Squadron. Post exercise turn around, the normal hectic routine and taking the lead in several sporting and social events has once again kept HQ Sqn in the fore. Many Sqn personalities were heavily involved in the most recent charity event, 'Ready, Steady, Cook'. What started as an idea for a 'Dinners in a Dash' cook book with suggested recipes donated by all ranks of the Regiment, soon escalated into a Ready Steady Cook competition. All money raised at the event was to go to SSAFA. The competition was to be between the Regts Chefs and Chefs from 280 (UK) Sig Sqn. **Mrs Julie Bennet** from the Regimental clothing store and a SSAFA Committee member were soon hard at work allocating tasks to the willing and not so willing. The evening was a complete success with the OC acting as a Roger De Corsey-type compere, ably assisted by **WO2** 'Nookie the Bear' **Bovan**. The winner of the competition was our very own **Cpl** 'Gaz' **Foulger**, who produced a 3-course meal in 45 minutes with ingredients he was presented with just prior to the start of cooking. After a superb effort by all involved, the total raised from the sale of the cookbook, raffle prizes and the auctioned shearing of **Cpl** 'Gaz' **Halliday**'s flowing locks was DM 3557.95.

Cpls Lindsay Kinghorn, Steve Bye and LCpl Beth Rees

Many thanks must go to the QM Tech Dept for the superb Squadron families BBQ that was held recently. It was refreshing to see a Department jumping to be first in the line of volunteers to host this event (but then again, it's not that you're busy trying to close operational accounts or anything). The venue on West Park was transformed into a paradise of fun, with face painting, bouncy castles and games (at times the children were allowed to take part as well). Although the weather was against them, everyone enjoyed the day and heaped praise on the Chefs for once again producing superb results. The SSI, **SSgt Kev** 'Muscles' **Mason** will no doubt be called upon again now that his Bruce Forsythe style of compering has been demonstrated. As a final note SSM, why is it that on exercise the soldiers won't use cam cream, but will queue 20 minutes to be covered in face paints when glassy eyed?

QUARTERMASTER'S (TECHNICAL) DEPARTMENT
QM(T) **Capt Ray Cory**
RQMS(T) **WO2** Trev ('Sicknote') **Henry**

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

At last we did it. After seven hectic months we have finally laid the ghost to rest that was the Op Agricola Account. **Capt Ray** 'Let's start on the camp account' **Cory** and **SSgt Kev** 'Who's got the SSRs' **Scott** have got the biggest smiles around the Department. Well done to all of the Department past and present (never again!). There have been a few moves and deployments over the past few months: **Cpl** 'Des' **Lang** has deployed to Bosnia to work with the Commercialisation Implementation Team, and **Sig** 'Geordie' **Ellis** has moved over to 231 Sig Sqn prior to his deployment to Bosnia to augment 4 Brigade. We have recently said farewell to **Sgt** 'Mick' **Neil,** who has moved to 21 Eng Regt, Osnabruck and **Sgt** 'Jock' **Castle,** off to 3 Div, both on promotion to Staff Sergeant. The Department thank them for their hard work and wish them and their families all the best for the future. We welcome **WO2 (RQMS) Henry** from 1 Div who will be taking over the reins from **RQMS Burdge** who is moving over to be SSM 229 (Berlin) Sig Sqn, **Sgt Skipper** who has taken over in the URS(T) and **Sig Bradbury** who has arrived from the factory. Welcome!

SPORTS AND SOCIAL

The golf clubs are out. The QM and **Sgt** 'Scotty' **Scott** recently squared up to each other in the Officers' Mess vs Sergeants' Mess Golf Competition - unlucky Sir, a resounding win for the Sergeants' Mess. **Sgt** 'Jock' **Castle** has continued his running and has successfully completed the London Marathon - Well done 'Jock'. **SSgt Kev Scott** has continued to support the Regiment's Football Team and **RQ Burdge** has recently played in the BA(G) 7's (Rugby Union) and the BA(G) 9's (Rugby League), both times the Regiment being beaten in the semi-finals (unlucky).

The Department is keen not to let the grass grow under it's feet, so we did our bit for the Squadron by organising the Squadron BBQ on Sunday 25 June at West Park on a glorious sunny day (not!). Special thanks go to **Mrs Lang** for running the children's face painting stand. Congratulations go to **LCpl** 'Clare' **Boswell** (nee **McIntyre**) who recently married **LCpl** 'Bossey' **Boswell** from 280 (UK) Sig Sqn. The Department would like to congratulate **Cpl** 'Dom' **Cooke** on being awarded Commander KFOR Commendation for his outstanding hard work on Op Agricola. Congratulations to **Capt** Ray **Cory** on his well-deserved selection for promotion to Major, also congratulations go to **Sgt** 'Scotty' **Scott** on his award of the LS&GC and for passing his hyster course with flying colours. Well done to **Sig** 'Muzzy' **Musgrave** and **Sig** 'Olive' **Macleod** on passing their B2, now get the beer in! Welcome to **Sig** 'Chippy' **Wood** posted in from the factory - the brew list is next to the cups!

QUARTERMASTER'S (A) DEPARTMENT
QM(A) **Maj Pete Doherty**
RQMS **WO2 Neil James**

The Department has been kept busy over the last few weeks getting ready for the Log Spt inspection, and if it hadn't been cancelled at the last minute I'm sure that the late nights and weekend working would have been worth it. The QM, **Maj Pete Doherty,** is still doing his 2hr walks into work each day, even though he only lives 600m from camp. It's a GPS for him as a leaving gift me thinks. **Sgt** 'Slick'**Miller** who recently returned from his NBC instructors course went straight onto his Environmental Protection Officers' course and can now be found in the gas chamber switching off the lights. **Sig Clare Patton** organised the BBQ on the sad occasion of the farewell for **Sgt Mark Chivers**. **Mark** who was unable to deploy to Kosovo last year due to illness was awarded the 'Short Service and Long Illness' medal by the QM. A gift of a bathrobe and slippers for his next hospital admittance was greeted with a tear in his eye (his glass one had gone to sleep by this time). All the best to **Mark, Yvonne** and **Jack** in Ireland and congratulations on your promotion (yes, now you can call yourself SQMS).

Maj Pete Doherty presents the Short Service and Long Illness Medal to Sgt Mark 'Bradbury' Chivers

229 (BERLIN) SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Dan Webster** Royal Australian Signals
SSM **WO2 Ged Keane**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS TROOP

There has been a lot of activity going on within the troop over the past three months, with arrivals and farewells. Firstly we say farewell and congratulations to **SSM Ged** 'Airborne' **Keane** and his wife **Wendy**, who are off to sunny Colerne for six months and then on to 40 Sig Regt on promotion to RSM. Next we say farewell and congratulations to **SSgt (YofS) White** and his wife **Marilyn** who are posted to 3 Inf Bde HQ and Sig Sqn on promotion to WO2. We say a fond farewell to **SSgt (SQMS) Taff Webb** and his wife **Rita** and family who are off to 14 Sig Regt. On the arrivals front we welcome **WO2 (SSM)** 'Taff' **Burdge** and his wife **Alda** and family, as 'Taff' swaps his RQ's badge for a proper one. Next in from the training wing is **SSgt Matt Wakeling** who takes over as the SQMS and hopefully he won't change jobs for the time being. Last but by no means least is the new YofS straight off his course, **SSgt Kev Book** and his wife **Nicky** and family – he has quickly learnt that when the OC says, 'Can you work late until 1830hrs?' he really means 0630hrs.

CHARLIE TROOP - *by LCpl Ben Pember*
Tp Comd **Lt Caroline Evans**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Jock' **Reid**

The first exercise after the hectic period of RSIT was 'Active Improvement', held between 10–28 May, in and around Amersfoort in Holland. This exercise came as a much-needed shakeout for all trades. There was lovely weather in the first week, and pouring rain in the second, even so a good time was had by all, especially the radio-relay operators who had a fun time putting up (several times) a 25m mast. With a foot-pump to get it up with, we all had a huge thighs at the end of the exercise!

During the exercise a trip was organised to the Airborne Museum near Arnhem, which we all enjoyed. At this stage I feel I need to mention the memorable Jazz festival held in Amersfoort, the weekend before the exercise, and attended by several of the Crypto guard. Two weeks later, barely after we had completed turn-around, the squadron deployed on exercise 'Arcade Falcon', and oh what fun we had! It was a multi-national exercise around the northwest of Germany, with the squadron

playing a major role. Rumours have been going round the camp accusing one of the troops in the Squadron of having it easy all exercise, and not moving at all, but no sour grapes here! We understand what hard decisions had to be made by all, what topping should one order on the delivered pizza's?!

With the second squadron deployment to Kosovo brought forward, with it came the UNTAT training package at Sennelager, lasting between the period 3rd-7th July, and teaching us how to react to certain situations, giving you a basic grasp of the Serbian and Albanian cultures, and weapon firing under different conditions. Most people found that after a slow start they actually ended up enjoying it. This was helped by the lack of unnecessary shouting from the range staff, and the fact that we all managed to pass our APWT's! A thanks must be given to all the Royal Green Jacket instructors who took the UNTAT week.

There have been a couple of farewells in the past weeks. We say 'Goodbye,' to **LCpl John MacDonald** (now at 2 Sigs), **Sig Andy McCabe** (pursuing fame and glory in his music career), **Sig Martin McMillian** (gone to fish in the loch's of Scotland) and **SSgt Webb** (soon to be **Mr Webb**). We also say, 'Goodbye,' to **Sgt Whitfield** (off to 16 Sigs), and **SSgt Robson** (promotion and Blandford calls) within the coming weeks. Best wishes to you from all of the squadron!
Until later….

WHISKEY TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt** 'Ally(son)' **Lawson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt P. Robson**

The Troop has enjoyed a period of relative quietness since the last installment of the W-files. The Troop deployed on exercise (holiday) Active Improvement in Holland in May for two weeks in support of MND (C). The Troop Commander, **Lt** 'Ally(son)' **Lawson** will not forget this period due to the fast and sometimes hectic driving of **Sig** 'Tomo (McRae)' **Thompson** in his Martini Racing Army sponsored Rover and the unforgiving sand dunes/ruts of Holland's training areas. This said he felt much safer riding around in a Dutch Leopard tank. Following a couple of weeks of normality the Troop set off on adventures once again, this time on exercise Arrcade Falcon. However, this was not appreciated by many due to the European Cup Finals being played. The exercise was not quite the same as the Dutch deployment due to the fact everyone was working hard (some Troops more than others- no offence intended C Tp). The exercise will be remembered for a number of incidents: Whilst the exercise was in full flight, **Sig Tomo** 'McRae' **Thompson** managed to have an argument with a rubber bungee which got the better of him and left him with a beaut of an eye, and left people in no doubt that bungees can seriously damage your health. Whiskey's finest operators were praised highly for their efforts during this exercise because of the outstanding work done by the Relay crews who managed to hold the world together as the exercise rotated around TN012. The Troop would like to congratulate **SSgt Paul Robson** on being promoted. He has recently been swatting up on computers to be able to fill his position at the Royal School of Signals (thanks for all you did for the Troop and all the best to you and your family back in the UK). Also congratulations to **Sgt Kenny Macpherson** on passing his Sergeant's course. A welldone must be said to **Sig Trev** 'The Fool' **Woodward** on passing his APWT on the first time of asking, increasing his score from 7 to 42 out of 60 - keep it up Trevor!! The Troop would like to welcome **LCpl Matt Knowles** and his wife Beverly, also hello to **Sig Nat** 'Bunsun burner' **Brown** and **Sig Ash** 'Spotty' **Spotswood**. The Troop would like to say farewell to the following **Lt** 'Ally(son)' **Lawson** who leaves us (on an upwards move-NOT) to go to Tac Troop 232 Sig Sqn, Farewell to **LCpl Luke** 'Beakimus Maximus' **Mason** and his wife **Marie** and his two kids **Charlie** and **Tamara** who leave for 1 Mech Bde in Tidworth. The remainder of Whiskey Tp that are not deploying on Operations wish all the best, and a safe return to the rest of TN 012.

NEW TROOPS

A warm welcome to those members of 231 Sqn who have now become X-Ray Troop, 229 Sqn. Also to all those in 229 Sqn not deploying, who are now in Yankee Troop. New members of the Squadron also include **SSgt Evans** and **SSgt Davies** – welcome to you and your families. Lastly, our new Yeoman, **SSgt Kev Book,** who deserves a mention as the man most adept at not making brews on exercise – We'll show you where the coffee is when you get back from Kosovo!

PARAGLIDING BASIC PILOTS COURSE
WERTACH- BAVARIA - *by 2Lt Harriet Hebblethwaite*

It was on the sunny morning of 19 June that five members of 231 Sig Sqn departed from Bradbury Barracks for the long drive down to Wertach in Bavaria, with great anticipation and a little trepidation for the ten day Basic Pilots course ahead. The students were split into two groups, and the course began bright and early the next day with an introduction to the equipment. It became startlingly obvious very early on that the thin piece of nylon was going to be the only thing holding us all away from certain death, so particular concentration was applied at this point.

With nerves slightly more at rest, it was time to take to the training slope (after a brew of course), or rather the flat grassy field tantalisingly close by. It was now time to learn how to get the paraglider into the air- a lot more difficult than it looks! **Sig Tony Barclay** and **2Lt Harriet Hebblethwaite** had particular trouble untangling their paraglider each time it crashed to the ground, and **LCpl Robbo Roberts** found it extremely difficult to run in a straight line- strange we thought for a PTI. The following couple of days saw us graduate to the slope itself, which threw up new challenges as the wind was stronger and coming from the wrong direction. With threats of an approaching weather front, we were all desperate to get 'AIRBORNE". **Sgt Gaz Topps** was doing especially well at this stage with his 'Bird Man of Alcatraz' impression (I don't think he actually got off the ground either **Gaz**!) and **2Lt Hebblethwaite** had to be held down to stop her from floating away (honestly).

Friday dawned cloudy and wet and marked the beginning of a couple of no- fly days. We took this opportunity to carry out a launch site appreciation as well as essential Go Kart training, bouncy castle action, swimming and a quick nip over to Garmisch, in between brews of course. It was our penultimate day all too soon, and our last opportunity to get all the training in to ensure a mountain flight at the end of the course. 142 launches were achieved between 12 students in one day- a new record, but not without its mishaps. **Sgt Topps** almost ploughed into the barbed wire fence, **Sig Barclay** and **LCpl Roberts'** wings decided not to fly in the morning and **2Lt Hebblethwaite** managed to crash land on her head for the second time. Only **Sig** 'JP' **Pearson** seemed unscathed at the end of a very exhausting day. The day of our mountain flight finally arrived. A moment we had all been waiting for. We headed off for the mountain previously recced only to be told that the wind was in the wrong direction. So after assessing another mountain close by and another brew the instructors called the flight off, much to everyone's disappointment. Nevertheless we successfully completed the course and had a thoroughly enjoyable time in the process, all keen to do the continuation course just as soon as we get back from the Falkland Islands!

231 SIGNAL SQUADRON v HMP WYMOTT
FOOTBALL MATCH

It was 1035hrs Wednesday 14 June 2000 when sixteen prison officers from Wymott Prison drove through the gates of 7 Sig Regt, Bradbury Barracks to take on the might of 231 Sig Sqn's select eleven on the football field. The officers had travelled to Holland to enjoy a well-earned break and to take in a few games at the ongoing Euro 2000 championships. **Cpl Andy McMullan's** father, **Mr Denis McMullan** was a member of the travelling party, and so after many phone calls to and from the UK, the match was arranged.

It wasn't long after their arrival that the whistle was blown for kick-off, and the game was underway. As **FofS** 'Tommy' **Steele** had kindly agreed to be the referee, the Squadron knew they weren't going to get any favours! The game started at a hectic pace, and the prison service were certainly having most of the play. It was quite apparent that we had underestimated their team, even though the average age must have been at least a cricket score. The Squadron side settled down, and eventually we got our reward – a goal, courtesy of **Sig** 'Scotty' **Scott**. After a hard-fought first half, everyone was happy to hear the halftime whistle, especially 'Stobie' and 'Denis'. Appropriate refreshments were served by **Sgt** 'First Class' **Michael Yendell**. The second half commenced, and it soon became apparent that the prison officers' nights out in Holland were taking their toll. Continuous pressure from the Squadron side eventually turned into a well-taken goal by **LCpl** 'Toddy' **Todd**. With a back four propped by **Maj Paul Bosher** and **WO2 (SSM) Karl Weaver**, it looked unlikely that the prison officers could fight back. However, owing to what can only be described as quality performances by **Graham Parker**, 'Breezy' and 'Wardy', the officers managed to shorten the scoreline due to a cool finish by **Mark Heary**.

Ted Quick, who was eventually voted 'man of the match', earned his title with an impressive performance keeping goal for the officers. The day ended with some traditional celebrations in the bar, which **Stuart Morrison** enjoyed more than most.

LIMA TROOP - 231 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Tp Comd **Lt Mayne**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Mitchell**

Firstly and with regret the Troop has said goodbye to **SSgt Mitchell** who has moved to 14 Sig Regt (EW) in lovely Wales after receiving his promotion earlier this year. He has been an excellent asset to the Squadron, and will be sorely missed by many. We all wish him and **Petra** a prosperous future. With the Squadron's commitments for the year, the Troop has unfortunately been disbanded until next April, and members of the Troop are now serving in Bosnia, The Falklands and back in sunny Krefeld. However, before everyone was blown to the four corners of the Globe, the Troop deployed on Exercise Lima-Llyn Backstop, which was a 9-Day adventurous training expedition to the Snowdonia National Park in North Wales. The activities were primarily lead by **Lt Mayne** (JSMEL), and **Cpl Casswell** (MLT). The weather for the expedition stayed mainly in our favour and all of the main peaks in the Snowdon Massif were climbed. We had our first examples of fear being shown when we ascended Snowdon via the Crib Coch arête. **Sig** 'Woahhh' **Learmonth** was definitely the most scared of heights although **Sig** 'Im not going up there' **Egan** was not far behind him. At the other end of the scale were **Sigs Mitchell** and **Kennet** who took every opportunity to climb up anything in sight. As well as the mountain walking days, people were given the opportunity to partake in rock climbing, mountain biking and deep-sea fishing. The Troop would also like to send its regards to a retired Royal Signals Lineman, **Malcolm Morris** who was last serving at 36 Sig Regt (V) in Colchester before most of the Troop were even born, who we met on one of the routes walked. Finally, the Troop would like to welcome **SSgt Young** who will not actually take over until the Squadron is reformed, but is most welcome.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON - EXERCISE LION SUN 05/00

Whilst the powers that be were sending the other 7 Sig Regt Squadrons off to the exotic climes of The Falkland Islands, Bosnia and Kosovo, it was decided that 232 Sqn would get the rough end of the deal and participate in Ex Lion Sun in Cyprus. To that end, the Advance Party (no emphasis on the party of course) departed these shores for the magical mystery tour to RAF Akrotiri via Munster, Stanstead and Brize Norton. Once arrived in Cyprus on a weary Thursday afternoon the intrepid travellers found themselves faced with many a locked door since everyone knocks off at 1330hrs……..Friday morning was spent in a frantic rush trying to tie up all the loose ends across all aspects of training before the Main Body flight landed on the Monday afternoon.

Thankfully the Main Body arrived safe and sound and we moved into the strangely named Camp Radio Sonde which had been taken over by the ever-helpful **SQMS** 'Yes but No' **Adie Chapman**. From there the training in earnest started with a Range package based at Akrotiri which was administered by **SSgt Shaun Cook** and his team of **Sgt Spence Ord**, **Sgt Rob Atherton**, **Sgt Julian** (yes it really is Julian !!) 'Drew the Brew' **Drewett** and **LCpl** going on **WO3 Bob Lovell**. All in all a good few days training apart from the interruptions caused by the Red Arrows fly pasts (posers!). The next week was spent at the other end of the Island at the Pyla Range complex where we had the luxury of living on the Range under the stars. The hot days were compensated by the cold nights although all agreed the Training was excellent. All that remained before the long awaited R&R was the long feared final Ex where **SSgt Al** 'Dingleov' **Ironside** and henchmen awaited us at every turn. The Exercise culminated in a full Sqn level attack on Paramali village where the bad guys were all killed and the victorious battleweary Troops retired to Radio Sonde for tea and medals. The vast majority of the Squadron then deployed on the R&R package on a mini-cruise to Egypt. There were some worried faces amongst the locals when some 83 thirsty soldiers embarked on the MV Princess Victoria bound for Port Said. We spent a long bus-bound day seeing the sights of Egypt before **Sgt** 'Disco' **Del Richards** entertained the boys and girls with some crazed dancefloor antics.

Upon returning to Cyprus, we then managed to squeeze in a victory in a football match against a local Cypriot team. **Sig Craig Harris** deserving a special mention as the resident football star and **SSgt** 'Oldest swinger in Town' **Stef Newton** scoring more goals than our linemen could count (3). All that remained was an Adventure Training period where we spent some quality time kayaking, power boating, water-skiing and the like before the eventual Endex and the impending return to BFG. Like most military Exercise there were areas which some enjoyed while others did not but it is pretty much agreed by all those who were there that Ex Lion Sun is one not to be forgotten in a hurry by all members of the Squadron.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON - DELTA TROOP - *by LCpl Anderson*

Yet again it has been a busy month for Delta Tp, including a three week deployment to Madrid for SAN 870, much to the delight of **SSgt** 'Stef' **Newton** and his bunch of merry men and girls. On the flip side though, SAN 874 was meant to deploy to Turkey to support the Turkish Brigade, but this was cancelled. Instead, **Sgt John Webber** and his crew had to make do with Soest training area and what it had to offer them - mainly nettle fields and farm yards full of raw sewage - unlucky lads!

There have been a couple of incidents this month. Top prize goes to **Sig** '17 stone and rising' **Gallard,** who took a bit of a dive out of the back of a Relay, managing to damage himself sufficiently to qualify for a couple of weeks sick leave back in blighty. Needless to say he was most upset at having to leave Krefeld for that long, but not as upset as the local gyros shop owner, whose takings have dropped dramatically. Second prize goes to **Sig** 'Simple' **Sim,** who decided that the quickest route over roundabouts was quite literally straight over them followed quickly by a bit of off-roading in the local farmer's field - he can now be seen going pale at the thought of the cost of repairs.

We offer up a big welcome from the Delta massif to **Cpl** 'Kev' **Brooker**, who has seen the light and come across from 16 Sig Regt. Also **Cpl Chris Rhodes**, **Bren** 'Randy' **Randerson**, **LCpls Craig Anderson**, **Sandra Evans** and **Sig Pam Hunt** who have all made the move from Tac Tp next door. Also, hello to **LCpl Becky Thompson** from Hotel Troop and **LCpl Bewick** and **Sig** 'JD' **Dennistoun** fresh from the factory.
Leaving us are **Cpl Steve** 'Geek 1' **Taylor** and **LCpl** 'Geek 2' **Bartlett** who have deserted to the newly formed CIS 'Geek' Troop also to **Sig Claire Davies** who's jumped ship over to Tac Troop. The troop is also losing **Sigs Rick** 'Pest' **Anderson** and **Toby** 'Straight outa Compton' **Rees** to another six month tour of Kosovo - try not to booze too much lads! The biggest farewell goes to **Mr Phil Hughes** and **Miss Paula Barrett**, who are on the move to civvy street. The Troop hopes everything goes well for them both when the baby arrives, and remember Phil, keep it real.

Congratulations and welcome back to **Sig Jase Holt** who got married to **Steph** - We wish you both the best of luck for the future (you'll need it Steph!). Last but by no means least, a big congratulations to **LCpl Dougie Porter** and his wife **Claire** on the birth of their baby boy **Connor** - Best wishes for the future. **Dougie** now looks like he's been on exercise for a month, and can be found wandering around the troop muttering things about nappies and toxic waste.

HOTEL TROOP
Tp Comd **SSgt Ironside**
Tp SSgt **SSgt McGuire**

As always another busy time for Hotel Troop. We welcome a few new faces but it appears we have more goodbyes. We'd all like to wish **LCpl** 'Tony' **Musgrave** a happy posting to 2 Sig Regt, and we hope **LCpl** 'Sean' **Dinsdale** has a groovy time in London - we hear the price of drinks will soon send him broke. We must also wish **Phil Hughes** all the best in his new casual Civilian life, and send him best wishes as a father to be. Goodbyes go to our elusive OC, **Lt Howarth**, who has deployed to Bosnia with 231 Sig Sqn. Good luck goes out to **Sig Murphy** as she takes time out to look after her newly born bouncing baby. **SSgt** 'Do one' **Ironside** now finds himself as OC Troop (not on a power trip, much) and **SSgt** 'Yes' **McGuire** arrived from 16 Sig Regt to take up the mantle of Troop Staffy. CIS section has also received a boost, with new blood being moved across from the other Troops. They now understand just how heavy those computers really are.

Our time and work has been largely filled with Exercise Prep and the exercises themselves. A splendid couple of weeks were spent up on

Sennelager training area, cabling in a very spick and span STAR(E) Headquarters in a row of bunkers. Other locations included the disused Napier Barracks Gym, Dortmund and The Chicken Factory near Gutersloh. The roar that could be heard when England beat Germany in Euro 2000 probably caused several hens to treble their egg laying output. **Cpl** 'El Cid' **Wilson** spent his Exercise sunning, I mean working hard with the SAN group in Spain. Lucky for some, eh?.

The Squadron set aside a couple of weeks this month to try and get everyone away for Adventure Training down in Bavaria. Most of the Troop managed to get the opportunity to participate in the various activities, including Hill walking and Rock Climbing. Finishing on a good note, the troop will be vastly depleted as everyone is soon taking time out on Summer Leave. As soon as we get back it will be straight into the normal grind with a range day and then the build up to the major exercise of the year, Ex Arrcade Falcon.

PAPA TROOP

First of all, the Troop would like to say 'Get the beers in' to the new Troop OC, **2Lt** 'Sprog' **Endean,** who has just arrived from his Troop Commanders course. A fond farewell to newly promoted 'Archie' **Gemmell** who is off to 14 Sig Regt (EW), and **Lt Noakes**, who is off to sunny Blandford. Also congratulations to the son of the CO 'Hoppy' for passing his cycling proficiency test, OR DID HE? The Troop has just returned from a weeks (well earned) adventure training down in Bavaria where **Sig** 'Postman Pat' **Sykes** was a bit confused about how a stamp cannot be used as a phonecard. The Troop is looking forward to summer leave but make the most of it because its exercise when you get back.

TAC TROOP - *by LCpl Williamson aided by Sig McColm.*

Tp Comd **Lt Lawson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Griffiths**

July has been yet another glorious month in the Corps for TAC HQ, with the usual round of hellos and goodbyes associated with the Squadron's roller coaster manning list. Hello to **Lt** 'Schoolboy' **Lawson**, **Cpl** 'Johno' **Johnson**, **LCpl Alex McMurray** and **Sig Claire Davies**. We also bid a fond farewell to **Sgt Rob Atherton**, who is moving to 39 Bde and Sig Sqn, **Cpl Randy Randerson**, who is off to Delta Tp, **LCpl Mark Reay** (231 Sqn) and **Capt** 'Pierre' **Farrimond**, who is posted to AAC Arborfield. Also a big unlucky to **Cpl** 'Peacemaker' **Cansfield**, who, whilst trying to grab the attention of some ladies on a night out, fell over and broke his leg - hope you are back on your feet again soon **Neil**! Congratulations go out to two sets of parents in Tac Tp, July saw the birth of **Steve** and **Sue Wilson**'s baby **Reece,** as well as **Dougie** and **Claire Porter's** baby **Connor** - and not forgetting congratulations to **Sig Andy Joynson**, who successfully passed P- Company.

TROOP BATTLEFIELD TOUR

At the end of June Tac Troop deployed to Ypres on a Troop outing, where we had the pleasure of camping in a local campsite, visited many local memorials and museums. A special thanks to **LCpl Al** 'Schumacher' **Ryall** for his excellent autobahn manoeuvres on the way down.

ADVENTURE TRAINING

On Sunday 17 July a handful of 232 personnel set off towards Bavaria, led by **Sgt** 'Disco Del' **Richards**. The journey was tedious and when we got there we found an uninhabited town called Wertach. The hill walking was led by **SSgt** 'Mountain goat' **Griffiths**, and a big thanks goes to **LCpl Rees** who helped us out by taking us kayaking for a couple of days. The other activity was rock climbing which was led by **Sgt** 'Brew' **Drewett** who instructed us well on inside and outside climbing walls. Well done to **LCpl** 'Chag' **Anderson** and **Sig** 'Stainsy' **McColm** for their efforts on the karaoke, I hear the local girls were very impressed. Thanks to everyone who was involved not forgetting **SSM Carter** for his hill walking knowledge.

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

Maj Rob MZ hands over command of the Air Portable Squadron to Maj Jonathan Gillespie, 10 August 2000

237 SIGNAL SQUADRON (EW)

Sqn Comd **Maj Drinkall**
Sqn SSM **SSgt Hughes**

For once it has been a quite period within the Troop due to most of our vehicles being deployed on Ex Iron Hawk. To start with we must say hello and welcome to the Squadron to **SSgt SQMS Craig, Cpl Coward, Cpl Daddow, LCpl Harvie** and **Sig Stratton** and farewell to **WO2 SSM Richardson** and **SSgt (SQMS) Kitchen** off to greener pastures.

The Regiment decided to hold a Regimental Fun Day on Sunday 23 July with the Troop being tasked to run the 'Human Bandit' as their stall. Congratulations must go to **LCpl** 'Dougie' **Douglas** for an excellent job on setting up and running the stall. How did you manage to be the only stall to lose money on the day? At least you know who your friends are and we still haven't discovered what is 'fun' about working on a Sunday! Congratulations must go to **WO2** 'Blacky' **Blackadder** on his promotion and commiseration's to **Sgt** 'Mac' **MacDonald** and **Sig Richardson** on their pending life sentences when they get married. Congratulations must go to **Sgt** 'Dave' **Keenan** on being the first person to be awarded the Troop Muppet award for his little incident with a Boughton, a winch, a Montago and a Wolf.... In a close second place was **Sig Richardson** who now holds the record for the longest time a generator could run without the fuel tap switched on and in third place was **Cpl** 'Paddy' **Gravey** for his little indiscretion with the police.At last someone out there has listened to the pleas and cries of the Nomadic Squadron Techs in their quest to find a home and found them a porta-cabin to use as a workshop, only for them to be told that they are not getting it because the Troop Commanders are moving out onto the shop floor. Now that the Troop offices are going to be empty the Techs will be moving into one of them, but there is a catch.... they can't move in until the end of October.

A question for all the operators in the Squadron, How long does it take for the brakes on a trailer to start smoking if the trailer hand break is left on? Answer: about four miles, but they didn't know the answer so they decided to try it out on two separate trailers on two different parts of the same journey!

TANGO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Phil Waddell**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Chris Mulligan**

Let us start in the usual manner by firstly acknowledging those dearly departed, and newly arrived. A big shout goes out to **LCpl Dave Terron**, who after many years of being Troop sprog educator has left us to re-educate Ireland in a more peaceful role. A warm welcome is extended to **LCpl Banks** who has just been posted in from the aforementioned place, the Troop would also like to welcome **Sigs Neale** and **Clarke** who have joined us straight from the factory, and can't believe their luck now that **LCpl Terron** has gone. We've only had a short amount of time to ourselves lately, Ops decided to spring the good news, 'You're all going to Canada at the end of August, but before you go you'll be playing enemy for 245 Sig Sqn, and send a det to the UOTC, complete two Jocomexes. Also send four blokes to do a BBGT, spend three days at Oakwood leisure park on a PR exercise, set up two stands for the Regimental open day, set up another det for an old boys reunion, prep for Canada, play cricket and still have Fridays off.' Nice one Ops!

The 245 Sig Sqn Exercise (Mouflon Summer) was an eleven day exercise which took place on your favourite training ground, and mine, sunny Salisbury Plain. Tango Tp were asked to provide a DEWCC det and a handful of men to act as enemy. During the Exercise certain members decided not to engage the enemy and thought it far more beneficial to go on a 14km tab, others found that it is possible to outrun a charging AFV 432 whilst in a reversing LandRover. At the end of the day the boys were asked to annoy, pester and kidnap any 245 Sig Sqn personnel which they did with good effect, but they do draw the line at engaging dets that have an infantry coy as support.

A three-day PR exercise at Oakwood leisure park gave the Troop a chance to show off some of their skills in front of the general public. A DEWCC det was put on display as well as a small assault course for the Troop to display their speed and athleticism in erecting a section of the PU 12m mast (why do all the good ideas come from seniors). The fruits of the PR Exercise are still being sampled.

237 get to grips with the local radio station

Now that all the vehicles have been shipped off to Canada the Troop are making good use of the quiet period and getting themselves on leave before Ops decide to drop any more bombshells. Finally, congratulations to **Cpl Dimmack** and **Cpl Piper** for being two of the hundred plus Corporals selected for promotion to Sergeant. Nuff said.

VICTOR TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Ashman** (Aus Army)
Tp WO **WO2 Watters**

The Troop would like to extend a warm welcome to **Cpl** 'Baz' **Keen, LCpls** 'Ken' **Dodd,** 'Village' **Green** and **Sig** 'Tracer' **Fraser.** We would also like to say goodbye and good luck in civvie street to **Sgt Bradbury, Cpl Zoe Wainwright** and **LCpl** 'Fred' **Perry,** and all the best to **Cpl Gareth Davies** and family on their posting to JSSU Digby. Farewell also to **Lt Hamish Ashman**, who is returning to Australia after his four month Long Look at Wales. Congratulations to **Cpl Danny Wilkins** on his recent marriage to **Emma**. We would also like to congratulate **Cpls Mick Haltam** and 'Giff' **Giffen** on their recent selection for promotion to Sergeant. It has been a very busy period work wise, preparing the Troop's vehicles and equipment for the forthcoming deployment to Canada on Ex Iron Hawk. During this period we also had an RSIT inspection thrown in for good measure, which was passed with flying colours. The Troop was also tasked with providing an Odette det to take part in a JFACTSU exercise in Scotland. The Regimental Families Day on Sunday 23 July saw the Troop painting tyres and signs for the target golf stand. On the day the weather and competition were both hot, with everyone trying to get their hands on one of the 'much coveted' trophies. During the afternoon a marked loss of accuracy was noted, possibly due to the rising temperatures and not the beer tent next to us.

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Hodges**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Griffiths**

A few changes as we said goodbye to OC W Tp, **Lt** 'Fi' **Stewart** and soon to be **Sgt Gray** who are both off to the damp sunshine of NI. Welcome to **SSgt (SupvR)** 'Use the force' **Timmis** and **SSgt (SupvR) Emmett**. Welcome back to KFOR Troop who are returning in a few days for a few hours socialising before departing on leave. The Squadron has been keeping itself busy with a few major deployments. Mouflon's Summer saw a full baseline deployment with TCAD's and DEWCC's on Salisbury plain. Beefed up with an additional detachment from 237 Sig Sqn we were able to put the new EW system through its paces in the field. A variety of successes and not so successes included everything from the **Sgt** 'Jock' **Marshelsay** led cavalry charge to near enemy attack on the TCAD position where the two sentries were beefed up by a Battalion of PWRR on TESEX. The latter never happened more by luck than judgement as the TCAD crew attempted to goad the SSM's boys into action.

Debus drills from a panzer

245 Signal Squadron in the field - Post Exercise turnaround

After a feverish week to turn around the kit we deployed to Germany for exercise Rhino Spear. This saw the DEWCC staff being exercised with 1 (UK) Armd Div and the TCAD crew provided the LOCON cell and the Gyros re-supply team. Back in the UK and after another week break the Squadron deployed to Sennybridge for it's annual battle camp.

Cpl Bastin (Int Corps) and LCpl Thompson (R. SIGNALS) lead the way in the Assault Course Competition

Assault Course Competition

Uncharacteristic weather made for Carribean conditions on the area; and the most evil midges known to the natural world. Somewhere along the way we managed to fit in RSITT and now the Squadron are in the midst of their well earned maximum leave.

640 TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Quinsey**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Flaherty**

It has been a relatively quiet period due to the fact that the vehicle transfer programme is still ongoing. However, there is a light at the end of the tunnel with the two Wildcat Detachments arriving back in the Troop., looking very shiny and impressive. The troop deployed on Ex Eagles Strike with the Sqn to Stranraer that proved to be an uneventful but very long drive. The exercise passed uneventfully except for being eaten alive by the Scottish wildlife! There are also four members of the Troop deployed on Op Basilica in Sierra Leone – **Q** 'Nige' **Watton Sgt Dave Scanlan, LCpl** 'The Boy' **Cranswick, Cpl Steve Frost** and **Cpl Andy Nichols** who was on the first deployment and has since returned.

HELLOS, GOODBYES AND CONGRATULATIONS

Hello to our new Troop Commander, **Capt Quinsey**, his wife **Teresa** and the new Troop mascot 'Clyde', **SSgt Clements** and his wife **Tracy-Ann**. Also hello to **Sigs Pete Evans, Chris Wilson** and **Dave Stevens** who were posted in straight from the factory. We say goodbye to **Capt White, Sig** 'Woody' **Woodrow** (on promotion) who is posted to 21 Sig Regt (AS) and **Sig Mark Watson** on betraying us to join the LEWT. We say congratulations to **LCpls Steve Frost** and **Glen Roberts** on their promotions to Corporal. Also to **Sig Marcus Taylor** on his marriage to **Zoe**.

XVI 16 SIGNAL REGIMENT

A report from one of the Regiment's outposts (soon to be our new home!).....

VISIT BY THE MASTER OF SIGNALS
MAJ GEN I. O. J. SPRACKLING OBE - 13 JULY 2000

On 13 July the Regiment was delighted to welcome The Master of Signals, **Maj Gen I. O. J. Sprackling OBE**, during his recent visit to Germany. Although time was short The Master spent an enjoyable morning visiting 252 Sig Sqn in the 'big house' and 230 Sig Sqn.

Chief Tech Taylor, RAF, explains to the Master what really goes on in SCP(R), looking on (L-R): Maj Brian Greenwood, SSgt (FofS) Campbell and Capt Graham Blondell

SSgt (SQMS) Ward doesn't believe a word of it! Neither does SSgt Marshall whilst Lt Simon Gladwin is still thinking about it!

Prior to lunch with the Officers, The Master kindly presented LS&GC Medals to **WO2 (SSM) Hood** - 230 Sig Sqn and **Sgt Deegan** - Bruggen Troops.

The Master, medal recipients and their families also the CO, Lt Col Tony Morphet and WO1 (RSM) Fradley

BRUGGEN TROOPS
Tp Comd **Capt Sarah Stonier**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Gaz Tinsley**
Line SSgt **SSgt** 'Jonah' **Jones**

LIFE AT BRUGGEN

RAF Bruggen, situated on the Dutch/German border and home to some 6000 service men and families, is also home to a small but growing number of Royal Signals soldiers.

Bruggen Troops is part of 252 Signal Squadron, 16 Signal Regiment and is responsible for communications infrastructure at RAF Bruggen and close support of communications systems employed by the RAF. The Troop consists of 80+ soldiers, mainly Telemechs with Technical, Stores and MT/LAD support. The Telemechs not only support the RAF Bruggen infrastructure but are also deployed through out the world to places such as Kosovo, Bosnia, Falklands and Ascension Islands as well as providing support to exercises in Germany and Corsica. With the Regiment moving from Rheindahlen to Bruggen in 2002 the Troop has become involved in the planned tear down of RAF facilities and the introduction of Army facilities.

Life at Bruggen can be good and the facilities provided by the 'boys in blue' are second to none. However, life is extremely busy. On average each soldier in the Troop will complete two detachments in a year ranging from 2–6 months duration, to any of the theatres above. Needless to say, juggling career courses, leave and deployments gives the Troop hierarchy a bit of a headache!

HELLO, GOODBYE & CONGRATULATIONS

Welcome to the following:
Capt Sarah Stonier
Cpl Andy Fisher
Sig 'Spotty' **Spotswood**
Sig Gaz Fuins
Sig Andy Stewart

Goodbye to:
Sig Jim 'Crazy' **Lawrence**

Congratulations to:
Sgt Ralph 'Greengrass' **Deegan** on his selection for promotion to SSgt and LS&GC.
Cpl Carr - on passing RSJCC.
Cpl Maher - on passing RSJCC and getting married – phew!
Cpl Dave Cascarino - on selection for promotion to Sergeant.

SPORT

On the sporting front the Troop has, whenever possible, fielded teams in both the RAF Bruggen Station Commander's Cup and the Leicester Trophy run by the Regiment. Congratulations to all who have 'donned armour' to do battle with the 'blue jobs' in Bruggen and to those who try to show the rest of Regiment that the Troop really does exist! Congratulations to **Sig Sean Peart** on competing for the Combined Services in the swimming pool and commiserations to **LCpl** 'Parsley' **Farrow, LCpl** 'Devo' **Figel, Sig** 'Mongo' **McFaul** and **Sig** 'Onion' **Ennion** for getting their 'mugs' in every national newspaper and glossy magazine during the England / Portugal Game in Euro 2000.

ENTERTAINMENT

Now we know the Troop works hard, plays hard and, as you would expect, we like to party hard. Every Friday night the Troop bar is filled with laughter and much bell ringing as certificate and medal recipients show their delight by buying the beers, followed by the clanging of the bell for those who have screwed up or been noticed during the week. Further to this merriment we have had a few function nights in the bar including a highly successful 'Who wants to be a Millionaire?' night set up by **Cpl Stu Shaw** and **LCpl** 'Devo' **Figel**. No one won anything but isn't that the point of the game?

FINAL THOUGHT

See you all in Bruggen in 2002. Meanwhile back at the ranch....

SUPPORT TROOP 230 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Tp Comd **Lt** 'Beccy' **Knightly Brown**
Tp SSgt **SSgt McNeill**

Life in Support Tp will be a quieter place with the departure of **Sgt** 'Chalky' **White** to 1 ADSR. After all, it was **Sgt** 'Vertically Challenged' **White** who introduced the charming square of pink carpet to the office, which has really done wonders in collecting dirt! The Troop's recent camping experience was Ex Arrcade Falcon where we duly impressed two potential officers who were glad to escape to Rowallen Company for a rest. Will we ever see them again? Somehow, on the biggest exercise of the year **Sgt** 'Chalky' **White** managed to put himself on a golf course and **SSgt McNeill** was otherwise engaged (but at least he can sit down now). In between our camping experiences the Troop managed to participate enthusiastically in the final Leicester Trophy events, coming a glorious last in the endurance competition but managed to swim into a respectable third place overall. Thank you **Sig Smithson** for your attempt at the Butterfly – every effort counts!

TN 016 230 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Tp Comd **Lt O. Dinnis**
Tp SSgt **SSgt D. Coleman**

There have been a few additions and departures in the last few months. We have said goodbye to **LCpl Danny** 'Two Bikes' **Jones**, who left for the promise of a helicopter ride in Colchester after his Class 1 - Good Luck. Also gone are **Cpl Euan** 'Mr Tolerance' **Cowie** on temporary attachment in Bosnia, **Sig** 'Linford Christie' **Kinzett** on transfer to Kowloon Tp, following in the footsteps of **LCpl Del** 'Cow Head' **Hunter. LCpl Gaz** 'No I'm Not' **Jack** left on an inter-troop posting and soon to be heading across the water is **Cpl Billie** 'The Fish' **Beaumont** currently having a BLAST. We have welcomed **Sig** 'Keen and Green' **Briscoe, Sig** 'Bog Brush' **Nowell, Cpl** 'Dodgy Number Plates' **Simpson, Cpl** 'No I can't speak German' **Tyrrell, Sgt Dave** 'Fresh from Rehab' **Taylor** and, last but not least, **Sgt Dean** 'I've been here eight months and still haven't been in the Wire' **Wilkinson.**

BATTLEFIELD TOUR TO EBEN EMAEL - *by Lt O. Dinnis*

With a little 'direction' from the CO the Subalterns of 230 Sig Sqn organised an Officers and Warrant Officers Battlefield Tour of the Belgian Fortress at Eben Emael. The visit started with a quick presentation by **Lt Simon** 'Russian Mafia Jacket' **Gladwin** and **Lt Rebecca** 'Crikey' **Knightly-Brown.** For the uninitiated the action at Eben Emael was the prelude to the German invasion of Western Europe in 1940 - 80 odd German paratroopers neutralised the strongest fortress in Europe manned by 700 Gunners. Not bad! The fort was supposed to destroy the approaches into Belgium but failed and allowed the Wehrmacht to catch the Allies unprepared and push them back to Dunkirk. Thanks to **Maj Jonathan** 'Desk Jockey' **Turner** for pinging us with that. The group travelled to the area in undisguised luxury and after studying the ground, settled down for lunch at a local hostelry. In the afternoon the tour around the fort was conducted by a local Belgian Guide – essential for navigating around the miles of interior tunnels! Lessons learnt included: all round defence includes looking up, line doesn't survive bombing, never stand in front of a locked door and never trust the enemy to do what you expect!

ANOTHER FAREWELL

230 Sig Sqn would like to take this opportunity to pass on its best wishes to **Capt Glynn** 'Bouncing' **Buxton**. Following a high-speed attempt to get close to nature at the DZ **Glynn** has been hospitalised for some time now. His replacement, **Capt Gareth Oliver** has arrived from across the water so we also say goodbye to **Capt** (Finally!) **Nigel** 'Three times the charm' **Frances-Megann** who has squeezed into **Glynn's** shoes in the meantime. The award for the most tactless comment about **Glynn's** accident goes to **SSgt (SQMS)** 'BAS' **Ward**. His request to the pilot of the helicopter that arrived to scrape **Glynn** off the DZ and take him to hospital went along the lines of, 'Wait a couple of minutes whilst we repack our rigs so we can hitch a ride up to 5000ft.' The latest we hear is that the recovery is going well - Good Luck **Glynn**!

If responding to any advertisements in *The WIRE* please mention that you saw it in your Corps magazine

!STOLEN!

Alarge quantity of bronzes and porcelain were stolen from a private residence in Cambridge on 13 July 2000. Amongst the items stolen was a pair of bronze figures depicting Mercury and Iris. Signed Bologna. Could be copies by the Italian master Giovanni Bologna. If anybody has any information they are asked to contact Robin Mortimer at Cambridge Police Station on 01223 823710 quoting reference 40722/00

21 SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO **Lt Col Peter Gillespie**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Al Jenkins**

MEDAL PRESENTATIONS

In July, we were pleased to invite the Deputy Commander Joint Helicopter Command **Brig Gary Coward OBE** to present operational, LS&GC and Accumulated Campaign Service Medals. During a short (but perfectly formed) parade, Kosovo medals were awarded to over 30 members of the Regiment. In addition, **Cpl Paul Selby** was awarded his NATO (FRY) medal and **LCpl Jason 'Clem' Clements** was awarded his Kosovo Commendation. Afterwards in the WO's & Sgt's Mess, LS & GC medals were awarded to **WO2 (RQMS) Nige Roberts**, **Sgt Chris Gearing** and **Cpl Paul Selby** and Accumulated Campaign Service Medals were awarded to **Maj Jim Forrest** and **Sgt Ian 'Billy' Belshaw**. As if **Cpl Selby** had not had enough chocolate frogs for one day, **Brig Coward** finally announced that he was incorrectly dressed and presented him his third tape … congratulations **Sergeant Paul Selby**!!

The photo shows Brig Coward presenting medals to the front row
(L-R): Sig Reeve, LCpl Smith, Sig Steele, Sgt Clayton-Batty, Sig Horne, Cpl Grice, Cpl Richardson, Sig Sutherland, Sig Perks, Sig Tidball, Sgt Ward, Sig Watt. Holding post at the front of the parade - SSgt Gilbert.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Please do not ask for photographs sent for publication in **The WIRE** to be returned, unless they are really irreplaceable.

Contributors should be aware of the fact that although every care is taken with contributions, they should not risk losing photographs which cannot be replaced.

Contributors should also be aware that unless digital photos are saved to disk at a minimum of 300 dpi mono and 400dpi coloured, they will not be used.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Chas Dale**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Nick Organ**

The Squadron has had (another) busy time lately (*Oh, come off it HQ Sqn, according to The WIRE,* everyone has a busy time! 'Think of something new to say', says the Regt 2IC). The normal routine in barracks is a mega-Board of Officers, Regimental Open-Day and Adventure Training. The OC, **Maj Chas Dale** and **WO2 (SSM) Nick Organ** were heavily involved in the Open Day and a lot of work and late nights went into ensuring that the event ran smoothly. There was a large turnout from the local community and the day was a great success due the hard work of all involved.

Maj Chas Dale
remains optimistic despite the growing storm clouds behind
'Café 21'

Adventure Training was held at Halton Camp in Lancashire. Some good quality training and 'FUN' was had by all. Most personnel who attended managed to complete the '3 Peaks Walk' over Whernside, Pen-y-Ghent and Inglebrough – 25 miles over three peaks above 600m is a quality day on the mountains! Other activities included climbing, caving, canoeing and mountain biking, as well as cultural trips into Lancaster – museums open until three in the morning oop north, honest!

The CO, Lt Col Peter Gillespie takes a side-seat as Cpl Eskdale holds up the cairn on Pen-y-Ghent

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

Tech Adjt **Capt Lee Wookey**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Spence Ord**

As usual, the past few months have been quite hectic (*Oh no! says the Regt 2IC*). The Regimental Open Day on 7 July took up much time with preparation and rehearsals for the 'It's a Knock Out' competition. The so-called 'dry run' was at no-time dry, especially afterwards (cheers **SSgt (SQMS) Paul Coates**).

SSgt Dave Wilson looks on as the 43 (Wx) Sig Sqn (V) team tackle the 'Wet B'ball' game. What's the 'B' stand for?!!

The main event recently for the Troop was the Adventure Training package, which was set up by **WO2 (SSM) Nick Organ** and **Capt Dave Whitaker**. Everyone who went did enjoy the week away with a few noticeable performances from **Cpl Rob** 'The Tears' **Murray** who couldn't work out if his harness was too tight or whether he was just enjoying himself too much! **Cpl Bobby Sands**, who enjoyed the isolation of the Yorkshire Dales that much that he decided it was too much to deface the natural beauty by keeping his clothes on! **Sgts Billy Belshaw** and **Chris Gearing** on showing everyone how good admin is carried out by SNCOs … Oh no, I've got that bit completely wrong! Not forgetting **SSgt Dave** 'George Doors' **Wilson** in his new appointment as Surplus to Requirement, had hours of fun in the thermal suit provided for the potholing. His CV is in the post for a new show of Shooting Stars. **Sgt Ian** 'Big Bergen' **Smith** was one of the UEL's for the walking. His group knows the real meaning of UEL … Un-Excusably Lost! Also, was **Sgt Chris Gearing** really that scared of canoeing or did the mini-bus really run out of fuel? All in all, the week spent Oop North was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who went, especially the evening entertainment laid on in Lancaster. A big thanks goes out to **WO2 (SSM) Nick** 'Recce master' **Organ** and **Capt Dave** 'Abseil King' **Whitaker**.

There have been a few new arrivals to the Troop — the main contribution being from the Regimental Tele Mechs — we have them all under the watchful eye of **Cpl Pete Richanjs**. A huge 'well done' must go out to **Sig Russ** 'Sniper' **Russell** who has now passed his APWT prior to UNTAT training. You see it's not that hard! Also newly arrived to the troop is **LCpl Stay Angelidi** from the factory and also **SSgt Spence Ord** and family from Germany. **LCpl** 'Jonno' **Johnson** and **Cpl Keith Gilbert** also join the troop from 220 Sig Sqn, posted into the ISM Team (that now makes up the Troop 4 Ball!!) Naturally with all these hello's there is a few goodbyes. Firstly to **Cpl** 'Bobby' **Sands** who has gone to Civ Div after ten years service. Good luck in Spain and get those sideboards down! **Chris Gearing** who is the Troop RLC weasel, posted to Germany. His valiant efforts over the last three years have not gone unnoticed - cheers for your jokes - also to **LCpl Percy Purcell** who has left us to join 244 Sig Sqn. This now means he will have to get up half an hour earlier to get to work on time.

Finally, the Troop wishes to send a huge congratulations to **WOI (FofS) Ady Knight** on being selected for Commissioning. The big question is will you still be home in time for tea and medals?

MOTOR TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

MTO **Capt Pete Griffiths**
MT Sgt **Sgt** 'Mac' **MacDonald**

August and September has seen the arrival and departure of a number of MT personnel. Firstly, we would like to say wellcome to the new MTWO, **WO2 Chalkie White** and his wife **Jackie** and family, all the way from 1 Div – how pleased we are to see them all. Welcome, also, to **Cpls Knight** and **Jay**, **LCpls Mankin** and **Russell**, all newly posted in and **Sigs Coxon** and **Laurenson** who have been inter-Squadron posted from 220 and 244 Sig Sqns – welcome to the better world! Farewells to **Cpl Andy Doyle** who is off to Bassingbourn, **Cpl Berry** and family off to Aldershot, **LCpl Berry** off to 220 Sig Sqn and **Sigs Singlewood** and **Watt**, both off to Civ Div. Good luck in the future!

QUARTERMASTER'S (GENERAL) DEPARTMENT

QM (Gen) **Maj Tom Dean**
RQMS(Gen) **WO2 (RQMS) Nige Roberts**

The QM (Gen) Dept has had, for the second Wire running, a number of changes to our vast military staff. First of all congratulations on two counts to **Sig Emma O'Neill,** both on her recent promotion to LCpl and also on the addition to her family, a son called **Sean**. Welcome to the Department to both **Cpl Mark Brown** and **Sig Glen Gibbs**, who joined us from QM (Tech) Dept. Both of them have hit the ground running, becoming immediately involved in the Regimental Board of Officers. They are now both able to impress their friends and families by explaining the difference between the types of tables and chairs spread about the Regiment, the winter nights will just fly by lads!

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Jim Forrest**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Dave Giles**

It has been a hectic three months for this Squadron but there is finally light at the end of the tunnel. The repercussions of the Regimental Board of Officers and the second squadron move in under six months has tested the resourcefulness and patience of all ranks. Nevertheless, we are now in an asbestos free and watertight hangar and, with completion of the works services in August, we will finally have a working environment, which fulfils the Squadron's needs. The Squadron continues to be busy providing assets to the Joint Helicopter Command and has deployed assets to Mozambique and Sierra Leone. The future is busy with commitments to Ex Iron Hawk in Canada and the preparation and training packages required for the approaching MAPPS equipment trial being conducted by this squadron. The closedown of the SH Force Signal Troop in Split continues to free up much needed manpower from what has been five years of commitment to Op Palatine.

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

Well it has been a busy couple of months for all of us at SHQ, especially for **WO2 (FofS) Allie Duncan** ('post me another leave app. Oh yeah! Send it c/o the golf course'). All have been very busy moving up to our new hangar and moving lamp posts to the middle of the street much to the annoyance of the OC Sqn. Despite the hectic timetable of most **LCpl Dave** 'Bob' **Heath** who has tried to convince everyone he has been working hard down at Bath University with the British Bobsleigh Team in preparation for the forthcoming season. Possibly an Olympic hopeful, we'll keep our fingers crossed, as I am sure he will. Congratulations to **Rory** and **Emma O'Neill** for their bundle of joy, **Sean Kieran**, sleep tight you two! Also to **Sgt,** yes **Sgt, Dave Clayton-Batty** and **Cpl** 'Claymore' **Clement** on their promotions. It is also welcome to **LCpl Jim** 'Essex' **Nye**, **LCpl Peter Piper** and the new Yo! Man, **WO2 (YofS) Bentley**. Cheerio and good luck to **Matty Lee** who is down in Blandford on his Class 1 - shouldn't be gone for long now. Finally all the best to **Nikki Ryan** off to Civvy Street after doing some rather strenuous fast learning at the Motor Cycle Training Centre – well that's what they told me it stood for!

CHARLIE TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Murray Macdonald**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Russ Ezard**

After what seemed like an eternity, C Tp joined the rest of the Squadron in the move from the 'Black Hole of Doom' (Old Hangar) to a rather nice ex-Navy hangar on the other side of Camp. This has been a big morale boost and now vehicles can be worked on without the need for big-softy jackets and torches.

The Spearhead MAOT deployed on Op Palliser in May and spent some quality time being used as a taxi around Lunghi Airport. All those that deployed – **LCpl Pearson**, **Sig** 'Chris' **Reeve** and eventually **Sgt** 'Si' **Oldman** - seemed to have a good time and came back complete with suntan and without Malaria. Op Palatine is ongoing and has seen a number of the Troop deploying and returning from Split, again with the

obligatory suntan along with armfuls of CDs and Duty Free. The exercise program has been limited for most of the Troop due to 'The Biggest Board of Officers in the World…Ever!', but has still managed to deploy on Ex Eagles Flight and Ex Eagles Strike (with 16 AA Bde), Ex Scorpion Strike (Sqn Battle Camp) and Ex Red Scorpion, to name but a few. Most of the Squadron are looking forward to deploying on Ex Iron Hawk in Canada and elements of the Troop will be off on Ex Arrcade Fusion in September.

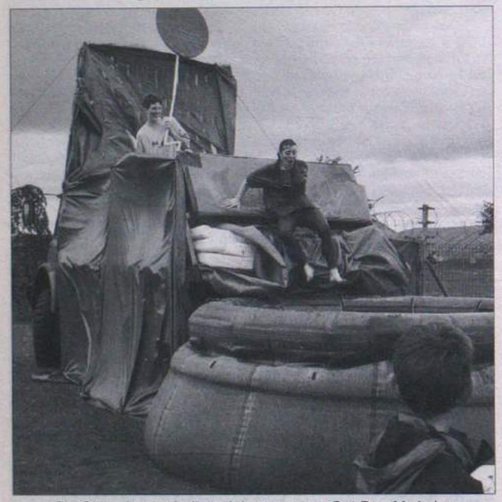
A week of quality adventure training was conducted at the end of May in Barnstaple. The Troop had an excellent time walking, climbing, canoeing and, of course, the drinking of some cups of beer. The week's experiences left **2Lt** 'Jez' **Wadia** with nightmares about a bright yellow canoe (how strange), which still haunt him now on his Tp Comds Course.

A few welcomes to the Troop: **LCpl Steve Riste** and **LCpl Nathan Eldridge**, who both came to us from NI. **LCpl Dave Mears**, fresh from his Class 1, **LCpl Dave** 'I wanna be the Unit Fire Officer' **Horton**, from 16 AA Bde, **Sgt Daz Kidd** from ATR Bassingbourn and **Sgt Matt** 'Never Stops Talking' **McDonald** from 3RHA. A few goodbyes: **LCpl Stu** 'Jonno' **Johnston**, off to the ISM Team to skive before heading off to Civvy Street, **LCpl Graeme** 'London' **Antrobus** and **Sig Lee Davison**, both off to cultivate their sideys in NI. Goodbye also to **2Lt Mike** 'Can't Say No to a Drink' **Barnes**, off to university in Nottingham after a short stint with the Regiment. Also **LCpl Pearson**, who almost left the Army whilst still in Sierra Leone and **Cpl** 'Reg' **Holdsworth**, who is off to work for Motorola and start a new life. Many thanks to all of you for all the hard work you put in to the Troop.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Lt Sarah Irwin**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Mark Gilbert**

June was far from ideal, with the Troop in the middle of a Board of Officers and carrying out the second hanger move in six months. Eventually life got less turbulent and the Troop soon established itself in the new hanger. Several members of the troop took off on 'Op Signet' – a month rambling in the Canadian Rockies, whilst the remainder stayed to keep the home fires burning. The Troop was responsible for running the dunk tank for the Regimental Open Day with superb performances from **Sigs** 'Dunkum' **Tidball** and **Suzy** 'Ball Fetcher' **James**. **Cpl** 'Gilly' **Gilbert** was responsible for the flow of chilled beer and fleecing the civvies for a good cause. **Sgt Aidy Watts** put in a very brief appearance but vanished once splashed. £125 made and a good day had by all!



Sig Suzy James 'adjusts' the target as Sgt Bev McAuley tests the water ... again!!

As the Troop selected to conduct the MAPPS trial, it is all hands back to training to convert all troop members into Area Sys Ops. We welcome troop 'new boy' **LCpl John Sherwin** and his wife and congratulate him on his promotion, along with **Marcus Bailey**, promoted to Sergeant last month. Sad farewells are said to **Cpl** 'Gilly' **Gilbert** who went to work with HQ Sqn and **Sig Clara Rowlands** who moved to Civvy Street – well almost, Wales!

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj David Bizley**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Paul Williams**

ALPHA TROOP AMF(L) - *by Sig Steve Beal*

Alpha Troop has enjoyed a busy summer period, with various exercises and activities. For the duration of May, the troop deployed to Hungary on Ex Ardent Ground. The Exercise went well and a good time was had by all! The hosts were very welcoming and we enjoyed the fruits of their country (cheap beer and pretty girls … *but not the boys*).

On returning from Hungary, the Regiment held an internal Board of Officers. Everyone was thrilled about this and times were hard … late nights and hard work. However, the Regiment is now once again, shipshape, and all counted! The month of July saw **Sig Matt** 'Simmo' **Simpson**, go away to Penhale in Cornwall with 19 Cd Trg Team, based at Colerne, on their mini-Battle Camp. Other members of the Troop, **Cpl Paul Annetts**, **LCpl** 'Boggy' **Marsh** and **Sig Rachel Riley** went to Longmoor and taught another cadet team comms skills. July also brought Wimbledon fortnight. **Sig Andy Day** attended as a steward and had a fantastic time. His most memorable moments were clearly dominated by the sheer excellence and technical supremacy of stance and technique of the players ... 'You should have seen **Anna Kornikova** when she's waiting to receive a serve!'

Colerne Activities Week and Regimental Open Day was a success, with over £300 raised. The Troop set up an arctic warfare demonstration stand displaying all the equipment used in extreme cold conditions. We also ran BV206 rides around our cross-country course, which was by far the most popular event of the day. The Royal Signals Recruiting Team were very impressed with our display and may use it for future demos. Recent changes to the Troop: we would like to welcome **SSgt Jack Hawkins** from 94 Sig Sqn, **Sgt** 'Sven' **Gronn** from 15 Sig Regt and **Sigs Albury**, **Hall**, **Smith** and **Addison** from the factory. Good-byes to **SSgt (now WO2) Daz Sheerin**, **Cpl** 'Olie' **Oliver**, **Cpl Nick Hill**, **LCpl** 'Boggy' **Marsh**, **LCpl Richardson**, **LCpl Phil** 'PHD' **Smith**, **Sig (LCpltobe) Andy Day** and **Sig Liesa Howson**.

The ongoing Op Agricola has seen, **Cpl Williams**, **LCpl Eltringham**, **LCpl Evans**, **Sigs Owens** and **Riley** deploy on four-month tours …see you at Christmas! Currently the Troop is preparing for Ex Adventure Exchange in Greece and we are all looking forward to this one as our suntans from Hungary are fading!

BRAVO TROOP

CCF TRAINING CAMP, LONGMOOR (7-22 July 2000)

Cpl 'Paul' **Annets**, **LCpl** 'Boggie' **Marsh**, **Sigs** 'Rachael' **Riley** and 'Daz' **McAlister** were sent to Longmoor Camp to teach the CCF some Basic Signalling Skills on their summer camp. The package involved the cadets learning how to operate a PRC 320 in a man-pack role using correct voice procedure. They were then shown how to erect a 5.4m mast and then in their sections had a race. The first to erect the mast won a prize. Each section was then sent on a patrol, which involved **Sig** 'Daz' **McAlister** being a special agent and the cadets were to use the PRC 320 to send messages back to HQ. The two weeks were much enjoyed by all and the Royal Rifle Volunteers appreciated the assistance given by the Regiment

EXERCISE EAGLES STRIKE (14- 22 July 2000)

Another success for the Regiment was Ex Eagles Strike up in Scotland. A lot of knowledge and experience was gained, especially by **Sigs** 'Stew' **Parsons**, 'Frank' **Reeves** and 'Damion' **Shepherd**, all have whom have recently arrived from Blandford and this was their first exercise. The exercise itself went pretty smoothly and the weather held out all week and the sun was shining for the first time in the history of Scotland! There is no dirt to be dished out after this exercise and, to my knowledge, everyone is squeaky clean ... hah! We returned to Colerne and completely turned round the wagons. By then, I think, everyone was ready for a good night out on the tiles.

SQUADRON ADVENTURE TRAINING - *by Sig Lea Snell*

Quite an eventful week was had by all at Fremington Camp, near Barnstable. They tried everything from rock climbing to water-skiing and plenty of socialising. Everyone seemed to have a good time except **LCpl** 'Si' **Lee**, who has only just realised that the sun burns – he ended up with 1st degree buns and massive blisters on his back. Nobody laughed … *much*! Then when it came to the aerial death slide (the name says it all). I don't think anyone was a willing volunteer, especially to hold the ropes when **Sig** 'Sadsack' **Sutherland** was bombing down the slide. He almost took out Fremington Camp and taking **Sig** 'Mat' **Simpson** with it. Overall a very enjoyable week and we'd like to say thanks to all the instructors and **WO2 (YofS)** 'Steve' **Firth** for giving up his time to pass on his wind surfing expertise.

20th NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES JULY 2000 - SAN ANTONIO TEXAS

by WO2 (RQMS) Geordie Merrie

For several years I have been actively involved with the British Ex-Servicemen and Women's Wheelchair Sports Association (BEWSA), a charitable organisation with over 80 members, whose purpose is to rehabilitate disabled ex servicemen and women through sport. Over the past two years I have had the honour to be assistant team coach to **WO1 Eddie Larrard** RLC, preparing the Great Britain team for the 20th Paralysed Veterans Association Games to be held in San Antonio, Texas.

PHASE 1: PRE - TRAINING

Having lost our traditional training venue at RAF Cosford, I approached 21 Sig Regt (AS) and BEWSA was kindly afforded the use of all sports facilities within Azimghur Barracks and accommodation for both the athletes and able-bodied assistants. The scene was now set and all that remained was to conduct a recce of the camp. With **Mr Bob Currant**, the QM Department handyman, strapped into a wheelchair and me pushing, we set off around the Barracks to carry out a feasibility study on disabled accessibility. By early February 2000 the requisite wheelchair ramps had been installed and we were up and running (no pun intended). The first training weekend took place at Azimghur Barracks during March and, with the kind permission of **WO1 (RSM) Al Jenkins**, the athletes and able bodied assistants gathered in the Sergeants' Mess to discuss official BEWSA business under the chairman, **Mr Edwin Thomas** (ex Royal Navy). It had taken some time to persuade the Regimental QMSI **WO2 Gary Pither** APTC, that a 20-mile route march in full CEMO might not go down too well, and this was excluded. Even so, after the training programme was handed out, there were a number of spontaneous gasps and comments such as, 'What time is reveille?' and, 'We'll never accomplish this in two days!' We needed a drink – and did!

After an early call the athletes and assistants made their way to the gymnasium to participate in archery, basketball, discus, javelin, shooting, shot, swimming, table tennis, wheelchair slalom and a variety of track events. In the morning, both the disabled athletes and assistants played team games, culminating in water polo and, after a hearty lunch, the athletes were free to train at their own disciplines. At the end of day one, both athletes and assistants were looking forward to a relaxing evening. However, the training continued, as one of the disciplines at the Games was to be pool or 9-Ball, and everyone needed practice. Despite a late night, Sunday training started on time, although the warm up took longer! Training ended at midday, with some athletes having to travel as far as Northumberland. Early opinions indicated that the training weekend had been a great success and everyone was looking forward to the next – honestly! As one training weekend seemed to merge with another, the time for selection soon arrived, eventually, eleven athletes were selected to represent Great Britain, each to compete in five disciplines:

Mr Jack Brooks	Royal Navy
Mr James Conway	Army – Guards
Mr Michael Marten	Royal Navy
Mr Robert Cox	Army – Cheshire Regt
Mr Andrew McErlean	Army – REME
Mr Stuart Harley	Army – R Anglian
Mrs Margaret Mitchell	Army – UDR
Mr Paul Jackson	Army – Guards
Mr Richard Simmons	Army – RE
Mr John Liddie	Royal Marines
Mr Edwin Thomas	Royal Navy

THE TEAM

The able bodied assistants to selected to accompany the athletes were WO1 Eddie Larrard RLC (Team Coach), WO2 (RQMS) 'Geordie' Merrie, Mr Brian Mitchell, Mr Albert Mack, Mrs Marilyn Thomas, Mrs Pauline Simmons, Miss Joy Grindley and Capt Stuart Davies RAMC. Next Stop: TEXAS!

PHASE 2: THE GAMES

Spirits were high as we gathered at Gatwick on 1 July 2000. The task of getting eleven athletes, wheelchairs and sports wheelchairs, baggage and equipment through the check-in was exhausting. Eventually everyone settled back to enjoy the flight. At Houston we were met by a charming young lady, **Stacey Toomey** of Continental Air Lines, who was a model of efficiency as she smoothed our passage through customs and onto the final leg of the journey. Our reception at San Antonio, organised by the wonderful **Shirley Bailey**, was heralded by a band of pipes and drums along with members of the local British Ex-Patriot Sports Club of San Antonio (who attended the Games and gave fantastic support to all of the British athletes). We were transported to our hotel and, after settling in, decided to go to the local Hooters diner (where girls, shorts and big hooters were in abundance) – no, there are no photos!

The next day, the Team visited Sea World, organised by the San Antonio Sports Club. **John Liddie, Jacko, Andrew** and **Stu** experienced the Steel Eel Roller Coaster and Great White (loop the loop) while **Mike Martin** settled for a ride on the Log Chute. The following morning, the Team registered and spent the day preparing equipment before attending the opening ceremony that evening - let the Games begin.

ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB
YACHT CHARTER

Unit and Family Sailing - Skippered and Bare Boat
Contact: **Cpl Kendell**
02392 765668
m.kendell@yachtclub.swinternet.co.uk

Size matters!

Five long days of fierce competition followed, as the athletes competed in each of their five disciplines. The organisation was superb: transport, feeding arrangements and the events themselves rolled on like a well-oiled machine. From the outset the Team started to win medals and, by day three, was in double figures.

Mr Mike Martin at the start of the 5km Road Race

Mr Andrew McErleanon his way to winning a silver medal

I would have included a few words about every individual's achievements during the Games but, instead, have settled for one to cover all OUTSTANDING. Two events do, however, deserve a special mention. The team of six athletes in shooting won four gold, one silver and one bronze in the four categories, a tremendous achievement. Secondly, in basketball, although **John Liddies'** team just missed out on a medal, **Jacko's** team battled through to the final. This match drew the biggest crowd of the Games and, taking **Jacko** to their hearts, every time he got the ball the stadium resounded to cries of **'Jacko, Jacko'**. It was, perhaps, fitting that he scored the winning basket to secure the gold medal.

The Team finally accumulated a massive 19 gold, 14 silver and 9 bronze medals, a wonderful achievement.

PHASE 3: THE CELEBRATIONS

By the end of the Games, the Team had gained celebrity status for their late evening training sessions at Hooters and was well prepared, therefore, for the official closing ceremony and banquet, held in the Marriot River Centre Hotel. Beginning with pre-dinner cocktails, the tables were lavishly decked and a cowboy boot, full of flowers, stood as the centrepiece. At this time, I should like to quash any rumours that I have since been seen with table decorations on my feet. It was also pure coincidence that the Mess Summer Ball was a wild-west night; furthermore, I only bought the Stetson hat because it was reduced in the sales! The evening culminated in the official handover of the Games' torch to the New York Branch of the Veterans Association. New York 2001, here we come!

It was not just hard work and no play. There was ample time for sightseeing and most managed a visit to the Alamo. The San Antonio Riverwalk is an experience to be long remembered: it never closes and the nightlife has to be seen to be believed. **John Liddie** showed a hidden talent for karaoke, **Stuart** gained Army colours for lager tasting and **Mike Marten** is reputed to have eaten 100 chicken wings in a single sitting. **Jacko** probably has the most expensive shark tattoo in the world and **Andrew** definitely suffers from sleeping sickness! **Edwin** and **Richard** managed to go shopping every day and 'Scouse' **Eddie** carried out more deals than Arthur Daley did. I spent all my spare time reading by the pool – honestly!

Words fail to describe the emotion as the disabled athletes wheeled themselves onto the podium to collect their medals, or to witness the support they gave each other. They are amazing people and it has been a privilege to witness the blood, sweat and sometimes tears of frustration spilled throughout the training and during the Games themselves. If anyone reading this article is interested in sharing in the experience of helping disabled Ex Service Men and Women, please contact **WO2 (RQMS) Keith Merrie** on Colerne Military, Extension 5207 (Civilian Telephone: 01225 745207).

Jacko's victory smile after winning gold at Basketball

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO	**Lt Col Mike Lithgow MBE**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Al Higgins**

SUPPORT SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj R. H. Gladwin**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Young**

REGIMENTAL MOTOR TRANSPORT

MTO	**Capt Johnson**
MT SSgt	**SSgt Nanda**

There have been many changes over the last month or so with Regt MT. An influx of Driver Electricians has joined us to form a Regimental Generator Servicing Bay, the Regimental Open Day took place, and we said farewell to one of our old boys who moves on to pastures new. Firstly we'd like to welcome **Cpl** 'VVVVern' **Critchley** who has joined us from Colchester. Hope you and your family has settled in OK without any problems. Also welcome to the Gene bay lads. **SSgt Narbir Locksom, LCpls** 'Trots' **Trotman, Kamal Rai**, and 'Sly' **Moine** (attached). Also joining us are **Sigs Min Gurung, Price** and 'Off to Canada already – good here in the MT' **Bradstreet**. Don't worry **Brad**, we'll get you for duty driver yet. Welcome lads, and don't forget your Troop funds. Sadly we say farewell to **SSgt** 'Taff' **Smith** and his family, who depart for 14 Sig Regt in his homeland of Wales. As is the norm for the MT, we had an informal 'dining out' for 'Taff' and his family at a local eatery, which was well attended, such is the popularity of 'Taff'. Good luck in the future, and take care of yourself. For a change, the MT has some promotions to report. Congratulations to **SSgt Narbir Locksom** and **LCpl Chau** on recent promotions which are both well deserved.

Ex Arrcade Falcon deployed to Germany on 10 July, with three members of Troop attached to 35 Sig Regt (V). **Cpl** 'Puggy' **Pugh** and **Sig Niel Grainger** had seen most of this sort of stuff before, but it was all new to **Sig** 'Brummie' **Hurl**. Bad enough working with the TA for the first time – his words not ours – but on a trunk node for the first time as well, it was a good experience for young 'Brum'. Not so good if he'd missed the Euro 2000 games though. Thankfully for the TA, he didn't miss any of the games.

Open Day fever hit Bramcote earlier this month, with the MT doing their bit as NCP Car Park attendants. As the clouds gathered, and the heavens opened, we thought there wouldn't be much traffic. How wrong we were, as thousands poured through the gates. A lot of effort had gone into the logistics of parking so many in such a small place, and **Cpl** 'Puggy' **Pugh** and his team worked tirelessly all week in preparation for the event. Yet again, another outstanding job was done by the lads who deserved their sports afternoon the following Wednesday !

QUARTERMASTERS' (TECHNICAL) DEPARTMENT

As ever the Department is busy as a busy thing, but we have made the time to greet our latest batch of new arrivals. Welcome to **Sigs** 'Caz' **Burgess** and 'Nat' **Whelan**, who together bring some welcome glamour to the department. Congratulations to **Cpl** 'Swerve' **Ovenden** who, together with his wife **Liz**, have their own new arrival in their baby, **Katie**. We must not miss this opportunity to greet our lads currently on Ops - **Sigs** 'Spud' **Williams**, 'Gaz' **Green** and 'Scouse' **Jones** in the sunny Balkans and **LCpl** 'Frankie' **Frankel** in even sunnier Sierra Leone. Hurry back boys, your in trays are putting a strain on your desks.

BRAMCOTE OPEN DAY

The Bramcote Open Day took place this year on a cool and showery 9 July, which was the major contributory factor in a reduced attendance this year. However the paucity of available major military players, caused by their attendance over the same weekend at the Millennium Tattoo on Horse Guards Parade, may have had some influence. Despite the weather and the lack of military participation the day went rather well and a considerable sum was raised for charities, one of which was the Mayor of Nuneaton and Bedworth's personal choice of the regional air ambulance appeal.

The CO, Lt Col Mike Lithgow MBE supervising the presentation of a cheque for £1000, to Her Worship The Mayor - Cllr Diana Hawkes and her consort Brian Hawkes, by Cpl 'Freddie' Star whilst the Town Crier adds colour to the occasion

The absence of the major military attractions meant that the entertainment had to be provided by the Regiment and local units. All Squadrons were required to provide stalls, which gave the occasion something of the air of a village fete, but they were all well received and contributed a great deal to the atmosphere and no small sum to the overall pot. Particularly well received was the display of Gurkha dancing by members of 250 GSS and their dependent children superbly described on by **Sgt Surje.**

2Lt Blaydon Morris and **Sgt Dan Burdus** choreographed an outstanding military display of a defensive communications site coming under attack from an insurgent force. This was enthusiastically acted out by **Cpl** 'Freddie' **Starr** and his band of **LCpl Bijay** and **Sigs Stewart Welton, Thomas Beerling, Stuart Hemmings, David Thwaites, Craig Wilkinson, Adam Langton, James Hewson** and **Kishnan.** Their performance was the highlight of the event and so impressed the CO that it is to become a permanent feature for future events, much to the consternation of the QM (T), **Capt Dougy Wright** who has to work out where to get the blank and pyro from. Well done to all involved.

One attraction, which went down extremely well, was the Tug-of-War competition staged between the Warwickshire & West Midlands Army Cadet Force, The Hinckley Sea Cadets, 121 Squadron Air Training Corps and 198 Squadron Air Training Corps. The competition, ably organised by **LCpl Mase Mason**, resulted in an excellent win for 121 Sqn Air Trg Corps, who can be seen below receiving their medals from the CO, **Lt Col Mike Lithgow MBE** and **LCpl** 'Mase' **Mason**.

121 Squadron Air Training Corps receiving their medals from the CO, Lt Col Mike Lithgow MBE and LCpl 'Mase. Mason

EXERCISE ARCADE FALCON 26 MAY- 30 JUNE 2000

Ex Arcade Falcon was designed as a Communications exercise connecting headquarters in Spain, Italy and Germany, using a Ptarmigan setup over a VSC 501 satcom link. Members of various units predominantly from 30 Sig Regt, 7 and 16 Sig Regts, 249 Sig Sqn and 33, 34, 35 and 40 (V) Sig Regts participated. The 30 Sig Regt and 249 Sig Sqn contingents set out from Gamecock Barracks near Coventry at about 0100hrs in the morning. We were slow to start as sleep was a greater priority on most minds at that unfamiliar hour of the day, especially for **LCpl** 'Ig' **Igboebisiokwu** who was unfortunately withdrawn from his leave hours before to provide technical cover for 501 Brown, after a large number of our 501 trained technicians had hurriedly deployed to Sierra Leone.

The convoy arrived at Harwich at about 0800hrs, after a ludicrous drive around Colchester to find the POL point, ready for our ferry crossing to the Hook of Holland, which occurred without incident. After arriving in Holland the immediate challenge for everybody was to get used to driving on the other side of the road before starting our exhilarating drive through Holland and Germany at a top speed of 40mph. We arrived at Krefeld, where we were to be hosted by 7 Sig Regt, at about 2300hrs, just in time to experience the delights of Krefeld's nightlife, which we took advantage of over the weekend before the exercise got under way.

The next two weeks were set aside for 'Plugging up' and checking our equipment ready to move on to check that the Ptarmigan interfaces worked over the Satellite link.

The 249 detachment were staying with 16 Regt in Rheindalen, where they were 'volunteered' for a unit exercise that had been scheduled to start coincidentally for two weeks before our exercise was due to start. This led to 249 Sqn's 501 Brown spending two 'relaxed' weeks on Sennelager ranges on a fully tactical exercise prior to deploying on Arcade Falcon. As you can imagine this won everybody's vote. However, at the weekend, they were fortunate enough to make it to the Rhine Army Summer Show (RASS), which was only a short walk from their setup. The 30 Sig Regt contingent set out with 7 Sig Regt to Spain on 11 June in time to arrive on the 14th without missing too much Euro 2000 action. The first day of our long convoy to Madrid was uneventful stopping at many service stations along the way to top up on Baguettes at every opportunity. We stayed the night at a French Army barracks in a small town near Orleans in Northern France, used for recruiting French soldiers. Breakfast was skipped in the French cookhouse in favour of another ten minutes in bed.

The day started pretty much as the previous until we got to Paris then the nightmare began, due to very heavy traffic, which must have been diverted for us especially, the convoy became split up on several occasions. Another overnight stop and on the third day later we arrived in Madrid. After a late night briefing from the Spanish guard commander of the barracks we were left to our own devices for the weekend. The Monday was spent setting up the various detachments and once all the links were in, we were left to run shifts for the following two weeks. Several visits to the cookhouse to try the local cuisine were made by all, and it was decided that we should avoid it at all costs. Between us we could have supported the McDonald's corporation, but luckily the Gurkhas were at hand to supply our evening meals. **Sigs Dipak** and **Lekh** had the daily task of supplying the currys. Other than this, it was a pretty uneventful two weeks spent in the centre of Madrid.

Before returning a goat was purchased from the local farmer, arranged by the recently promoted **Cpl Somras**, for a curry night. With the blessing of the Spanish Camp CO, **Sigs Dipak** and **Lekh** turned 'Billy' into a fantastic supper, they should make career moves to the Catering Corps. The return journey was pretty much the same as the outward, but due to the large number of terrorists in Spain, few stops were made until the border with France. After a short stay with 16 Sig Regt for two days to collect the obligatory duty frees we made our return journey to the UK. Meanwhile the 249 Detachment, who seemed to have all the luck, was sent to Heidelberg to start yet another exercise with the Americans.

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj J. W. Cooper**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Keen**

SUPPORT TROOP, 256 SIGNAL SQUADRON - *by Cpl Wilcock*

We start with hellos and good-byes. We welcome to the Troop, **SSgt** 'Chaz' **Chambers** the new SQMS who deployed straight on Operation Palliser to handover-takeover his department. Welcome to **Sigs Andy** 'Dangerous Diseased' **Dawson**, and **Ritchie** 'No home' **Hancox**, who have come straight from training, also **Brad** 'Bad Boy' **McCallum** who arrived from 280 Sig Sqn, with a record. We say goodbye to newly promoted half-a-tour **SSgt Des Holroyd** who went to 16 Sig Regt, and congratulations to him and his wife **Jenny** on the birth of their new daughter **Katie**. Since the departure of **SSgt Holroyd** the power struggle has started within the Troop between **Cpl's** 'Willy' **Wilcock** and 'Dazzy-B' **Brown**, but the Troop is running more proficiently without the on look of an SNCO. 'Who needs them?'.

The Troop has had a very busy period over the last few months with 80% of the guys deployed on various Exercises and more importantly deploying on Op Palliser in Sierra Leone, with the Joint Task Force Headquarters. The main effort being to supply the power and distribution to the Headquarters to a high level of professionalism, under difficult conditions to some personnel.

Congratulations go out to **LCpl Andy Kinnaird** and Emma-Joe on their recent marriage, and on their posting to Cyprus in October, 'what women do to go somewhere hot'. A very well done to **Sig Lilasing** 'The Dead Eyed Dick' on being selected for the Army Shooting Team, and who is away at the moment with the team in Canada, and then off to the USA in September.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd	**Flt Lt Paul Pearce**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Paul Storey**

It has been a while since I have had the opportunity to compose an article for my own Troop, so I feel it only right to blow the trumpet on Alpha Tp's involvement within the Squadron during the period when we have been stood at R3. Following a period of post operational leave on returning from various locations around Europe in support of Op Surety,

the Troop settled into a comfortable period preparing for the role handover scheduled for May. For two weeks in March, our twinned French Regiment invited four of us to take part in their first major exercise of the year, Ex Senlis 2000/1. The exercise took place in various locations on the west coast of France and involved two sites with strategic SATCOM assets, one site with a tactical SATCOM asset and a radio-relay capability. I was based on a French Naval base working from a derelict Air Traffic Control Tower and enjoying a diet of fresh oysters and white Bordeau, while **Cpl Dave** 'Scottish Man Utd fan' **MacDonald** deployed to a picturesque chateau on a small island and enjoyed a diet of BBQ fresh meat, whiskey and beer. **Cpl Slim** 'Look at me I'm a mess' **Scott** deployed to the same island where he was accommodated on the floor of the original A-Team hangar and enjoyed a diet of French compo rations, and **LCpl Paul** 'Mustn't Grumble' **Taylor** slept under a tree whilst enjoying a diet of fresh beetles and river water. Needless to say, much benefit was gained from the exercise both in terms of understanding the French approach to deployed operations and also in enhancing the relationship between our two Regiments.

Only ten days after returning from France, I was fortunate enough to deploy to Florida on Ex Cobb Ring with **WO2 (FofS) Ian Toft**, **SSgt (FofS) Kev Peters** (600 Tp, Corsham), **SSgt Chris Gouldson** (600 Tp, Corsham), two Regimental Technicians and nine members of Alpha Tp. This exercise is an annual interoperability trial between the Regiment and the American Joint Communication Support Element based at MacDill Air Force Base, Tampa Bay, and was held during the period 1-30 April 2000. Many lessons were learnt during the exercise; **Sig Adam** 'How much!?' **Flatman** learnt the disadvantage of 'drinking and dialling' when he received a bill for $250 on checking out of his hotel room, **Sig John** 'Jordan' **Roberts** learnt the lesson of removing your wallet from your shorts before jumping into the sea and **LCpl** 'Demolition Man' **Hicks** learnt that looking where you are going whilst driving is a fairly sensible idea. Aside from the technical and operational objectives, everyone had plenty of time to make the most of a great month in Florida and most people chose to head for either Universal Studios or Busch Gardens. Clearwater Beach was another popular location, all the lads taking the opportunity to tuck their R3 bellies into skin-tight shorts and watch the American college girls leaping about playing beach volleyball. Not to be forgotten is the excellent work put in by **Sgt Gaz** 'I didn't want to go anyway' **Shuck** and the other members of the Troop on the rear party at Bramcote, maintaining comms over two SATCOM detachments and hosting the American troops in barracks.

Having arrived back in the UK in the early hours of 1 May, it was business as usual within barracks the next day. **Sgt Gaz** 'Show me the action' **Shuck** had already been tasked with standing in as 2IC Spearhead and I was approached to stand in as OC Spearhead within the Regiment. Three days later the pair of us were queuing up at the Medical Centre waiting to receive various injections with a warning order for Op Palliser in our hands. 48 hours later we were stepping off a Hercules in Dakar, Senegal with the Spearhead crew from Bravo Tp. **2Lt M-L** 'Will I ever leave the country?' **Lucas** was handed the reins of the Squadron rear party for the next three weeks while we were away. Alpha Tp were the unsung heroes during Op Palliser, working tirelessly back in barracks to ensure that the Squadron were well supported at all times.

Articles have already been written regarding that operation so I will not dwell on it. On returning to the UK on 25 May I was greeted by newly posted-in **SSgt Paul** 'Changing Rooms' **Storey**. I had been warned that I would not recognise the office when I returned and, I have to admit, that it been drastically improved. So much so that I was expecting to be greeted by **SSgt Laurence Llewellyn Jones** in tight leather pants and frilly cuffs harping on about post-modernistic architecture; it was quite a relief when **SSgt Paul Storey** arrived in traditional Combat-95 dress and introduced himself, and I would like to take this opportunity to welcome **Paul** and his family to the Regiment. On the subject of postings, we have recently bid farewell to **LCpl** 'Spib' **Gibney** on his way to JCUNI, **LCpl Paul Taylor** posted to 21 Sig Regt and **LCpl Dave** 'George Clooney' **Needham** who is posted to 16 Sig Regt. A recent arrival is **Sig Alan Neesam** from 15 Sig Regt. **LCpl Daniel Clarke** and **Sig Darren Lewis** have also joined us from Charlie Tp recently.

Alpha Tp have now assumed the Spearhead Land Element role which will keep us busy at R1(-) until the end of September. The Squadron hand-over exercise, Ex Battering Ram, took place at ATR Bassingbourne between 10-14 July, during which it was discovered that the detachment commander, **Cpl Brett Grist**, has a rather unhealthy fascination with SATCOM tails equipment. From the beginning of October we will stand-to as the Joint Task Force HQ main signal support Troop, and look forward to Ex Internal Look which is held in various locations around the USA in November.

We now face what I hope will be an exciting time at R1 and, indeed, the next time we go to press I hope to be able to tell fresh war stories from a future operation involving the Troop. Alpha Tp have achieved a great deal in the last seven months, helping to raise the profile of the Regiment both in France and America, and put in maximum effort in support of Op Palliser.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt John Dagless**
Tp SSgt **SSgt McNair**

Having returned successfully from Op Palliser and completed the post Op turnaround before squeezing in a bit of leave B Tp has now changed roles from Spearhead to JTFHQ Main. This has resulted in the Troop becoming inundated with tents of all shapes and sizes, some rather natty air conditioning units, and a lot of plastic flooring. All of this was put to the test of Op, I mean Ex Butt Ram, that saw the Troop prepare and deploy to the Wind Breaks, a mystical and mysterious location miles from civilization! At the helm of this transition has been **Sig** 'Baby Taff 'tent monster' **Jeffers** and **Sig Lee** 'I'm not moaning' **Banks**, ably guided by **Cpl Mark** 'I'm doing an appreciation' **Allen**. In the meantime along with juggling Open days, Summer Balls and the odd General's visit the Troop has been trying to squeeze in a spot of ITD, formal, and IS learning and education. A number of people have left the Troop and unfortunately not many joined it. A sad farewell to **Sgt Del** 'I know what your doing' **Paz** who wasn't here for the last four months due to his IS course anyway, **Cpl** 'H' **Honeywood**, **Sig Richie** 'LCpl at Last' **Hewitt**, **Sig Lynden** 'I'm Free' **Clarke**, and **Sig Phil 'I'll be back' Baxter**. A warm Bravo Troop welcome goes out to **Sig McMillan** and **Sig Simpson** straight from training who have a lot of shoes to fill.

CHARLIE TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Lucy Pim**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Phil Joyce**

OPERATION PALLISER, SIERRA LEONE MAY – JUN 00
Lungi Airport – *Sig 'Smudge' Smith*

Op Palliser was a full scale deployment of 256 Sig Sqn's JTFHQ assets, with Charlie Tp as the lead Troop. Charlie Tp were on exercise in Ghana practising a medium scale HQ build when we were tasked with Op Palliser – it ruined the R & R phase! Initially the Troop was to set up a full scale Rear HQ at Lungi Airport in Sierra Leone. In about six days we flew kit from Ghana and the UK – this used six Hercules and an Antonov in total! The Squadron set up the HQ quickly and efficiently in a searing 90^0 heat, the barbed wire and mosquitoes adding to the experience! The security had to be tight with the threat from the RUF being high. Soon we were into a fairly gruelling routine marked by stand-to at dusk and dawn. The shower unit was a god-send and much sought after at the start and end of the day as the heat and humidity was intense.

In the draw-down towards the middle of June the monsoon season started, and the first night of heavy rain succeeded in flooding most of the systems in the headquarters. This brought forward the planned re-location of the headquarters on the other side of the airport. The Headquarters' here was a fraction of its original size with many of the Staff returning to the UK, with the bulk of the Squadron. On 15 June the last of us came home, after a very successful operation.

FREETOWN - *Sig 'Slicker' Powell*

At the beginning of May we deployed on exercise to Ghana, here I worked as an OLRT Operator and worked with a 6-man Staff Officer Operation Liaison Reconnaissance Team. This prepared me for Sierra Leone in many ways, however the move from a 5 star hotel to a mosquito infested bed under the stars was a nasty shock! I deployed to the High Commission in Freetown and was one of the first members of the Troop to reach Sierra Leone. However, **Sig** 'Billy' **Harris**, who has the claim on being the first Signaller into theatre, beat me! On my first day in Sierra Leone Sanco, the rebel leader's, house was being attacked, as it was only just down the road, at night we could see the rounds going through the air over the British High Commission. No escaping the fact we were in a war zone.

Once the remainder of the Squadron had deployed, there were six of us working for 20 Staff Officers. The work load was heavy with so few of us there, so I found myself doing 16 hour night shifts. However, this did leave a little time for a spot of lounging by the pool!

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj P. Deans**
SSM **WO2 M.Webb**

25GREAT (8) Sig Sqn has been as hectic as ever over the last few months as it continues to 'carry' all the Regiment's operational commitments – well done! D Tp remain in Sierre Leone in support of Op Basilica and F Tp have manned the Spearhead commitment and, more recently, training to takeover the commitment in August. E Tp are frantically preparing their handover/takeover as their EOT approaches on Ops Agricola and Palatine. In addition, there is manpower in Blandford assisting with the TWACAN trials and a few individuals completed Nijmegan Marches. You may well ask how can one Squadron be so good? The answer: with long working hours and pulling out of hair as **SSgt** 'Give me some more tasks' **Fiddler** has demonstrated. It is during this period that **Maj Jules Swindells**, **Liz** and family decided to seek a well-deserved quieter life doing 'Special' Comms at DERA Fort Halsted. And then there is **WO2 (SSM) Miles Webb** who is so desperate for a tour he is leaving 30 Sig Regt, where he has tried his hardest to visit all the Squadron operations, to 19 Mech Bde to do a tour in Kosovo next year as their RSM. We all wish both families all the best for the future. We must also congratulate **Cpl Arjunkumar**, the Squadron Clerk, on his deserved promotion and bid fond farewell as he starts his long three day trek back home! In return we welcome to 258 Sig Sqn a new OC, **Maj Phil Deans**, from HQ LAND – 'the tasker becomes the tasked' and **WO2 (SSM) Forester** and family to Sunny Bramcote. At long last some stability at the helm.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Chris Smith**
Tp SSgt **Sgt Billy Kidd**

The deployment of 256 Sig Sqn to Sierra Leone from exercising in Ghana meant D Tp took on the role as Spearhead Two as 258 Sig Sqn manned a JTFHQ 2. During a very busy time **Cpl Wyllie** and his detachment worked very hard for two weeks in putting together an ever-changing communications package - everyone was ready to deploy anywhere in the world except the Sqn activation room.

No sooner were we ready then D Tp was tasked with putting together a team to deploy to Sierra Leone as a Short Term Training Team, on Op Basilica, to support 2 R Anglican in training the Sierra Leone Government Forces. The selected team moved to Chepstow within a couple of days to conduct pre-deployment training with the Battalion. Half way through training, members of the Troop were called forward as the advance party and returned to Bramcote to prepare to deploy. Within 24 hrs **Lt Smith**, **Cpl Sykes**, **LCpl Roulette**, **Sig Fielding** and **LCpl Holt** (with his box of crypto) were on a flight bound for Sierra Leone. At the same time **LCpl Marsden** set sail with RFA Sir Percivale to Sierra Leone, after nine days at sea he has found his sea legs and learnt all the associated terminology. The RFA has been alongside in Freetown providing logistical support for the British Forces.

We arrived at Lungi and found our feet with the help of 256 Sqn who were well established in their tented city as the JTFHQ across the peninsula at the APOD. By first light **Cpl Sykes** and **Sig Fielding** had signed over their ORLT pack and jumped on a helicopter with **Lt Smith** and **YofS Knight** to fly to the south to the proposed British Training Camp at Benguema. **Cpl Sykes** and **Sig Fielding** spent the next few days in the jungle in a primitive hut providing strategic rear link communications as the training camp began to establish. This was until the locals decided the Generac was a very desirable item and it disappeared! Meanwhile **Lt Smith** and **YofS Knight** receced the potential BRITFOR HQ in Freetown, and **Cpl Roulette** and **LCpl Holt** began feverishly signing as much kit as they could off 256 Sig Sqn.

After a week in theatre **Sgt Kidd** brought the remainder of the team out to help build the Headquarters. On the 15 June we said farewell to Op Palliser as everyone departed theatre leaving us the 'attached arms' and a large company sized group to fend for ourselves. It was not long before we had turned a derelict building into some sort of order. In the South at the Training camp we settled into a routine in the established-tented camp and a thousand locals paraded to be trained. The night curfew came into effect after **Lt Smith** and **LCpl Langford** found themselves in the middle of a gun battle in the middle of Freetown when a prison guard had a negligent discharge with an RPG! **LCpl Roderick, LCpl Climpson, LCpl Langford, Sig Andrews, Sig Cassells** set about their routine in the HQ (allais 'Slipper Palace'). **Cpl Sykes, LCpl Green, Sig Maybank** and **Sig Fielding** continued to rough it in the middle of the jungle. **Cpl** 'half-a-tour' **Sykes**, after his sterling effort in the early stages, departed for Blandford to start his Class 1, just as the monsoon season steps up a pace. Without thinking of his own safety our new technician **Cpl Gray** abandoned his broken Trends and moved from the Headquarters in Freetown to the Camp.

Congratulations go to **LCpl Prem** and **LCpl Roulette** on their field promotions. Meanwhile the rear party of D Tp has worked hard filling in the gaps and doing numerous guards. They have also been involved in TWACAN trials at Blandford. Congratulations go to **Cpl Wyllie** and **Cpl Miller** on their promotion to Sergeant. The Troop also said goodbye to **Cpl Rawlings** as he moves to 1 Div and we wish him well for the future in Germany. Congratulations on your recent promotion. As the second Short Term Training team arrives to be trained by the R IRISH Battalion D Tp are preparing to hand over the reigns to F Troop mid August.

ECHO TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Chris Preston**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Oh no Doc' **Halliday**

ANOTHER TOUR IN THE BALKANS - *by Capt Chris Preston*

No sooner had my feet touched the ground in 30 Sig Regt and I was away to Kosovo. I was given the choice between a month on rear party organising adventurous training and a month on tour meeting the new troop. Not surprisingly I choose the latter option – 'Hello Echo Troop'.

I returned from the Balkans last December and expected at least a few things to have changed in my absence. Oddly enough the pace of change is slowed down by the continuous flow of personnel arriving and departing theatre. Very quickly I discovered that the same people places and projects were bubbling away with little to show for my six months absence. The most pleasant change was Trogir. When I left in December it was cloudy and autumnal. Now the sunshine had returned and the locals were out in force trying to out dress each other. The same café owners and street restaurants lined the roads and now more cruising boats were anchored in the harbour. Trogir looked simply beautiful. However we couldn't stay there too long as we embarked on a whistle stop tour of the Balkans.

The Balkan Satcom Troop (alias E Tp) has detachments all over the two theatres in the Balkans and visiting them takes a week. In theory one could spend the entire tour checking on the remote sites, but transport is the key. In four days I was moved around in everything from shank's pony to USAF Blackhawk and everything in between. To my relief at every turn the detachment commander had four months experience and had seen almost every situation once before. E Tp have been out here for four months before the short touring their Troop Commander (but what a great job she did).

Pristina now has Corrimec style accommodation and air conditioning and 7 (Armd) Brigade and Signal Squadron have a wide variety of welfare facilities to keep you busy. The Chef rivals Banja Luka Metal Factory and the gym is interesting enough to turn a tour into a health farm. The next step is the comms hand-over to the Gurkhas and then the arrival of the Royal Marines in Pristina.

SETTING UP MOST IV JAGUAR SARAJEVO
by Cpl Fred 'Not another chuffin' MOST' Hazard

We started our little break on 23 June 00 from Pristina to Skopje courtesy of **Sig Rob** 'Michael Schumacher' **Hall** who broke most land speed records in getting us there. Once at Skopje **Maj Swindells**, **Capt Chris** 'I got lost on Lanyard' **Preston, Lt Mogs** 'Strawberry Vodka' **Southern, Cpl Fred Hazard** and **Sig Gaz** 'Why am I going?' **Green** waited around to board a Czech plane for the stunning flight to Split. **Sig Gaz Green** managed to find the most comfortable sleeping place, on top of an inflatable lifeboat. On arrival in Split we decided to get some cash out to go and see the wonderful sights of Trogir, where **Cpl Fred** 'Lucky' **Hazard** managed to get his visa card eaten by the hole in the wall machine. Cash crisis resolved we set off to get our transit accommodation. Once set in our rooms, we set an RV for the trip down to Trogir. All I can say is that a fair few strawberry vodkas were sunk and how come there are no fat girls in Trogir.

We set off the next day bright and breezy (**Capt Preston** having a couple of hours extra kip), towards Sarajevo. The only eventful thing that happened on the way is the fact that we had a puncture, which happened when **Sgt Brian Flynn** decided it would be better to avoid a truck than the kerb (good call!). On arrival at Sarajevo **Cpl Jeff** 'Jeffers' **Ford** met us and showed us the sites and temporary accommodation in which we would be staying. Then we set about going round the 'px's where **Capt Chris** 'I'll never get lost again' **Preston** bought a wrist GPS (magic!). Another arrival drinks session was had as the boys from Pristina were only used to the bar being open for a hour and a half as opposed to those at the 'sharp end' in Sarajevo, (the first casualty of war is your kidneys).

The next day we set about erecting MOST (Military Off-the-shelf Satellite Terminal) IV Jaguar on top of a iso-container which in itself was no drama, unfortunately, every helicopter in the vicinity deciding it would be fun to see if they could blow it off was! Nice one flyboys! Particular thanks go to the USAF Blackhawk's who nearly blew the dish with **Cpl Fred Hazard** and **Sig Paul** 'Deploying again with E Tp' **Howells** hanging on to it. Also a big shout going out to the RA RSM who sited the det on the back of a heli pad with no hope of getting our secondary shot, good work fella!

We finally got around to engineer the det in on the Saturday, which was not bad at all considering we should have started on the Friday! With much to-ing and fro-ing between Colerne and Whitehall and with faults at every turn we finally managed to get all four circuits some 38 hours later.... brilliant. With the circuits in and working we retired to the bar for more pizza's and beer. My tour was cut short as my services were required elsewhere. Where ever a MOST IV is in need of some special TLC, I will be there with my cape flying in the wind and my boxer shorts on my head.

MY ATTACHMENT TO 2 RRF – *by Sig Andy Doherty*

To break up the monotony of COMMCEN work I requested an attachment with the RRF in the centre of Pristina. This was so I could see a different side of the Op Agricola. It consisted of patrols on the estates and searches of various buildings to try and stop the flow of illegal arms. My first night patrol resulted in a 'shotrep' that we had to deal with. Although the infantry boys were used to this as a regular occurrence, I thought it was an exciting ordeal. The RRF were a good bunch of lads to work with on the whole, and surprised me with the number of guys they were down, almost 50 percent undermanned. Now, as well as being in a high speed chase and various searches and patrols, the week finally came to an end with a visit to the morgue. This was an experience I don't think I will ever forget and enough said on that subject. The attachment was very enjoyable and if given the chance again I would definitely take it, except next time I would try and get out of wearing a hackle.

BALKANS SATCOM TROOP - BOSNIA DETACHMENTS

Bosnia elements of Echo troop have now returned to Bramcote, after nearly seven months in BLMF and Sarajevo holiday camps. Firstly, we would like to thank all the personnel who could not manage a full tour but nevertheless helped out: **Cpl Locky** 'Get the shirt off' **Whitelock; LCpls Cilla** 'Chunderwoman' **Black, Jamie** 'Sinner' **Slade, Kate** 'Bouquet' **Deal, MJ** 'Send my webbing back' **Holt**, 'Ice cream' **Hem;** Sigs **Dion** 'Cherry ' **Fotheringham**, 'I can drive' **Prati** and, last but not least, Harry the det dog who sadly went missing after **Sgt Barney** 'Stalker' **Barnfield** took him out for a walk (where is he?). The tour has consisted of a lot of hard work; the guys in Banja Luka concentrated on getting the 501 det IAW so it was able to carry out its tasks and the Det in Sjj concentrated on moving the MOST from Ilidza to Butlins, oops sorry, Butmir.

Cpl Tony 'Big arms' **Gallagher** has been outstanding with his adaptability of languages, (i.e. if he doesn't know what to say, he just makes it up). It is also not true that now he is back in Bramcote he will be helping his wife to run the 'Bacon Butty Empire' he set-up on R'n'R! **Cpl** 'Queg' **Ford**, Det Comd of MOST Cat in Sarajevo, has also been outstanding in his position of authority, unfortunately for a reason only known to himself (and the CO!), he has taken to wearing tropical combat kit, lets hope he can find some '95 soon. **LCpl John** 'Keebab' **Lawrence** has shown yet again that he knows a thing or two about the 501 and also a thing or two about where to find the best scoff in theatre. However, he was last seen careering down Route Clog screaming 'What no BRAKES?!' Moving swiftly on to **LCpl Caz** ' I can drink' **Burrows** who had an excellent tour but also found time to organise charity football

matches and runs, however there might be some truth to the rumour that there are some dodgy photos going round of her in compromising positions. **Sig Adam** 'Life of the party' **Toner** had a quality tour, was a member of the Brit football team which lost in the final of the Butmir multi-national football competition to guess who - Germany. **Sig Mark** 'Mine clearance team leader' **Vinten** who worked very hard in support of UKNIC, the only problem was he was supposed to be working for 30 Sigs! Thanks also to **Cpl** 'One to watch' **Rup** and **LCpl** 'Still love Ice cream' **Hem** for trying to teach both the dets Nepalese, with varying success..

Oh, and by the way **Sgt** 'Big gay' **Al Barker** had an outstanding tour looking after both the dets with his unsurpassable blagging skills, sums up the 'chundertour' with this classic: 'It smells like something died in here, like a sandwich' or **LCpl** 'Jamie' **Slade**, who on snapping a fork whilst eating his dinner asked, 'What are these plastic forks made of?'

That sums up the tour for Echo Troop, 258 Sqn, all the best for 250 GSS in the next couple of months until commercialisation takes over. The Swan has landed back in Blighty, long live the white duck of courage.

FOXTROT TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Mogs Southern**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Stu Fidler**

HALES AND FAREWELLS

This month we are saying goodbyes to **Cpl** 'Mal' **Campbell** and his wife Jenny who will shortly be leaving us to go across the water, on promotion, to 39 InfBde. Also **Cpl** Gaz **McKee** who, although remaining part of the Troop, will become the Yeoman's brewboy down in Sqn Ops. We extend a warm hand of friendship to **Cpl Neil Harrison** from 15 Sig Regt, who brings with him a wealth of knowledge on Camnets, and also to **Sig Brennan** who has arrived straight from the factory.

SQUADRON SUMMER BALL

This year we had the delight of hosting the Squadron Summer Ball, held over in Hangar Two, with a Cowboys and Indians theme. With little time and less manpower the final touches were only put in place moments before the guests started to arrive, but with **Sig Dave Scott** and his sister teaching all and sundry the art of line-dancing , and a Bucking Bronco going all night, everbody seemed to enjoy the occasion. The night was also a good occasion to welcome back Echo Troop personnel into our midst who have just enjoyed tours in Bosnia and Kosovo, and the new OC Sqn – **Maj Deans**, and a fond farewell was given to **WO2 (SSM) Miles Webb** who leaves us for 19 MechBde. Op Basilica. The Troop is now nearly ready for their deployment to Sierra Leone, after some intensive training both in the Squadron and also with a two day visit to Canterbury where our hosts 1 Royal Irish took us through our paces in UNTAT Training.

250 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj R. P. Wilson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Chandrabahadur Gurung**

TRAILWALKER UK 2000 - *by Sgt Nandaraj Rai*

The Queen's Gurkha Signals organised another very successful Trailwalker UK 2000 event in it's own unique style on 24/25 June this year. Trailwalker UK is a highly competitive non-stop charity challenge for teams of four, who run or walk along 100kms of the South Downs Way. This year's event had two starts, the first at 0700hrs which was started by **Brig J. Cook** whilst the second was started by the Gurkha Welfare Trust's Chairman, **Gen Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE**. The event was started in bright sunshine on a Saturday morning near Petersfield (Hampshire) and ended later during a mild Sunday at Whitehawk Football Club in Brighton. Over 230 civilian and military teams took part this year. A team from the Gurkha Demo Company, Royal Military Academy Sandhurst came first in 10 hours and 34 minutes. They broke last year's record by 1 hour and 2 minutes, very big well done to them and SYABASH. The Trailwalker concept, which was devised in 1981, is set to continue all over the world well into the 21st Century in order to raise funds for the good causes and the charities. There are three annual Trailwalkers in the United Kingdom, Hong Kong and Australia. It will be six very soon with Trailwalker Adelaide, Quebec and New Zealand. Money raised by Trailwalker UK is dedicated to School building projects in Nepal.

EXERCISE SWAN NEWFOUNDLAND DRAGON

On Thursday 25 May, 13 soldiers set off for adventure training in Canada. It started with the coach breaking down a mile from Heathrow. Luckily Lt Davis had contacts to get us to the Terminal in time to catch the plane. After a long journey we landed in Halifax Nova Scotia. Six Canadians, who were to be our escorts for the expedition, met us. We stayed in local barracks for the night then proceeded to drive for one and half days to Newfoundland. The plan was to split the two teams and trek the Long-Range North Rim Traverse from both directions. It was scheduled to last five days (dream on!!) My own group was travelling from south to north and consisted of **Lt Davis**, **SSgt Burns (JSMEL)**, **Cpl Tulasi**, **Sig Prabin**, **Sig Rajendra**, **Cfn Ballinger**, **John** and **Sly** the two Canadians.

The first day was relatively easy going as there was a regularly used trail. It gave us a chance to settle in and observe the wildlife! One of the team, **Cpl Tulasi** thought he saw a tiger, realising his embarrassment, when told it was a moose. We reached the campsite and pitched our tents ready for the next day's trek. The next morning came with a blanket of snow and high winds. We reached the top of the first mountain to be met by nothing but snow. We carried on approximately for five hours, navigating past frozen lakes and rivers. The team spent most of the time falling into snow holes. The team took great pleasure in watching and laughing at **Lt Davis**, who seemed to find every snow hole. We finally caught sight of the toilet roof to hear a raging river in the distance. It was in-between the campsite and ourselves. As we approached the river we realised that it was impassable and after much discussion realised that the trek would have to be abandoned due to the excessive water levels. The other group also encountered excessive water and had to find a different way back..... Even though either team did not complete the trail, it was fun trying.

The remaining two days were used doing day treks to keep us occupied and sampling the food ie: lobsters, trout and salmon. Don't take photos of your food **Chris!** (The author of this article).

We moved back to Halifax to enjoy the food, company and hospitality of the Canadians. It was a memorable trip and the photos will prove that.

The Expedition Members

WE THE BROTHERS - by Cpl Sombahadur Chochangi

Since December 1996, I had thought of expressing my feelings amid the Parbate readers, but due to assortment of reasons I have not been able to do it. Well, it was the time when my youngest brother Sim joined the Queen's Gurkha Signals and made up the three brothers serving in the same Regiment. This is probably the first time that has happened in the history of QG Signals.

Kamal and myself were enlisted in the British Army in 1990, however, after the basic infantry training in TDBG Hong Kong, we were separated, myself being posted to QG Signals and **Kamal** to 2/2 GR. On the redundancy and amalgamation process, **Kamal** was transferred to QG Signals in January 1992. Later on, **Sim** joined us after his basic training in Gurkha Training Wing, UK. Now, we all work for 250 Gurkha Signal Squadron. As the Regiment has an ongoing commitment to provide strategic CIS support to British Forces at home and abroad, the Squadron is currently deployed on Op Agricola in Kosovo. Hence **Sim** and myself are currently serving in Kosovo on the same satellite communications detachment, as part of the NATO forces. **Kamal** is down at Blandford on his Class 1 course that finishes in September 2000. **Kamal** and myself are due to bringing our families next year. Our families are back in Pokhara, Nepal with our parents and a sister.

Last but not least, I must thank those who inspired me to write these words for Parbate. In fact, all brothers in the same Regiment, it is something different and we certainly feel proud to serve together in the QG Signals. Jai QG Signals!

Standing from the left; Cpl Som, LCpls Kamal and Sim.

RAF COSFORD INTERNATIONAL AIR SHOW

Like previous years, this year, the Royal Air Force organised an international air show at the RAF Cosford airbase on 18 June. More than 40,000 people attended the air show last year, but this year, attendance figures broke past years' records. The main aim of the event was to raise money for Ex-servicemen/women who needed help. Various charity organisations had set-up stalls on the show. One of them was ours run by **Cpl Dambar** and his team from QG Signals with the support of **Maj (Retd) R. J. Cross** and his families and friends. We were a wonderful public reminder that Gurkhas are still recruited into today's British Army, many thought that this was no longer the case. I felt that our presence at Cosford was on very worthy cause for the GWT. There is a whole generation out there that had no contact with the Gurkhas and to be physically reminded of our existence does entire Gurkha cause nothing but good. At the end of the show, a good day was had by all with a good cause benefiting!

32nd (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col J K McKee MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Hilborn**

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Roddy Sutherland**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Anderson**

EXERCISE TARTAN TERRAIN III
(SECOND LEG OF THE SOUTHERN UPLAND WAY)
by WO2 (RQMS) Dave Inman

Ex Tartan Terrain III was an adventurous training exercise which saw 44 members of the Regiment, including Regulars, TA and NRPS set off from TAC Jardine Street on Saturday 3 June. The team also included civilian guests, **Rodger** and **John** our specialist fire-fighters, purely there to beat out any flames on the hills as a result of the brilliant weather promised by our illustrious leader **Capt John** 'undulating' **Lynch**, and worthy of a mention for his sterling hill walking **Alex** our resident electrician. Our aim was to hike along the length of the second leg of the Southern Upland Way, from Overfingland (Although **WO2 (RQMS) Dave Inman** insisted it should be renamed England) to Cockburnspath, a distance of 106 miles in a total of six days with a days training and rest incorporated either side.

Day 1 - Saturday 3 June - Saw all personnel gather at Jardine St TAC by 0900hrs to be issued equipment and receive an excellent, if not daunting, brief for those who had not walked the walk before, conducted by **SSgt (REME PSI)** 'au natural' **Crow**. This was followed by an early lunch. Finally we deployed to SANQUAR our first base camp were we set up our tents and then carried out hill walking training, incorporating map reading and first aid, in the Lowther Hill area. A small matter of eight miles to warm up the soles of your feet!

Day 2 - Sunday 4 June - After an early wake up call we were greeted with a warm smile and mouth watering good old English Breakfast (or was it Scottish!) by the Admin Team superbly led by **SSgt (SQMS)** 'Chick' **Doyle**. The A Team who definitely deserve a mention consisted of **Chick, SSgt Andy Crawford** and **Sgt** '(still) Sugs' **McClean** our superb Chefs and **Sgts** 'Who's in charge today boys?' **Danny Beattie** and the sprightly (60 years of age!) **Jackie Dollen** and last but not least **Sgt Jim** 'le taxi' **Wilson.** Once we had been amply fed and watered we were given even more food to see us through the day and set off for our first 17 miles hike to MOFFAT. The weather was poor and this ensured that the teams began to bond together.

Day 3 - Monday 5 June - Today was a good day for the HQ Team consisting of **WO1 (SVWO)** 'Just sort it!' **Terry McVey, WO2 (RQMS)** 'Englander' **Dave Inman, Sgt** 'Egg on me face' **Graham Smith, Cpl** 'Hitler' **Adrian Augusto, Sig** 'Unwashed and unemployed' **Curry** and our civilian guests **John** and **Rodger** the Fire Fighters and **Alex** our Sparky, and how could any of the team forget **Sig** (new recruit) 'SAM no I'm not a MAN' **Towers** our only female team member. We walked a total of 18 miles without any shortcuts. Much of the walk was boggy with steep climbs and treks back down the hills, which became very sore on the feet, however we soon finished as a team at Tibby Sheils campsite. After very few sociable pints of Guinness at the local (the only pub for miles!) it was early to bed for most of us, although **WO2 (SSM) Karen** 'Where's the door?' **Swan** decided she would rather stay in the portaloo all night. This ensured the SVWO got his first decent nights sleep in the tent by himself (please do not write to the Editor, they are married!).

Day 4 - Tuesday 6 June - This day will be remembered forever! The day **Cpl** 'Hitler' **Augusto** became HQ's team leader. This was the longest day with a 23 mile hike to Selkirk ahead of us all. Somebody forgot to inform 'Hitler' that we should stop and rest occasionally hence his nickname. If it had not have been for the mandatory stop in Traquiar thankfully enforced by **Capt** 'Its only ? miles' **John Lynch** we would still be walking now! We all knew **Cpl Augusto** was strange since he had put on his gaiters on Day 1 and had no intention of removing them until we had walked the walk! A very welcome and relaxed evening was spent swimming, washing kit and taking in a sauna ready for the next day's walking.

Day 5 - Wednesday 7 June - **WO1 (RSM)** 'I'm cold' **Mam Hilborn** joined the HQ Team led by **Sig** 'Unwashed and unemployed' **Kev Curry.** The first part of this fifth day was pleasant with a meander through Galashiels and a visit to the local Fire Station so that HQ's team could ask for directions! How embarrassing for our two fire fighting guests not to mention the SVWO (was it mentioned that he is also a fireman!). After many a pointing in different directions the team soon got back onto the route. On arriving at Melrose the team decided a rest was deserved so onto a local establishment for a 'no-alcohol' lunch we tabbed. Two hours later we decided to continue the walk after a surprising phone call on the RQMS's mobile from the 'A' Team leader **SSgt** 'Chick' **Doyle**, requesting a location report! Apparently, we were two hours behind the last team. Ah well it was a nice lunch! So on we trekked and trekked and yes!, trekked. To our dismay the final leg for today's walk consisted of a wicked path from Melrose to Lauder, which blistered several pairs of feet and resulted in a much less jaunty spirit at that evenings meal. We pitched tents that night at Thirlestane Castle, which was very picturesque.

Day 6 - Thursday 8 June - At last the sun shone for the walkers and the teams set off in high spirits for what was to be a steady even pace of 15 miles to Longfromacus. HQ Team leader today was **Sig** 'No she definitely isn't a MAN SAM' **Towers. Sig Towers** was one of the newest recruits to the Regiment and she soon realised that all these team members she had been calling by their first names (including the RSM) during the walking were in fact the highest non-commissioned appointments within the Regiment! On finishing the day's walk a pleasant evening meal superbly prepared by the chefs was consumed before departing to the local Community Hall which had been kindly opened by the locals for a few sociable and relaxing pints of Guinness. At this stage it is well worth mentioning that everyone we met, in every town or village, treated us with the utmost kindness and were always friendly.

Day 7 - Friday 9 June - The final day's trek was completed in good weather through the lovely village of Abbey St Bathans and finally into Cockburnspath with the final stretch along a beautiful coastal path a total of 17.5 miles hiking. HQ's Team leader today was one of our civilian guests recently promoted **LCpl** 'Fire-Fighter' **Rodger. LCpl Rodger** to his credit took his task very seriously and the team even carried out stretching exercises before commencing this final walk. However, the good weather was soon to change and as teams approached the finish along the coastal path the heavens opened up and rain continued for the next 36 hours. The campsite in DUNBAR turned into a quagmire and **Capt** 'I will sort it' **John Lynch** along with his trusty Admin Team leader **SSgt** 'Chick' **Doyle** had soon negotiated refuge in the Community Hall in West Barnes, once again, the professionalism of the 'A' Team came to the forefront and rescued what could have been a disaster. The chefs prepared an excellent BBQ, which was moved along with all personal kit to the Community Hall. After much deserved sustenance and liquid refreshments, every team performed a sketch or song, and certificates and T-shirts were presented. The Saturday was used as a day to recover the aching limbs, see a little of the local area and for those more active, a selection of coastal walks was organised. This was an ideal time to turn around all equipment and stores ready for return to TAC Jardine Street. After breakfast on Sunday, everyone returned to Jardine Street to prepare the exercise equipment for handing back to stores and then return to parent TACs. Credit must go to both SQMS HQ, **SSgt John Addison** and SQMS 52 Sqn, **SSgt** 'Chick' **Doyle** without whom this exercise would have been able to go ahead. Their professionalism and commitment to the task in hand ensured all exercise participants where correctly equipped, fed and watered at all times and all loan stores were returned in excellent condition on Thu 15 Jun. Well done boys!! A final thanks also to **Capt** 'How many miles!' **John Lynch** and **SSgt** 'au natural' **Crow** his trustee 2IC for organised the exercise.

Finally some concluding comments made by **Sig** 'SAM the MAN' **Towers** one of the Regiment's newest recruits who had been tasked with writing a diary for the exercise: Anyone who endured those 106 miles will know the pain and the down moments that also must be experienced along the way, but these people will also know the immense amount of fun that can be had if you work as hard as mixing well with your team, and other teams, as you do on your walking! At the beginning, I knew few names, by the end I had mates for life. With no other entertainment but each other you share things that you never would in any other circumstance. You learn things about yourself, and about other people, and all the while you are on holiday from work and yet still receiving pay. The Admin Staff looked after us like we were Kings and Queens and the preparation done by the Recce Team ensured that our spirits were never allowed to fall as we were entertained at every stop. Nothing was too much trouble for anyone and it is that team spirit that pushes you forward. A huge thanks to all of my team. I will definitely be back next year!

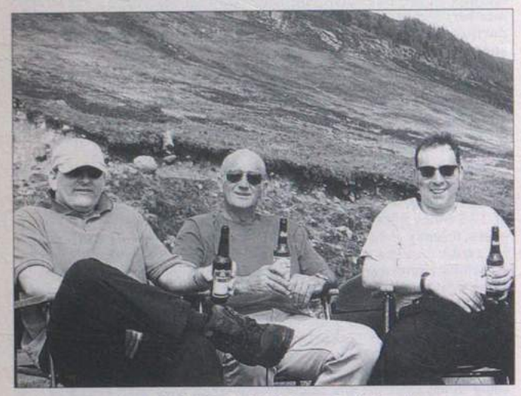
WALK THE WALK and then TALK THE TALK

QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

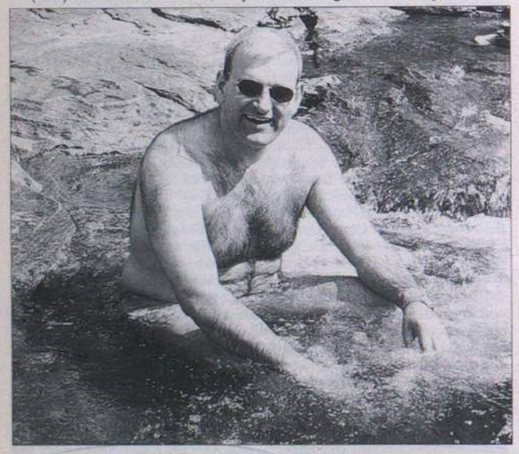
QM **Maj Ian Dudding**
RQMS **WO2 Dave Inman**

It has been a very busy period within the QM's Dept with the fallout of SDR now taking its toll. SDR has resulted in two civilian redundancies which in reality equates to 66% of the civilian staff. So in true army tradition it was a case of knuckle down and make it work for those of us left with **Mr John Addison** taking on the bulk of the manual work and taking on responsibility for the day to day business within the clothing store and R&I Bay as our only civilian storekeeper in Jardine St. Meanwhile up into the dizzy heights of the QM's offices **Mr Gary Steen** - Admin Officer for the Department since 'nineteen canteen' has continued to run the office in a true civil servant, professional manner in the absence of the QM - **Maj Ian Dudding** who's leave card has now been destroyed as all his leave has been used for this year, and the RQMS

- **WO2 Dave** 'Hairy Monster' **Inman** who has decided he loves walking the hills of Scotland. Meanwhile **WO2 (RQMS(V)) Norma Sproul** has managed to take some time off from her new job to gamble away her redundancy money in Las Vegas. **LCpl Liz Leitch** has also been very busy in ensuring the smooth transition of USA onto UNICOM working closely with the LAD, as well as attending her UFNCO's Cse and most recently her RSCC (TA), we will make an RQMS out of her yet. **LCpl Annette Fair** has managed to sneak in a nice little trip to Germany unbeknown to her PSAO or the RQMS - nice one **LCpl Fair** - where's the duty frees! Recently the three kind of head honchos in the Department decided to have a day out at Glen Lyon to take in the scenery and walk a few hills. The day started before the sun was up and finished long after the sun went down. the QM entertained the RQMS and AO with his historical knowledge of what he proudly calls his glen, it was a cracking day away from the office, unfortunately it took place on a Sunday so it was back to your desks for Monday morning, sun-tanned and much refreshed!



The QM, RQMS and AOs' day out at Glen Lyon
(L-R): WO2 Dave Inman, Maj Ian Dudding and Mr Gary Steen



WO2 Dave 'Hairy Monster' Inman
taking his yearly bath at Glen Lyon

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

We welcome **Cpl Mick** 'Where's those rations?' **Martin** to the Dept, a much needed helping hand to assist **Mr John Addison**. We also say a sad farewell to **Capt (QM) John McCall** - QM(V) who leaves the TA after some 30 years or more of distinguished service (since nineteen canteen!!). Sadly also **Mr Alan Smythe** and **Miss Norma Sproul** (yes the RQMS(V)) were both made redundant as a result of SDR after more than 30 years of dedicated service to the Regiment between them. In the true tradition of 32 Sig Regt all where given a good send off in the form of a QM's Department - Dinner Night and all ranks BBQ. Sadly all will be missed!

51 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)
Sqn Comd **Maj Morna Strachan**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Davey Crocket**

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

It is with heavy hearts that we say farewell to our beloved Squadron 2IC, **Capt John** 'Mine's a dark rum' **Mackie**, who has hung up his hat after 12 years service. Amongst his many varied duties, he was our scribe for contributions to *'The WIRE'*. He will be sadly missed by all ranks in the Squadron and the Regiment. Everyone who worked with him knows what a pleasure it was to do so. All ranks wish **John** and **Laura** all the very best for the future and hope to see them both at future social events. The Squadron would also like to wish **2Lt Adrian** 'Posh Jock' **Yates** all the very best in his future career as he flies off to join the RAF Regiment (Traitor). He will also be greatly missed by all ranks in the Squadron, particularly members of 514 Tp. I have been reliably informed that he will be doing his sideways walking course soon. Our best wishes also go to **Sig Steph Bogart** who was initially mobilised for a tour in Bosnia, applied for and was accepted for regular service in the Royal Signals. We have no doubt that she will get on well and enjoy working as a regular soldier.

All members of the Highland Sqn congratulate **Sgt Clare Smith** and **Cpl Richie Taylor** on tying the knot. A good night was had by all at the reception and apparently a few people had a bit too much falling down juice – isn't that right **Sgt Bud** 'I'd like another drink' **Burnett**? Good luck and best wishes to the happy couple. Finally, we would like to extend a very warm welcome to **Capt Rebecca Bird** who has transferred to us from 104 Regt RA (V). She is taking over from **Capt John Mackie** as the new Squadron 2IC. We hope you settle in quickly and get to grips with writing *'The WIRE'* notes soon.

52 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)
Sqn Comd **Maj Donald Gordon**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Swan**

Traditionally a quite time of year for the Squadron, this summer has been a little bit of an exception, with activity seemingly never ending. At the start of June the core of 'weekday ' Squadron HQ ably lead by **SSM Karen Swan**, and with a good number of those from the Troops took part in the Annual Adventure training, which consisted of completing the second half of the Southern Upland Way. This was just the way to introduce our new **PSI (Tech) Sgt Chris Kelly** to the Squadron, including **Sig Mick Larkin** who won the prize for greatest dedication to Iron Bru – never letting a bottle of the amber nectar leave his hand during the walk. There was then scarcely time to draw breath when the next weekend was upon us, with an ITD weekend where everyone shot the APWT, some were able to fire 9mm, and we completed the TA CFT, with a BBQ thrown in, on the Saturday evening.

Then as July began, a select few members of the Squadron deployed in support of the Annual CCF Central Camp at Cultybraggan, whilst **LCpl Pete Tierney** and **Sig Catherine Hinkley** were away to London as part of the Pipes and Drums display at the RMT 2000. Now as the month closes the Squadron has deployed into the field in a final work up for the NCRS component of our annual camp, with a delegation lead by OC **Maj Donald Gordon** and **SSM Karen Swan** representing the Squadron at the local branch of the British Legion as they mark the Queen mothers birthday.

We have also dispatched three of the squadron east bound to Former Yugoslavia, **Cpl Garry Ballantyne**, and **LCpls Joanne Mondie** and **Anthea Purvis** all having recently left for Chilwell. The term 'changing of the guard' seams more apt as we look forward to the return from BATUS, of **Cpl Carol Wight** (after a year across the pond), and **LCpls** 'Bob' **Nursimiloo**, and **Rob Lawson** having been away for six months. Finally, congratulations from all in the Squadron are extended to **LCpls Pete Tierney** and **Chris Marshall** on their respective weddings, and wish them luck long into the future.

ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM
Trading Company

A Gift for any occasion

Blandford Camp, Blandford,
DORSET DT11 8RH
Tel; 01258 482 248 Fax; 01258 482 084

33 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS
CO **Lt Col R. J. Steed MBE**
RSM **WO1 R. D. Cowan**

The climax of the training year resulted in Ex Arrcade Falcon 2000. The Regt's Annual Camp took place in Germany over the period 10-24 June 2000 in the Nordhein Westfalen area. This was the Chief G6, HQ ARRC's annual comms FTX to practise the deployment of NATO level 2 CIS facilities in support of HQ ARRC. It was a thoroughly successful two weeks with many lessons learnt - especially in the area of movement! Not only was the Regiment busy with camp, we also had the Regimental Shooting Team 'dusted off' and competing again as well as a RHQ expedition to South America - the Adjt, **Capt John Harrington** would do anything to get away from his desk!

Congratulations must go to **WO1(RSM) Rod Cowan** for passing the WOAB - next stop Families Offr?! A fond farewell to the Adjt who leaves to be a student in Blandford on the next CISM course in September, **SSgt Allen** who has returned to NI, and **Cpl Fitzgerald** who goes to 2 Sig Regt. A warm welcome goes to **SSgt Heslop** and **Cpl Neal**, their replacements. The following is an account of the Squadron's experience of Annual Camp, followed by a taster of what happened on the Regiment's expedition to Ecuador!

55 (HEADQUARTERS) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)
Sqn Comd **Maj W. Wyper**
SSM **WO2 P. Williams**

Over the past couple of months the Squadron has been very busy. The Squadron supplied the majority of the Regimental Shooting Team that competed very successfully in the Brigade SAAM and also the Corps SAAM.

The Sqn OC receiving his trophy from the Bde Comd

The Squadron had a very successful Summer Camp. We deployed with the rest of the Regiment and 11 Sig Bde on Exercise Arrcade Falcon on Saturday 10 June via Hull, Folkestone, the Channel Tunnel, (Euro 2000 Day in Brugge), Flushing and arrived at Ayreshire Barracks, Monchengladbach early morning on 12 June. After the remainder of the Regiment had deployed into their field locations, the Squadron deployed to Dulmen and was co-located with 34 Sig Regt's Ech. After a couple of days, Ech was moved to a site the Squadron know and love, a boggy car park on Sennelager Training Area. Luckily this year it didn't rain and not everyone's boots had turned grey from that special mud. During the visitor's weekend the Squadron was visited by the Regimental Honorary Colonel, **Professor Peter Toyne**. He met as many of the Squadron as possible and thoroughly enjoyed his stay.

42 SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)
Sqn Comd **Maj M. Cummings**
SSM **WO2 G. Ward**

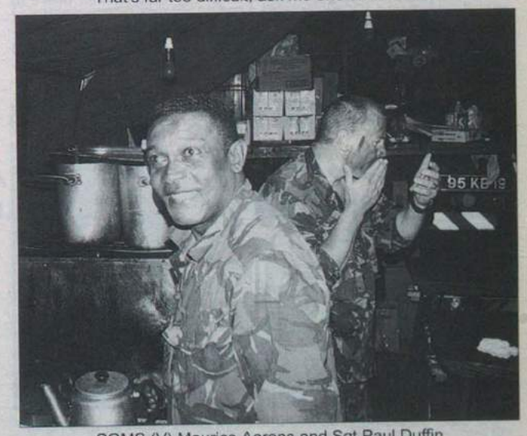
EXERCISE ARRCADE FALCON 2000

The Squadron's specific task was to deploy its trunk node, (TN 031) Secondary Access Node, SCRA and associated Radio Relay Assets together with an ELG to act as the Squadron Command post. As the Squadron rolled out of Rusholme, Manchester, the sun was beating down out of a cloudless sky, which proved to be the norm for the next 15 days of camp with the weather, if anything, becoming hotter as we headed towards Germany. Space on the ferry from Hull proved to be at a premium, which meant that the vehicles were loaded on to two separate boats and sailed for Rotterdam and Vissengen, Europort, respectively, with a small party of soldiers to keep an eye on them. Meanwhile, the bulk of the Regiment was 'coached' down to Folkestone to overnight in Napier Barracks and enjoy the delights of flat southern beer. The next day they were whisked through the Channel Tunnel to be reunited with their vehicles once more. It was certainly different, but it did mean a good night rest in Folkstone and proved to be a novel trip through the tunnel, a first for many members of the Regiment.

Once on the continent, the Squadron moved up through the low countries and Germany to the Brigade concentration area in the wide open spaces of Ayreshire Barracks in Moenchengladbach, to carry out PACEX procedures and to shake out the comms equipment before deploying to initial locations for the exercise, proper. This took place in and around the Biefefeld and Paderborn areas where a Ptarmigan and Euromux network was established before HQ ARRC began moving comms assets around the beautiful Germany countryside. This was an anxious time for the Sqn 2IC, **Capt Dave Titheridge**, who was acting as Sqn Cmdr in the absence of the OC. However, our switch remained well behaved and our shots came in on cue which was most satisfying, proving that most of the lessons learnt earlier on in the training year had not been forgotten.

The Regiment closed in on Sennelager for the military training phase of the exercise and experienced the special pleasure that only the wearing of full NBC clothing and equipment on a very hot day can bring. By now thoughts were turning to R&R, and visions of cool German beerkellers and other delights were understandably becoming uppermost in most soldiers' minds. R&R took place from Krefeld, at Bradbury Barracks, and was to take the form of a 24 hour pass. Surprisingly everyone made it back on time to form up and commence the long trip home. Once more the movers had arranged for drivers to part company with their vehicles at the port and to be coached a few miles down the coast to Zeebrugge to travel across on the 'Norwind', a particularly comfortable North Sea Ferry. This proved most popular and enabled the camp to finish on the highest of notes.

WO2 Graham Ward manning the Sqn Command Post,
'That's far too difficult, ask me one on defence.'



SQMS (V) Maurice Aarons and Sgt Paul Duffin
having a quick cuppa prior to a night patrol.

A happy 42 Sqn
prior to moving back to the UK after a successful camp

The 'A' team.
The Squadron's long suffering but ever-cheerful permanent staff (L-R): Sgt 'Fitz' Fitzgerald, Sgt 'Taff' Powell, SSgt Sam Faulds, SSgt (FofS) Gaz Clapham and Sgt Chris Glover.

59 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

Sqn Comd **Maj Chris Heaton**
SSM **WO2 Patterson**

59 Sig Sqn (V) took their part in Ex Arrcade Falcon in Germany as well. The Squadron deployed from our TA Centre in Deysbrook Barracks in the early hours of Saturday 10 June delivering our vehicles to Hull docks by 0700hrs for ferrying to Vlissingen in Holland. All Squadron members then began what was a very interesting movement phase to meet up with the vehicles in Vlissingen and convey them onwards to Ayreshire Barracks Monchengladbach. On Sunday morning we remounted our trusty chargers and travelled to France via the Tunnel which was a new experience for most of us. We then travelled to Flushing for the short ferry journey to Vlissengen.

On arrival in Vlissingen we took over our vehicles and drove to Monchengladbach and immediately commenced a PACEX to check out all equipment and installations prior to deployment into the field. Following this phase we then deployed into the field under the command of our acting Squadron Commander, **Capt Cheryl James** who was ably supported by the SSM, **WO2 Bob Paterson.**

OC Sqn, Capt Cheryl James and SSM Bob Patterson arriving at initial location with Secondary Access Node 886 and putting on a brave face for all to see

ACCESS TROOP

Access Tp, commanded by **Lt Tony McFarlane,** had a very good communications exercise which was typically well supported by his admin staff.

Lt Tony McFarlane, SSM Paterson and the CO, Lt Col John Steed carrying out a hygiene inspection of the Cooks tent. The Hon Col, Col Peter Toyne can be seen in the background sampling the fayre

SSgt Ken Smith explaining to the Hon Col how to set up a sun dial clock supervised by Lt Tony Mcfarlane and the CO

The Exercise play staff bit off a bit more than they could chew when they unwittingly attacked SAN 886. **SSgt Ken Smith** a new addition to the Troop from 264 (SAS) Sig Sqn created a Mexican stand off against the aggressors and their oversized German sheepdog. **SSgt Smith** who has spent many years with the special forces was the first to admit that without the assistance of **Sig (Tpr) Lee Downing** the result could have been different.

TRUNK NODE TROOP

On deploying into the field, Trunk Node Tp had an easier ride than some people. This was due to their location being very central to the exercise scenario. Ably led by **Lt Paul Knight** and supported by **2Lt Jo Down** the troop finished the exercise with two very quick moves separated by extremely long drives through the German countryside.

At the end of the exercise all vehicles and manpower returned to Bradbury Barracks in Krefeld staging through Ayreshire Barracks to discard fuel and gas empties. The next day in Krefeld saw a pay parade that is always well attended and the start of our days R&R in Krefeld and Dusseldorf. On the completion of R&R we returned to the UK via Zeebrugge and Hull to arrive back in our TA Centre on Saturday 24 June. All members of the Squadron had a very interesting and challenging time and look forward to the next sorte overseas.

EXPEDITION TO ECUADOR

EXERCISE EBOR PONCHO - *by 2Lt R McLeod*

On 4 July 2000, eight intrepid volunteers from 33 Sig Regt (and one from 14 Sigs) embarked on a journey of a lifetime to the wilds of South America. The budding explorers were:

Capt John Harrington - Adjutant, and expedition leader
Capt Bob 'I'm old enough to be your father...' **Dobson** - RAO in 'normal' life, and holder of the purse string on the expedition.
Lt Ath 'Sturdy Girl' **Mayo** - From 14 Sig Regt (EW). JSMEL(S), Fluent Spanish speaker, and generally indispensable person.
2Lt Ross 'Numpty Sticks' **McLeod**.
2Lt Jo 'Has anyone got any toilet roll?' **Down**.
Sgt Mick 'Yoda' **Watkinson**.
LCpl Scott 'Has anyone got an iron?' **Wilson**.
LCpl Geri 'It's crap! I wanna go 'ome!' **O'Brien**.

The following is an extract from the official diary by way of a taster!

Tuesday 4 July: Met at Deysbrook Barracks, Liverpool. **Capt Harrington** had masses of kit, in fact most of the party had too much kit. During the way through customs at Manchester airport **LCpl O'Brien** was stopped and interrogated as to why she was carrying needles at the airport (for the first aid kit). Not a good start! Next was a brief stopover in Amsterdam before flying on to Quito, the capital of Ecuador. Having looked through the guidebook, beer in hand, **Sgt Watkinson** declared, 'It's gonna take some beer to make these birds look pretty...' After a nine-hour flight we arrived at Curacao, in the Dutch Antilles, where we stretched our legs for an hour. **2Lt Down** managed to lose her passport for a short period, before finding it again on the aircraft, much to our disappointment as we began to think of how we could spend the extra CILOR!

Wednesday 5 July: Arrived in Quito early in the morning, after a very long, drawn-out journey. Quite a few people noticed the lack of oxygen. Quito is at, just under, a height of 10,500 ft. **Capt Harrington** had obviously picked up a few tricks from **2Lt Down** as he managed to leave his immigration documents on the plane, and had to go back from immigration control to receive them!

Thursday 6 July: Today was scheduled to be an admin day as well as acclimatising in Quito. We took the opportunity to visit the Instituto Geografico Militar, to collect maps. Checking in at the embassy, the Political Advisor gave us up-to-date information on the viability of some of the routes that we had planned and as a result we had to slightly change some of our plans.

Friday 6 July: We spent this day acclimatising by walking in the local area. Some people are still finding it difficult with altitude. In the evening we visited a restaurant recommended by **Lt Mayo**. We turned up and it was empty. First warning sign; A 'merry' South American type said that the chef was away but he was doing it. Second warning sign; He then said that some dishes were better than others, and recommended Pork chops, and chicken. (Translation - this is all he can make...) We ordered the first course. During the delay the chef-replacement stumbled outside and engaged in a 'heated' conversation with a man in a 4WD outside, started fighting, and eventually ended up on the floor. The first course did arrive after a long wait with plenty of excuses (and garlic bread to keep us quiet). This was followed by more fighting outside. The food arrived cold. The thought of not paying was not entertained due to the presence of a shotgun-carrying security guard. We paid for what we had eaten and left hastily.

Saturday 8 July: Started trekking at Tombacco. We got the bus there and traversed up the side of Illalo before dropping down the other side to San Peblo. The total journey of about 15km took about 61/2hrs. The highest point was 3200m and most felt the effect of the altitude. This was the first real chance to gauge the effect of altitude with weight on our backs, having done some previous minor walks. Everyone was completely exhausted afterwards. We almost got quite a bargain, though, when one of the farmers we passed on the way down offered five camels in exchange for **2Lt Down**. Unsportingly she refused to co-operate and we had to decline the offer, useful as camels would have been for carrying our bergans. Still not everyone was convinced that she was worth five camels, **Sgt Watkinson** declaring, 'He must be drunk'.

Monday 10 July: A bus ride to Loma Santa Cruz with the aim to do the three peaks of El Chaupi started the day. At the very bottom of the first hill **LCpl O'Brien** started plaintively wailing - 'No one told me there were mountains in Ecuador! I thought we were walking around hills.' We successfully completed the first peak of El Chaupi. Although it took us far longer than expected. We were, at last, in a position to ascend the second peak of El Chaupi. It was mid-afternoon and as the extraction march would take up to a couple of hours the decision was made to go directly to the bus station, some 6km away. The guide book seemingly having been written by some sort of ultra-acclimatised fell runner, or certainly, someone far fitter and faster than our group.

Wednesday 12 July: The day started with a bus ride out to Pappallaca, which took a few hours. We started walking at midday and within 45 minutes we were engrossed in a steep, muddy climb. Combined with the very low cloud base a thoroughly wet and muddy time was had by almost everyone. **LCpl O'Brien** managed to fall a few metres and although she wasn't sure whether she wanted to scream or giggle she managed to give everyone ahead of her a shock that she was in trouble. The terrain was secondary jungle, a small fact that the Ecuadorian maps had omitted to denote. Camping sites were impossible to find and we ended up pitching our tents under a local farmer's barn roof. Unfortunately, not satisfied with providing a roof over our heads the farmer's pack of dogs also provided a musical accompaniment for the rest of the night, much to our chagrin.

Sunday 16 July: Today we attempted the highest mountain so far - El Corazon, at just under 5000 ft. In addition to the altitude the weather was extremely windy, so for the last 400m of ascent we decided to attempt the hill with half kit. Unfortunately, after about a hundred metres the complete absence of a path, in favour of tons of scree, no security, and the high winds made the climb very unsafe so we had to turn around.

Tuesday 18 July: After a far harder climb than anyone was expecting we arrived at the 'New Horizons Refuge' at 4600m. **Sgt Watkinson** was suffering from the beginnings of AMS so he decided to wait until the morning to decide whether or not he would ascend.

Wednesday 19 July: Starting at 0600hrs we got our kit together, and began the ascent. **Sgt Watkinson's** headache hadn't improved overnight and after a few hundred metres he had to turn back and remain at the refuge. The remainder of the group continued up Iliniza for about two hours until we were within about 300m of the summit (in height), but at this point the presence of snow from the previous day prevented us from continuing and we turned around. The remainder of the day was spent descending Iliniza and then getting transport back to Quito.

Friday 21 July: We decided for the last two days of the expedition prior to R&R peaking Imbabura. Unfortunately, about halfway up the heavens opened, the temperature plummeted and the mother of all hailstorms began. With the mountainside being at a 45% angle we had no option but to push on. We eventually reached what was a relative plateau - at a gradient of only about 30%. A scramble to get the tents up was delayed by **Lt Mayo's** discovery that she had lost the tent poles on the way somewhere up the mountain, so we were down to two tents. A thoroughly cold, wet, and miserable night followed.

Saturday 22 July: Fortunately by the morning the previous night's hail had frozen and the weather, although bitterly cold, was at least dry. Our spirits improved further when a group of tourists who had started the ascent at 5am came past and gave us the tent poles that they had found on their way up. We spent three hours climbing Imbabura and after an hour's descent to the campsite we packed up the tents, which had now dried, and walked down to La Esperanza. After a much-needed meal we went back to the hostel, packed our kit for R&R and placed the remainder in storage.

XXXV

35 (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col S. J. Potter, TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) P. Marshall**

IRRITABLE TOWEL SYNDROME

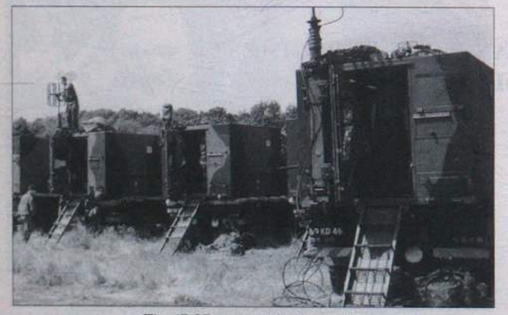
Before I continue with the Regiments report on our Annual Training in Germany I feel compelled to return to the recovery phase of my gutwrenchingcheekclenchingtrouserdrenching encounter with e-coli. Thankfully our good Doctor, **Maj Raziur Rahman** introduced me to the indisputable benefits of immodium and relief I believed was but a swallow away. What I forgot to mention was that I gave the immodium an unfortunate boost by taking it with a kaolin and morphine chaser that produced some rather unpleasant side effects. Consequently I spent the first week of the exercise confined to the nearest portaloo – the dehydration caused by the unusual hot weather didn't help either and by now my laundry was building up! Rather foolishly I carried on self diagnosing my problem and introduced other self binding remedies that included, when I was feeling a little better, huge amounts of vegetables with the emphasis on cabbage, sprouts and onions. For good measure I added a packet of fibregel to my daily diet. This as any doctor will later tell you is a rather volatile combination and I am still recovering from the unstoppable chain reaction and resulting gastric explosion that led to

more than a week off work (the first in my illustrious military career) on my return from Germany. To conclude this comedy of errors I have to report that I was, however, immensely relieved to arrive at RAF Bruggen for our R & R Phase and believed that because of my affliction I could claim priority to use the laundry room. Needless to say I received little sympathy and a hapless battle of wills took place as many devious attempts were made to use the only washing machine. By now I had used up all my clean towels and other essentials so I was pretty desperate. Because every effort I made to get in during the day was thwarted, by I have to say the female of the species, I set my alarm for 0400hrs. Despite my sense of foreboding when I entered the laundry room and found the machine full of washing, it had fortunately reached the end of its cycle and I was in business! But even then I just made it, for literally seconds later a clearly irritated **Maj Ricky Logan** who had the same brilliant idea, walked in the laundry room behind me, needless to say we shared the machine!

I won't bore you with my other experiences and strange encounters. However, for those of you who are interested the burn on my hand that I received when I tried to climb on top of a Radio Relay at Suchteln, by holding onto the generator exhaust outlet, has almost healed. Also the damage to my Damcon minibus, when I drove it into the only hole in the ground at Veldhoven was only minor! The aerial on the CO's car that I inadvertently took through a car wash has now been repaired and the jug of coffee that I knocked over the SCRA Plan in the BSV has not caused any permanent damage. I have also been assured by the RSM, that, following my efforts at RAF Bruggen, I am now a fully integrated member of the TA. Finally some pieces of useful advice; never ask a limb-less person for directions, never divulge your innermost thoughts and fears to a friendly ear until you find out who it is and never walk onto a range uninvited unless……..!

EXERCISE ARRCADE FALCON OVERVIEW

Despite our now unforgettable deployment to the continent, Regimental assets finally begun the move into designated field locations that stretched from Kerken to Detmold during the early hours of Tuesday 13 June. This was preceded by a succession of essential briefings and IBCP at Ayrshire Barracks, Monchengladbach. It has been some years since the Regiment had deployed over such a wide area and it presented a daunting challenge that the CIS Ops (or is it OSC) staff where only too keen to meet. The enthusiasm to meet this challenge on the ground from the Trunk Node to the mobile element's was infectious and it was clear that everyone had now put the miserable outward journey behind them, and providing the ARRC and Brigade staffs with a comms blanket became every-ones priority. The last Regimental Commex was but a distant memory and some neglected and forgotten skills had to be quickly restored to achieve the aim of the ex. In addition our most recently qualified operators were anxious to prove their worth and verify the training invested in them. The initial phase went extremely well and links were established quickly and efficiently which pleased the CO, **Lt Col Stephen Potter** who was delighted to report that the Regiment performed magnificently, communicated consistently and effectively and achieved our aim and mission. This message was quickly disseminated and some of our new operators in particular beamed with pride at this accomplishment. So impressed was **Sig Robert Blake** of 48 Sqn with his own personal performance that he has ordered multiple copies of the photograph of him working on his Radio Relay to distribute around his family and friends. **LCpl Jackie Sheldon** of the same Squadron would have liked to have shared in his exultation's but found herself without a vehicle when it suffered a major technical failure but later admitted that she had an excellent exercise. These sentiments were typical throughout the Regiment and clearly indicated that morale had been fully restored and we were now back in the business of not just communicating but communicating well. Not everything was plain sailing however, and like every major exercise things for one reason or another do go wrong. This is a fact of life and is often unavoidable and we are usually the casualties of unusual and unique circumstances beyond our control. Mistakes are made, tempers are frayed, reputations are laid and victims are made. This is all part of the almighty learning curve that brings with it future improvements, and better procedures that we can all look forward to but which also needs to be combined with a sprinkling of understanding and sympathy for the planners and organisers.



The IBCP at Ayrshire Barracks

Sig Robert Blake adjusting his line of sight

Sig Adrian Proffitt practising his radio operating skills

ATTS & DETS

The Regiment was pleased to have elements of 60 Sig Sqn on board throughout the exercise as they provided excellent back up and movement communications and a special thank you is extended to **Maj Gavin Miles** and his team and to all of the other individual attachments to the Regiment. A special thank you is also extended to the press group; **Sarah Chapman** of the Stoke Sentinel, **Dan Bardsley** and **Joe Bailey** of the Rugby Advertiser and **Cathy Spenser** of the Shrewsbury Chronicle who provided the Regiment with some excellent post camp coverage. Hopefully they will now join us on Regimental Weekends. It was also gratifying to have a high profile role during the Exercise when elements of 89 Sig Sqn provided SCRA(T) for the Comd & Dep Comd of 11 Bde and the COS. Reports have filtered through that these dets proved highly successful and greatly impressed the Brigade staff and that the Bde Comds' crew in the shape of **Cpl Adrian Proffitt** and **Sig Michelle Carvell** have both left an indelible impression on the Bde Comd with their outgoing personalities. The Dep Comd was equally impressed with his crew headed by **Cpl Tracey Haggan** ably supported by **LCpl Richard Teale**. Meanwhile the COS (for a while at least) had the company of a one man band in the shape of **LCpl Daniel Stacey** who was relieved to be joined by **Sig Kez Rea** for Week 2 of Camp.

The Brigade crews together with the Deputy Commander

VISITORS WEEKEND

It has now become a well established tradition to host a visitors weekend on annual training in Germany and this exercise was no exception, except of course that the number of visitors was down on previous years. Unfortunately no mayoral visits took place because all were bound by other commitments but the Regiment was pleased to host a visit from GOC 5 Div, **Maj Gen A. P. Grant Peterkin OBE**. The GOC spent over an hour with members of 58 Sqn on the Sennelager Training Area and was hosted by **Capt Dominic Hope** and the CO throughout the visit. The Regiment was also delighted to be visited by the Honorary Colonel, **Col Brian Foxon OBE, ADC, TD** who was accompanied by the 2IC, **Maj Richard Hemmings**. The Honorary Colonel took time out to visit as many field locations as possible and achieved his aim of talking to most members of the Regiment. We do, however, hope that he has now got over his experience of unexpectedly sharing a room with **Sir Nicholas Bonsor** in the NATO Mess at Sennelager – but at least it can be the source of an amusing anecdote. The mystery of the missing maps, however, has still not been resolved!

GOC 5 Div with Capt Dominic Hope

STRANGE ENCOUNTERS

Talking about anecdotes I couldn't close this annual camp edition of *The WIRE* without relating some of the amusing incidents that always occur during annual training and this camp was no exception. Least said about the CO's birthday surprise the better – the stunt to mislead the CO into believing real beer was available was uncovered when the CO found the evidence (i.e: the non alcoholic Beck's) before the surprise was sprung. Meanwhile somewhere on the Bielefeld Ridge **SSgt Andy Lloyd** was been ticked off by **Capt Allison Swain** who was suffering the indignity of finding a tick embedded in her posterior and less than politely refusing his offer to remove it free of charge. An unconfirmed report that the Trg Maj, **Maj Tudor Hill**, on a morale boosting walk around came across two RR Ops and asked them who they were? One replied, 'I'm **Sig Brown,** Sir,' while the other simply stated, 'I'm bollocked,' – exit a bemused TM.

Staying with the TM for a moment, he had such a fine time relaxing at Roermond during the R&R phase that later that evening he was seen to be having a totally unintelligible conversation with the Adjt. It was something of a revelation that both had clearly mastered the Double Dutch language. At a picturesque field location close to Venlo, **LCpl Sam Maguire** and **Sig Rees Manford-Jones** found out to their cost that you cannot squeeze a 120cm wide vehicle through a gap in the trees 118cm wide without causing substantial damage to the environment surprisingly the vehicle escaped unscathed! Finally what on earth were **Maj Steve Pell** and **Capt Ruth Emphson** doing with their NBC kit in Hanger 17. The TM (yes he gets everywhere) commented that they looked a little sheepish but certainly not as sheepish as the SPSI of 58 Sqn as he attempted to explain why there was a dead calf at the rear of TN 038's CP.

ROVING REPORT

Any thoughts of relaxing too much after camp were dashed when the Regiment quickly moved up a further gear to its continuation-training phase and participation in Ex Silver Bounty 1 at Beckingham. The Exercise, which was held over the weekend 14/16 July, had a triple purpose. They were to give the TA the opportunity of carrying out ITD training towards bounty, to engage in other useful training offered as background activities and to give everyone the opportunity to socialise and get together at a well organised barbecue. This just happened to take place outside the CO's accommodation. The weekend, despite falling in the middle of the summer holiday period, was very well attended and many members of the Regiment completed at least three ITD qualifications as well as having a useful and exciting introduction to the 94mm rocket launcher. Uniquely all of the instructional effort during the weekend was provided from members of the TA that bodes well for the future. So, for the first time in living memory, the Permanent Staff Instructors were more than content to stay in the background in a supervisory role and even volunteered to deliver norgies of stew for lunch. This of course was to ensure they didn't look too redundant! The regiment was also pleased to receive the Dep Comd of 11 Bde, **Col R. Davenport, TD** as a special visitor during Saturday's training events.

Later that month 89 Sqn had by all accounts an exciting but unusual survival-training weekend held at Swynerrton Training area. I say unusual because instead of having to trap and find food the organisers **Sgts Dave Wright** and **Kevin Bannigan** came up with the idea of having a number of checkpoints that team members had to go through to avoid capture by a notional enemy. On arrival (that is if they found the checkpoint) they had to answer a series of questions. If they answered correctly they were given cryptic directions to hidden food either vegetables or the contents of a 24-hour ration pack. Needless to say no one went hungry and the local chickens stayed safely in their pens!

LCpl Hughes ready to launch at Beckingham

EXERCISE SILVER DRAGON

Unfortunately the Regimental report on the skiing expedition to Zermatt in late April arrived far too late for the last edition of *The WIRE* and is therefore being included here. What follows is a revealing but belated report from **SSgt Rod Shelton Smith**.

On 28 April a party of twenty-two began their journey to Zermatt. After 27 hours travelling we finally reached our destination and after settling in and ski issue a well-deserved rest was taken. The next day suitably dressed, including some very unusual headgear we took the ski lift to the top of Klein Matterhorn and proceeded to be divided into groups according to ability. Then the hard work started for our intrepid instructors but by the end of the day all participants, even though exhausted, had enjoyed every minute. Day Two provided the incident of the week when **Sig Laura Burrows** reached the top of the mountain, she suffered a severe abdominal attack and had to be airlifted to Visp hospital. Fortunately it was nothing serious and she returned to do battle with the piste 48 hours later. The remainder of the week passed, in glorious sunshine, and the group skied not only on the Plateau Rosa Glacier, which has some 12.5 miles of marked runs, but also on the Breuil-Cervinia ski area in Italy, which doubled the ski area available. The most improved skiers included **Sgt Nav Muhammad, LCpl Avril Forsythe, LCpl Brian Reid** and **WO2 Mick Kearney** who made his mark by going from non-skier to Basic skier (Bronze award) at an age some would consider giving up the sport. Our instructor's, who included ex-Adjt, **Capt Andy Talbot** and ex-PSI, **SSgt 'Jock' Reid** even gave us an insight into off-piste skiing that resulted in many tumbles.

Although there were no incidents requiring further medical attention one worthy of note was a spectacular tumble by **SSgt 'Road' Shelton-Smith**. Fortunately he suffered no injuries but his pride was a little dented. There was, however, a lot of aching muscles and one or two team members took advantage of a massage service provided by **Avril Forsythe**. For most of us though the Après Ski was better than any massage, as I'm sure **Cpl Andy** 'I can drink more red wine than anyone' **Carroll** can testify. The week ended with all members being awarded the Basic Ski Proficiency award and some achieving even higher levels of competence, but perhaps more important was that everyone enjoyed themselves and want to become even more proficient. Finally every good adventure training exercise requires the 'backroom' staff and our chef, **Cpl Karen Dilley**, served up a variety of excellent meals that were designed to keep energy levels at their highest including abundant supplies of daily packed meals and snacks. Following an excellent expedition all team members returned safely to Canley in the early hours of Sunday 7 May.

HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

To close this edition of the unit's contribution to *The WIRE*, **Sig Peter Cater** has submitted the following report of his hair-raising experiences on his recent parachute course.

When I was asked to write a report on parachuting I knew it would be extremely hard to describe the feeling of one of the greatest experiences in my life but I tried and here goes…..

My first jump was to say the least intense. After one and half days ground training I was eager but a little wary and nervous. The real fear struck me as I boarded the aircraft and it quickly ascended to our jump height. I kept telling myself I was perfectly safe but the nervous twitches it my body seemed to tell me otherwise. Then everything happened in strict synchronisation – on the command 'Cut' I handed over to the instructor my static line. 'In the door', in front of me 3500ft of open space, behind me the plane that only a mere three seconds ago I thought was unsafe now seemed very inviting! 'Go', I was out, looking back at the plane as we drifted away from each other – then the chute jerked open. Breathtaking, I was now flying 3000ft above the earth and everything below me just looked like a map, I felt like a king!

The sheer exhilaration had driven the drills out of my head, but I didn't care, I flew my canopy – I had the power in my hands to go wherever I liked. The ground though began to approach rapidly and as I came into land the drills I had practised over and over again clicked into place and I landed softly with a great sense of pride and achievement. Would I do it again – of course I would!

Relaxing before the jump

36th (EASTERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col W. Brown TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D.T. Eaglesham**

This has been another extremely busy period for the Regiment. RSIT, PRE and two major exercises within weeks of each other, in tandem with a change over of Commanding Officers, have done much to concentrate the minds of both TA and Regular soldiers. In addition, several of our TA soldiers, SNCO's and Officers have deployed on operational tours to Kosovo and Bosnia.

WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS

Every soldier within the Regiment welcomes **Lt Col William Brown TD** back into the fold as Commanding Officer. After a six year sojourn with 11 Sig Bde and 31 Sig Regt (V), he has returned to the Promised Lands known as Essex and East Anglia, officially taking over from **Lt Col Allan TD** on Saturday 8 July. **Maj J. R. Nixon** (AGC), our new RAO, joins the Regiment on a free transfer under the Bosman ruling from the RFCA (the organisation formerly known as TAVRA). A driving force within the Army Youth football system, **Maj Nixon** will lend some much needed assistance, and football knowledge, to the RAOWO, **WO2 Gordon Cameron**. Another newcomer to Ilford is **WO2 (RQMS) Steve Russell**, who joins us from 15 Sig Regt – welcome, and get that CS95 sorted out, RQ! The Regiment has welcomed two new PSI's into its tight knit community over the last few months. **SSgt Gerry McGachy** joins us on promotion from 1 (UK) ADSR and, questionable choice of football team aside, has already proved to be a fine addition to the team. **Sgt** 'Tosh' **Hodgskins**, fresh from the factory that is Arbourfield, has also hit the ground running; both are currently employed with 45 Sqn.

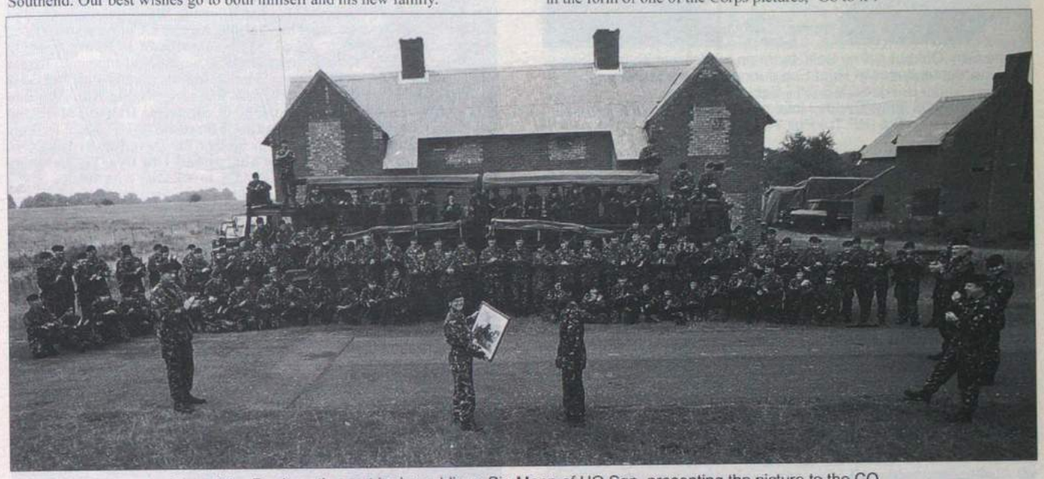
Sadly, we have also had to say farewell to some old friends who have served us well over the years. **WO2 (RQMS) Tony Gaston** leaves the Army after 22 years distinguished service (or so he would have us believe). After making many friends within the TA, he will be sorely missed, especially by the QM who has lost virtually 100% of his cigarette supply in one fell swoop. **SSgt (SQMS) Gordon Brogan** leaves 44 Sqn on retirement after having worked there for more years than he would care to remember. His farewell lunch will be remembered for the beautiful quaich ($^3/_4$ full of Lagavulin Malt at the time) that he presented to the Sergeants' Mess, as well as the gargantuan hangover that he left the RSM with the following morning – guess where the whisky went! **Sgt Nige Back** is posted, on promotion, to 30 Sig Regt, and will be missed both within 45 Sqn at Colchester and the Regiment. **Nige** has often been likened to a typical Officer, mainly because of his expertise with map and compass – needless to say, his wife is navigating the family to Bramcote! Last but not certainly not least, **Sgt Mick Eades** leaves the Army for Civ Div after spending the last eight or nine months in 'isolation' down at Southend. Our best wishes go to both himself and his new family.

The new Commanding Officer, Lt Col Brown TD (R), accepting his new company car from Lt Col Allan TD (L), with WO1 (RSM) Eaglesham in attendance

THE FAREWELL (S) TO LT COL JACKIE ALLAN TD

The Regiment recently bade a sad farewell to its Commanding Officer, **Lt Col Jackie Allan TD**, who left us after virtually 24 years of unbroken service. The Officers' Mess started the proceedings when they dined **Col Jackie** out on Saturday 17 June. The evening took the form of a Ladies Dinner Night, and in recognition of her musical talents and interests the CO was presented with a fine statuette of a Scots Piper. The evening was rounded off nicely by the surprise appearance of a stretch limousine, which the Adjutant, **Capt Russell Edwards**, had organised through some of his shady associates, and the CO duly left the Officers Mess in great style.

Ex Mars Marathon, held over the 1/2 July, gave the CO a final chance to see all her Regiment together in one place at the same time. It also provided the perfect opportunity for the Soldiers within the Regiment to present **Lt Col Allan TD** with a token of their respect and appreciation, in the form of one of the Corps pictures, 'Go to it'.



One of the Regiment's most junior soldiers, Sig Mann of HQ Sqn, presenting the picture to the CO
(Thanks go to the Ops Offr, Maj White, for the use of his house as a back drop)

The CO's final farewell came on the evening of 22 July, when the WOs' and Sgts' Mess dined her out. After so many other functions, and given the dangers of repetition, the decision was taken to go for a slightly different approach to the proceedings. A large amount of research by the PMC, **WO2 Terry Butler**, and his PEC, **Sgt Tim Gamble**, in tandem with a friendly agent deep within the **Allan** household, gathered the photographic and film evidence. This, allied to the technical wizardry of the Foreman, **WO2 Phil Holland**, led to a film and slide show that surprised, entertained and educated (Educated? Well, we all now know where to go for a recuperative mud bath, and that it's best to destroy any photographic evidence straight away!).

After the CO had been presented with a bronze Jimmy, and, in turn, had presented the Mess with a crystal decanter, the evening was rounded off when **WO2 (RQMS) Eddie Kikas** gallantly offered to drive **Lt Col Allan** from the Mess on the back of his motorbike, an offer which she accepted with some relish.

The RSM presents the CO with her leaving gift on behalf of the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess

MERCURY SOCIETY GOLF CLUB - *by Ron 'Bandit' Russell)*
Report on the Regimental Meeting held on 19 July 2000

On a brilliantly sunny July morning, 14 members of the Regimental golfing society tucked into bacon buttys and coffee, quietly contemplating a round on the Championship Course at Stapleford Abbotts. The course had only recently been improved and the challenge was just too good to miss. A testing experience with some tight turns and well-guarded greens did not put off some of the players, and a good scoring round was recorded by quite a few. To his credit, **Gerry McGachy** played his first ever round of golf and scored 18 points. He later told a packed press box that he was gutted at losing one ball and one TEE PEG. Well, he is Scottish! **Jon Wopling** is continuing to improve within category 2, and proceeded to win the section convincingly, with **Neil Garfoot** finishing a creditable second. In the category 1 section the Chief Clerk, **Gordon Cameron**, scored an 'obscene' 40 points and will definitely be playing off a new, lower, handicap in the future. **Tony Dale** went for the money and won the nearest to the pin competition – I heard your comments, **Tony**, and you will definitely play with a stranger next time! The society has quite a few events to look forward to; the semi-finals of the knockout competition loom large on the horizon. Other than that, OC HQ Sqn, **Maj Pete Minshell**, is hoping to knock up a competition during the R & R day on camp – South Wales in September should be a challenge! (Report to follow).

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON - *by Capt E. Feasey, PSAO*

Sqn Comd **Maj P. J. Minshall**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) A. C. Wells**

STOP PRESS!!

HQ Sqn are 'Mountvoy Trophy Champions' and March & Shoot Champions of the Regiment for the first time in some years.

Episode 3 in the HQ Sqn contribution to the Regimental *WIRE* Effort. This is the RSM's **(WO1 Dougie Eaglesham)** new project. Apparently throughout his career he has only appeared in *The WIRE* on the 'odd' occasion, normally when he has been caught out doing something strange or mysterious. In this new life with the Volunteers, he has realised the main effort of the unit is the P Info Effort (for Recruiting, Community Relations etc) and is determined to gain major 'star' coverage for himself while he still has the opportunity. We are finding it increasingly difficult to find photographs for publication without the obligatory RSM 'pose' - however we will keep on trying. The major activities in this period included the Squadrons participation in Ex Mars Marathon, supposedly a Regimental Comms Ex, which ended up, due to a severe lack of available comms assets, as round two in the new RSM's introduction to being a 'real soldier' in a field environment.

The Sqn 'Old but not so Bold' team on a brief respite from their arduous duties at Regt Ech during Ex Mars Marathon
(L-R): SQMS (V) - Sgt Les Eldridge,
SSM WO2 Tony 'Daddy I love playing enemy' Wells and
Tp Sgt (HF Tp) Phil 'Popeye' Babester.

This was the Sqn Comd, **Maj Peter Minshall's,** opportunity to demonstrate that he could still teach the young upstarts in the Squadron a thing or two. Having planned, persuaded and deployed the Echelon in support of the Regiment, he discovered to his chagrin that the No 4 Cookset came out fully kitted except for the vital gas regulator needed (PPP factor). Faced with the prospect of feeding the Regiment a cold breakfast, he proceeded to organise and oversee the building of a fire sufficiently large enough to heat the food and water necessary to make a breakfast barbecue. Burned Corn Flakes anyone? The Squadron and LAD also placed a major stand in the Redbridge Town Show that went down well with the kids and oldies at the show, but was unable to attract the attention of the target population (18-24). (Or 18 to 54 if the PSAO had his way - he seems to be trying to surround himself with the sixty's generation like himself). However, the show demonstrated to the greater population of Redbridge that the TA is still around and, of course, the evening activities of Pop Shows, fair and other female attractions went down well with the more robust younger members of the Squadron. The 'Hearts and Minds' campaign is alive and well in Redbridge.

HQ Sqn Team at the Redbridge Show
Back Row (L-R): Sig Pemberton, WO2 Smith, Cpl Egunjobi,
Cfn De Wulverton, Cpl Fisher, Cfn Sladden, Cfn Nichols, Sgt Eldridge
Front Row (L-R): WO2 Terry (look at my wings) Butler, Cpl Roberts,
Sig Pierce, WO2 Wells, Capt Needham, WO1 Grimshaw, LCpl Baynes,
Cfn Wilson, LCpl Norris, Pte Evans, WO2 Johnston

The SSM - **WO2 Tony Wells** - is a kind hearted, family man (aren't all SSMs like this), who cannot bear to see young children deprived of the opportunity to meet a real soldier. In this vein, he accepted an invitation (from the OC) to give up a Sunday and put a small team together to run a Sqn stand at the Local Primary School for their annual fete. Good organisation and a small team of willing (press-ganged) Volunteers produced a mini-assault course for the kidewinks to play with. Tony gave it his all with his team and produced an excellent stand that was enjoyed by all. This new kinder side of the SSM was immediately followed by the introduction of weekly beastings of the Squadron on drill, especially for those younger ones who are now referring to him as daddy.

The Squadron has been secretly acquiring a number of high quality younger members in the last year or so, and for the second year running was able to field a team for the Regimental Annual Military Skills Competition, The Mountvoy Trophy. The team, ably selected, trained and led by **WO2** 'Wings of Glory' **Terry Butler,** swept the board in both the Mountvoy Trophy and the Regimental March and Shoot and came away as Champion Squadron for the first time in some years. A separate report from the team is produced elsewhere, however the OC has been walking on air ever since - this does not devalue the achievement of a largely raw and inexperienced team who put in more hours than they could be paid for to train and produced a magnificent result. The whole Squadron is proud of each and every one of them. Another recent coup for the Squadron was the recruitment of the Photographer from our local paper, The Ilford Recorder. **Pte Johnnie Walker** is now safely in the net with the AGC, and will soon be snapping away on our behalf bringing a much needed professional touch to our photographic requirements.

Of course, life continues in the Ilford Spa, the daily routine of conference, conference and another meeting continues to allow the Regimental planning for its first UK camp to continue. The Squadron is intimately involved in this process and will be responsible for the administration at Castle Martin Camp in September - life gets busier. We have enjoyed a certain amount of success in Recruiting, for the first time in living memory the LAD is at full establishment and is developing a waiting list. Recruiting for the more exotic Squadron posts of Technician, Clerk etc are also going well - we do, however, remain deficient in Driving/Electrical trades and Radio Ops, but are working on it. If there are any members of the Corps out there, due to leave the Army and settling in East London or East Anglia, a second, part time career with the TA beckons - you would all be welcomed.

Arrivals among the Volunteers for the first time outnumber departures, for the Record we bid farewell to the following who left the Squadron or LAD in the last two months: **Sig Yasmin Ali** and **LCpl Ernie Kuma** on termination of service. **LCpl** 'Dave' **Davidson** is transferring to specialist RLC TA to be a 'train driver' - we are still in shock. British Rail (or successors) look to your laurels. Arrivals are **Sgt Phil Babester** as Tp Sgt HF Tp (after a brief sojourn in Civvy St). **Sig Kim Mann** to TM Tp, **Pte Johnny Walker** to the RAO, **Sig Eddie Hall** to TM Tp, **Sig Orlando Mardner** and **Charmaine Meredew** to HF Tp, **Cfn Izzy Boatey**, **Cfn Paul Edwards** and his brother **Pte Dave Edwards** RLC to the LAD, transfers in include **Cfn Sharpstone**, **Cfn Dye**, **Sig Heseltine** and **LCpl Pomroy** (from R SIGNALS to REME) with others in the pipeline, the situation is looking healthier than for some time, however we cannot afford to rest on our laurels, the effort to achieve full manning continues.

As we go to press, **LCpl Ramesh Managavasagan** is at RMAS on his TA Commissioning Course, **OCdt Christopher Iyawa** is due to go, and **Sig Imran Chaudhry** is loitering in the wings undergoing MTQ training. Just a pity that we do not have vacancies for them within the Squadron ORBAT, but are grooming them for stardom elsewhere in the Regiment. Another imminent departure from the Squadron is **WO1 (SVWO) Mick Grimshaw** who has been SSM, SVWO and has doubled as OC HF Tp for the last 18 months. No, he is not retiring but has been successfully selected for an NRPS post with 44 Sig Sqn (V) as their SQMS - our loss is their gain. Seriously, **Mick** has been a stalwart of the Sqn for some considerable time. His experience, maturity, wisdom, sense of humour, leadership and sheer weight of technical knowledge have gained him enormous respect and liking throughout all members of the Squadron. A strong social member of the Squadron and the Sergeants' Mess, he will be missed at Ilford.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON
MOUNTVOY TROPHY WINNERS
by WO2 Terry Butler – Team Captain

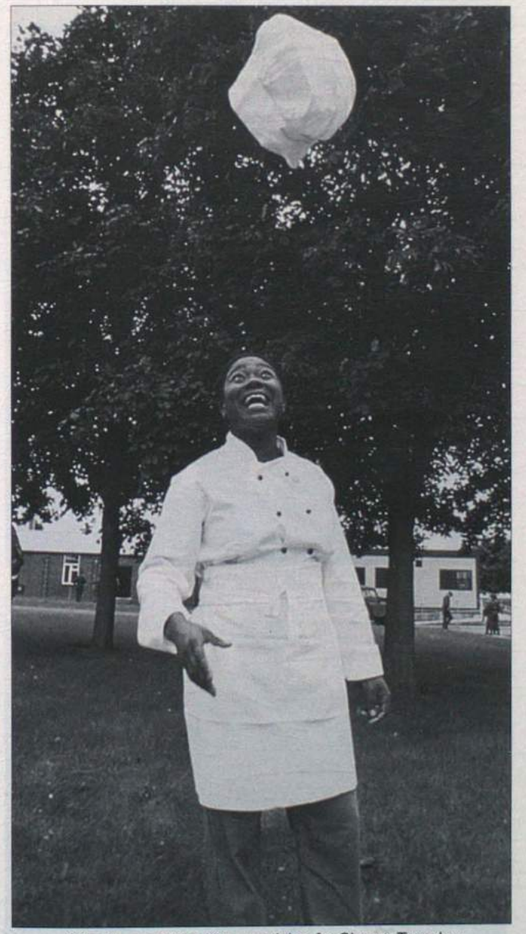
The Mountvoy Trophy Competion first started in 1984 when **Maj Mountford** and **SSgt (YofS) Mcavoy** donated a trophy to 36 Sig Regt (V). It is a Military skills competition held every year involving subjects such as First Aid, Combat Stalk, Map Reading, NBC and Command Tasks, culminating in a March and Shoot. Each TAC puts in a team of ten troops and must include one female, although this year only seven teams took part. Over the years Norwich, Colchester and Warley have provided the strongest teams, with HQ Sqn out of the running in the main. In fact, last year was our best ever result when we came sixth overall. The team from last year felt that with some prior preparation for the competition we could do a lot better. With five members from last year still keen to participate, new blood was drafted in and the team that started was as follows: **WO2 Terry Butler** (team captain), **Cpl Michael Egunjobi, LCpl Dane Macintosh, Sig Lee Marshall, Sig Reggie Cullumbine, WO2 Keith Smith, LCpl John Rodwell, Sig Jamie Pemberton, Sig Vic Meredew** and **Sig Glen Thompson.**

A training programme was drawn up and at the end of March we started fitness runs every Tuesday evening. By the beginning of June, and with the days becoming longer, bergan runs through Epping Forest became the order of the day. A final indication of the teams commitment was the two unpaid weekends used to revise all the skills required during the competition. On the first day of the competition our initial stand was the River Crossing; the team put in a very good time, which was to remain unbeaten for the rest of the day, and this set the tone for the weekend. We also came second in Map Reading, Signals, and Combat Stalk. By Saturday night we were in third place with 35 points, Cambridge were second with 36 points and Colchester were first at 37 points. We knew that we had to win the 3.7 mile battle march, but even then we had to hope that Cambridge came third and Colchester finished fourth in order for us to win the Mountvoy Trophy. The teams were set off in pairs at 45-min intervals, with HQ starting first in tandem with Cambridge, one of the teams that we had to beat. It was neck and neck until the last mile, when we had to pick up stretchers (thanks for that, **LCpl Worsfold**!), and with Cambridge falling behind we finished in 41mins 36secs, a full two mins quicker. All we could do was sit back and wait for the other teams. Some one was smiling down on us that day because Grays came in only four seconds slower than our time, pushing Cambridge into third place. The whole team waited on the finish line to see how Colchester, who were last out, would fare; all they had to do was finish no lower than third to win the Mountvoy. After a nerve wracking hour or so, Colchester came in 5mins slower than our time, putting them in fifth place.

At the end of a great weekend, HQ Sqn not only won the march but, with the points added to the previous days score, also had done enough to win a keenly contested Mountvoy Trophy. On return to the TAC the whole team celebrated late in to the night, boosting the much needed bar profits. Other Squadrons beware, though; the main topic of conversation on the night was how we will retain the trophy next year!

Stop Press: The CO took the opportunity to promote Regimental Master Chef, **Norma Miller-Kite** to Staff Sergeant during the Mountvoy Trophy prize giving ceremony – many congratulations go out to one of the biggest and most popular characters in the Regiment.

The victorious HQ Sqn Team parade their silver ware
Back Row (L-R): Sig Thompson, Sig Meredew, LCpl Macintosh,
Cpl Egunjobi, Sig Pemberton, Sig Cullumbine, Sig Marshall
Front Row (L-R): WO2 Smith, WO2 Butler, LCpl Rodwell



SSgt Norma Miller-Kite practising for Shrove Tuesday

LAD REME - *by LCpl Izzard*
The Beltring Show – 'War and Peace'

36 Sig Regt (V) LAD REME formed part of the "invasion" of the The Hop Farm Country Park, Kent, for the Millenium War and Peace Show 20–23 July. Reputedly the world's largest military vehicle show, it provides the opportunity to see everything from motorbikes to main battle tanks pluse 400,000 square feet of stalls full of military kit and memorabilia of all kinds. This was the third year running that the LAD has attended this event with the aim of putting the Regiment, REME and associated trades in the public eye and not forgetting a spot of team building! As always, the imposing Foden Recovery Vehicle attracted a number of visitors to the field workshop area, although this year the lads didn't try to sell it to a wealthy Japanese visitor! Apparently, though, they were tempted by an offer of £35 for a 10 man ration pack.

Among the attractions this year were tank rides, a fun fair, arena displays, modelling marquees and battle re-enactments. Did I mention beer tents? However, the highlight for **Cfn Sladden** and **Nichols** was the helicopter ride. They reported that the trip was going along quite nicely when the pilot suddenly started ranting about Charlie (?) The next thing they knew he was reliving combat missions in Vietnam! They were quite relieved when they got back on Terra Firma. **WO2 (AQMS) Johnston** continued to fall victim to his strange fetish for bizarre military cooking equipment and came away with some contraption designed to burn on Camel dung.

In attendance at Beltring were the OC LAD, **Capt Needham**, **WO2 (AQMS) Johnston**, **Sgt Grey**, **Cpl Hourihan**, **LCpl Izzard** and **Cfn Sladden**, **Nichols** and **DeWulverton**. All in all, this was another great War and Peace show. If anyone in the Corps wishes to find out more information on next years event, visit their website at www.warandpeace.uk.com.

54 SQUADRON – THE MARIE CURIE TRUST - *by Cpl Kett*

On Sunday 14 May 2000, eleven members of 755 Sig Tp, in conjunction with the Marie Curie Trust and public volunteers, successfully abseiled the Maternity Tower at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital. The primary aim of the abseil was to raise much needed funds for the Marie Curie Trust, a charity dedicated to the research and battle against cancer, and the Army Benevolent fund, a charity committed to the welfare of the army and ex-army personnel and their dependants. Troop efforts managed to raise in the region of three hundred pounds which will be divided evenly between the two charities. The secondary aims of the event were to positively promote the TA in the public eye. This was achieved by the troop providing safety escorts for the abseil, abseiling with the public and also by having an active Recruiting stand. Finally the fostering of an adventurous spirit within individuals was promoted through all Troop members successfully overcoming the anxieties of walking on the outside of a 128ft building when there were perfectly reasonable and safe stairs inside the building! Particular congratulations must go to those members of the Troop for which this abseil was their first, and also to those who overcame their genuine fear of heights.

54 SQUADRON – RAF MILDENHALL AIR FETE
by LCpl Goodman

755 Sig Tp recently took part in the static Army display at RAF Mildenhall's Air Fete 2000 over the May Bank Holiday weekend. Members of the Troop were on hand to explain to the public the role and functions of a Royal Signals Troop and to show them the workings of a Command Post, Hight Frequency radio detachment, and TRIFFID and EUROMUX communications vehicles. A laser range featuring an imitation SA80 rifle provided entertainment for those young (and on occasion, not so young!) members of the public. Despite the heavy (and at times, torrential) rain, the turnout to the show was good, and the majority of air displays went ahead, including flypasts by the amazing B2 Stealth Bomber and, of course, the Red Arrows. The Troops own stand attracted a fair amount of visitors, and the weekend proved to be an unqualified success.

EXERCISE MARS MARATHON2000
THE 54 SQN PERSPECTIVE - *by 2Lt Keegan (757 Troop)*

The Troop assembled at 0500hrs on 1 July, a few nervous smiling faces wondering what the weekend had in store for us. We left the Cambridge TAC at 0600hrs and made our way to STANTA. After a slight detour to the greener side of the area, we eventually got to Stanford Council Houses, where the whole Regiment was assembling for the festivities of the weekend. The Troop donned their helmets and made themselves ready for the war to follow. The morning started with a series of training stands covering HF Comms (PRC 320 and PRC 351), Vehicle Anti-Ambush drills and Cam and Concealment of vehicles (with a dash of Defence of a Comms site procedures for good luck). After we had eaten, the Squadrons then advanced to their own hide areas, where 54 Squadron established a Patrol Harbour. On arrival, 757 Tp were initially responsible for the Cam of the vehicles, and we then moved on to a wide-ranging clearance patrol of the area. After a few moments of excitement, however, we realised that there was no enemy for us to practice our hand to hand combat on – very unfortunate! The routine of a patrol harbour continued throughout most of the day and also most of the night until the enemy bumped us. That high awareness **Sig Beer** of Norwich Tp, meant that we were prepared and were able to open fire before the enemy got too close to our position. 754 Tp, led by **2Lt Darren Ambler**, meanwhile, had ambushed an ambush; the rate of fire laid down by the Bedford Tp could be heard from 2km away, making sure that everyone

was aware that 54 Sqn was ready for anything that came their way. 755 Tp then went on to conduct a recce of an enemy position, in order to prepare for the morning attack.

The fire support was provided by 757 Tp and, with cries of, 'Get Some!' from **Sig Davey Dewart**, Cambridge really made their presence felt. With valiant **SSgt Andy Osborne** hobbling away (he had injured his knee earlier on in the exercise), he led 755 Tp on the charge, with 754 Tp acting as the sneaky beaky reserve. The assault led to a victorious 54 Sqn and a very happy **Lt Emma Hillyard** who had been operating as the Squadron Commander over the weekend. The return to the patrol harbour, and also to the staging area of Stanford Council Houses, proved to be upsettingly uneventful. With mournful faces the troops de-bombed the few rounds they had left. The Regiment then had the opportunity to take a few photos, and also say a sad farewell to **Lt Col Allan**, who's last weekend it was with the Regiment. Overall, this was an extremely enjoyable weekend, and the troops left for their TAC's with the adrenaline still buzzing around their system, and big grins on their faces.

38 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNALS REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS
CO **Lt Col Nigel Harrison MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Colin Milne**

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Bill Evans TD**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Clive Howland**

THOUGHTS ON EXERCISE BLUE HORIZON

Having taken over officially as the RAO of the Regiment on 1 April 2000 (A good day to start), I looked forward to my first Regimental FTX with some apprehension. However, I need not have worried as any reservations were quickly overcome once I arrived at the TAC on Friday night. I was most impressed with the efficient and effective manner in the way everyone went about their tasks. Weapons were issued and transport was organised with the minimum of fuss and shortly after 2030hrs we were on the way to our Exercise location.

On arrival at our location for the next two days we were briefed by **SSgt Thwaites** and shown to our sleeping area. I then located myself in the Sqn CP with the OC and eagerly awaited the start of my first shift as a Watchkeeper at midnight (they said it was the best time to learn). The next six hours went reasonably quickly and it was reassuring to have the RQMS on the same shift. Having consumed an excellent breakfast I then tried to grab a few hours sleep before my next shift, not too successfully. I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend and being on exercise with the Squadron. The OC, PSAO and members of HQ Sqn made me feel part of the team and I got a good idea of the role that we would play in supporting the Regiment on operations. The Squadron were all very friendly but this could have something to do with me being the person who pays them.

I found the weekend interesting and I hope to build on the knowledge and skills gained on Blue Horizon so that I can be an asset (rather than a hindrance) to both the Squadron and the Regiment when they deploy on exercise or operations.

64(CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)
Sqn Comd **Maj Andrew Smith**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Mick Rooney**

EXERCISE BLUE HORIZON

'Everybody's favourite weekend. A Regimental Field Exercise. What fun!!!' So said all of the operators on Exercise Blue Horizon, and it was. Deploying on the Friday evening the guard net was established on HF just as the ionisphere went 'T*Ts Up' and comms were lost until morning. Thankfully the mobile phone (the Royal Signals new comms kit!!) was still working – providing you stood on the trailer and shouted. Come morning all comms came in including NCRS, Mould and Clansman.

SCP was deployed at Finningley Airfield (formerly RAF Finningley) and **SQMS Burton BEM** (Uncle Dave - the lovable old teddy bear of 64 Sig Sqn) set up a field kitchen and messing area which would not have been out of place on the Riviera. The food as always was better than at the Ritz and consequently 64 played host to the colonel and RCP on Saturday night. All of 64's detachments redeployed to Finningley around lunchtime on Saturday and although on 24 hour Ration Packs were unsurprisingly supplemented by 'Uncle Dave' with fresh rations and Bacon Butties. A worried SSM was wandering about on Saturday as he had 'lost' a Subaltern. **2Lt Helen Love** 'Machine' was last seen leopard crawling in her slug to a quiet corner as, 'The Sergeant Major was walking up and down really loudly.' Working through the night and into Sunday morning one of 64 Sig Sqn's detachments redeployed to the Worksop area where **Col Harrison** called End-Ex.

As always the return to the TAC seemed quicker than the deployment and the bar was opened after all of the kit had been cleaned and put away. A good enjoyable exercise, Blue Horizon 'Blew' away the cobwebs and got the whole Squadron thinking about their role at camp in September.

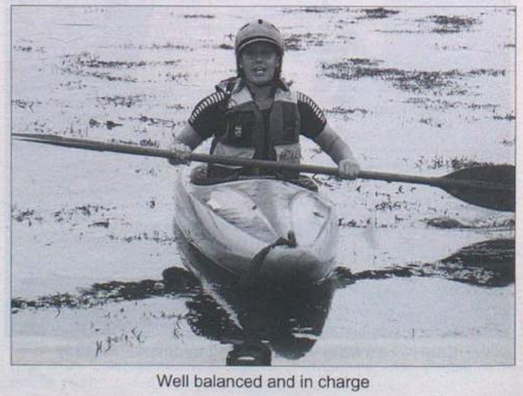
NUFFS ENOUGH

Anglesey was the location, adventurous training was our aim. The first weekend in July 64 Sqn descended upon the Nuffield Centre, just west off the Menai Bridge to participate in Exercise Salty EBOR. The training programme stated that it involves lots of water so take plenty of clothes to last the weekend. That didn't include the change five minutes before departure when the heavens opened, as the canoes were being fastened down; by that stage we were onto our last set!

The weekend went off to a flying start: no wind for sailing, the canoeing equipment was nicely folded back at the Manor in Sheffield and to top it all the BBQ stand was double booked! Be resourceful, be flexible, be happy! Despite these and many other hiccups thrown our way the weekend was a great success. Everybody participated in three activities. Activity 3, where no one really knew quite what to expect and a further two activities from: kayaking, coasteering and the island trip (sailing substitute). The mystery activity (Activity 3) involved being dropped off in the middle of nowhere, given a time limit, map, question sheet and a set of instructions, with which to complete an orienteering treasure hunt (minus treasure) and collect various items including rabbit droppings and seaweed.

Everybody launched themselves, some quite literally, into the weekend and entered into the spirit to which it was intended. Even in-between sessions people were in the swimming pool, as if they were not wet enough anyway!! It is not often people have to face up to their fears, whether it be that of a sea cliff traverse with waves crashing below, or standing up in a canoe in tidal waters surrounded by jellyfish or even just holding the rank of Sergeant and pretending to be a chicken! A brilliant weekend was enjoyed by all, rumoured to be the best adventurous training in a long time and definitely the best weekend of the year and we got paid to participate!

The Island Trip



Well balanced and in charge

Kayaking

Puzzled on - Activity three

87(CITY OF NOTTINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)
Sqn Comd **Maj David Tomlinson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Vicky Hardy**

This has been a busy time since our last *WIRE* notes. A team of four entered Lombardia 2000 mil skills competition in Italy, and together with two reserves and (literally) a flying visit from the OC, a great time was had by all (see full report elsewhere). It generated a lot of local publicity, including the local papers' satirical cartoonist, who likened our girls' markswomenship to that of the WI! Their very creditable performance has inspired the boys to mount their own assault on Italy later in the year. Well done to **Sgt Carol Lee, Sgt Emma Crogan, Sgt Mandy Jones** and **Cpl Heather Blair**.

On the departures front, we are quickly establishing ourselves as Officers R Us, with the transfer of both our Troop Commanders! **Capt John** 'Mr Gadget' **Pearson** has gone to 46 Sqn as 2IC, whilst **Capt Ken** 'Geographically Challenged' **Rustige** will go to HQ Sqn, again as 2IC. Congratulations gentlemen on your step up (as far as going to Derby or Sheffield can ever be thought of as promotion), and our grateful thanks and very best wishes. It is unknown how much the transfer fees amount to, but rumour has it that the PSAO, **Capt Ken Scott,** has got a free golfing holiday in Scotland this September from the proceeds.

Once again the Squadron supported the Great Nottinghamshire Bike Ride, providing the organisers with communications during the whole event, which has almost 8,000 participants and spectators. This year, the Squadron's effort was overseen by **WO2 QMSI** "Uncle" **Pete Cooper,** aided and abetted by **SSgt John Dye** and PSIT, **SSgt Phil Newman**. This year was almost faultless, and good weather saw the event pass with fewer than usual injuries. It was a good opportunity to brush up on VP, and gave some of the newer squadron members their first opportunity to speak 'live' on a net. Some reverted to type, **LCpl** 'Twinkletoes' **Hammett** managed to nab the same quiet sleepy spot on the course as last year. **Cpl Britain** managed to display his new tech skills, mending a succession of bikes! New arrival, **Cpl Steven Keay** was pondering how he managed to get stationed between a pub and a tea shoppe. Surely, all of your Regular postings weren't this cushy? Some of our younger male soldiers (who will remain nameless) took the opportunity to pose and flex their muscles before an appreciative female cyclist audience. Obviously Keeping the Army in the Public Eye (KAPE) comes easier to some than others!

OC 87 Squadron - Bike Ride 2000

Out on the 50 mile course, **Capt Ken Rustige** put in a blistering performance, to beat the OCs time by over an hour and a half. All of us on the last half of the course were impressed as he steamed past at a great rate of knots, a blur of lycra clad thighs! Now, the truth can be told, his front gear shifter had jammed in the top cog. He dare not slow down, worrying that he could never get going again! The OC, **Maj David Tomlinson** was accompanied at a more sedate pace by the former SSM, now retired, **Nigel Caldicott.** After hurling abuse from a check point last year, he had no excuses. **WO2 (SSM) Vicky Hardy** had that task this year, with a shout of, 'Come on Sir!' (Well, that's what the OC thought she said, and who are we to tell him different?)

The recent work up commex for camp saw the visit of Comd 2 Bde, **Brig Jackson**. The commander was briefed by **OCdt Simon** 'Off the cuff' **Young**. He then had the chance to chat to most of the Squadron, and hear their views on a number of topics, as well as seeing both our NCRS and MOULD deployed. Full marks go to **LCpl Houghton,** for being able to correctly describe the function of an ASL, off the top of his head! Meanwhile, **LCpl Hammett** had displayed a novel approach in adjusting the sights on a rifle, although the adjusting tool, a landrover, seems a bit big to fit in a cleaning kit. We hope **Cpl Panter** doesn't think we treat all visitors from HQ Squadron like this.

Rent a power det has also been busy, supporting ABF functions at Nottingham Castle and Boer War centenary celebrations at Sandbeck Park, in cahoots with Notts Army Cadet Force. **Sgts Craig Toft** and 'Stewie' **Nessbitt** have been doing a good impersonation of hard workers, although **Cpl Bedford** tell us that it is all down to him! On new arrivals, the Toft household has produced yet another potential recruit Jody, at 7lbs 7oz. Congratulations to **Craig** and **Helen**, and we have booked the selection weekend for January 2018, OK? We also send a get well soon to our stores accountant and stand in TA SQMS, **Cpl Bal** 'DB' **De la Billiere**, who has managed to break her ankle. Don't worry, our medic, **SSgt Pete Ward** bravely filled the breach, and has already written off a 4 tonner canvas!

LOMBARDIA 2000

On 8 June party of six girls consisting of four team members and two admin, from 87 Sig Sqn set off for the beautiful city of Luino in Northern Italy for the Annual International Military Challenge. Taking part were soldiers from all over Europe including Germany, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, France, Greece and America, a lot of them regular soldiers. There were 72 teams in all travelling over rough terrain in the mountain area of Lake Maggiore and the heights around the town of Luino. The team consisted of **Sgts Emma Crogan, Mandy Jones, Carole Lee** and **Cpl Heather Blair**.

The journey from Nottingham to Luino took aproximately 30hrs by minibus, with a sleep-over at Strasbourg. Finding a hotel in the early hours proved to be quite an adventure. Arrival at one hotel seemed to cause quite a stir with the locals as, due to the hot weather, they were sat outside in their shorts and underwear. The arrival of a minibus with six scantily clad females seemed to excite them in the belief that the entertainment for the evening had arrived! Fortunately there was no room at the inn. Having had a lucky escape we finally found a room at the Ibis Hotel. After a short rest it was an early start for breakfast, with each of us carrying holdalls to fill from the buffet table, for lunch and dinner as we didn't know when our next stop would be. Having passed through four countries to get to Luino we were greeted by friendly forces in the form of our OC, **Maj Tomlinson**. We were directed to the HQ building in order to check in and be allocated our hotel whilst in Luino. Whilst we were waiting in the queue we could feel a lot of eyes on us, we later discovered that this was because we were the only female team around. We checked into our hotel, had a quick shower and changed into uniform for the opening ceremony which was held in the town. At 2100hrs a briefing was held at HQ and due to a lack of seats only two members of the team were allowed in. The briefing was in Italian and at times in broken American English. This was extremely diffcult to understand so after threee hours, in almost unbearable heat, we left to head back for a 4.00am start and no breakfast.

We were taken by coach to an unknown location and after a kit inspection given a map and the competition commenced. We must have looked lost and bewildered as another team pointed out where we were on the map, with this information we set off unsure of what was to come next, but full of enthusiasm and with our morale high. Our first stand was called 'Airfield Preparation' which consisted of disembarking from a helicopter. Our orders were to sit inside a Ford Transit van and when we saw a green light to carry on - in Italian. We duly sat in the Ford Transit wondering what to do next when suddenly hidden inside a cam net, was a green light. We all piled out of the side door, leaving the radio op tangled up in the cam net with her antenna. Using Fire and Manoeuvre we completed the task, and were told that it was one of the top scores. We had expected the stands to be far apart but the first few were quite close, this gave us a false sense of security in that we thought we had completed half the stands within the first couple of hours. We then planned our afternoon off sunbathing by Lake Maggiore only to find that the next stand was to take us four hours. Upon arrival we thought we had finished as our card was complete, however, we were given another card with more stands. This seriously changed our plans for the afternoon. One of the stands was a river crossing which consisted of four different methods of using ropes. **Cpl Heather Blair** volunteered to take the most physically demanding method and was eagerly encouraged by the Italians shouting DIE! DIE! DIE!**Heather** did not accept this gracefully and it unbalanced her causing her to fall into the river. However, at the other

end , we were to learn later, 'DIE!' means 'Come on!.'

Stand number 11 was Penetration into Enemy Territory, this consisted of live firing on a short range using fire and manoeuvre. The DS were extemely concerned at having females let loose with weapons, as they hadn't worked with females before. They didn't need to worry as we successfully shot all the targets, despite **Sgt Carole Lee** receiving a cut to her eye due to the weapon being so long. However, first aider **Sgt Emma Crogan** was on hand with words of sympathy, 'Your cam-cream needs touching up.' From here we headed to our last stand down the mountain using the quickest method known to us, bum-skiing. The other teams saw this and quickly followed suit. We reached our final destination feeling exhausted yet full of a sense of achievement and overflowing with morale. **Sgt Mandy Jones'** only enemy seemed to be the mosquitoes which travelled with her throughout the competition. We finally finished to the sound of a rainstorm and were met by two friendly faces in the form of **Sig Helen Driscoll** ans **Sig Sally Fisher**. Would we do it again? See you next year!

The Team

39th (SKINNERS) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col J. Crackett TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) P. Anderson**

REGIMENTAL PERMANENT STAFF ADVENTURE TRAINING EX INTREPID DRAGON

After a hard weekend working with the Territorial soldiers on Ex Bounty Lynx, the Regiment's permanent staff deployed to Penhale Camp, Newquay for a well-deserved week of adventure training. The first day saw us rock climbing, starting with the climbing wall on Penhale Camp and then progressing to more difficult and challenging climbs around the local cliff faces. The title for 'Rock Leader' was being fiercely contested with **SSgt Tony** 'Am I looking good doing this' **Ward** just pipping the QM, **Capt Phil Abbot** to the post. The day proved successful for two members of the group with **SSgt** 'Scouse' (Disco legs)' **Simcock** and **Pte Anna Davies** (RAMC) overcoming their fear of heights. The second day was the 'short and enjoyable' coastal walk that wasn't short by any stretch of the imagination. It began 23 miles away and finished in Newquay and took far less time than originally thought - much to the dismay of some of the group. The route was chosen by **SSgt Phil Sweetland** and was used as a trial for the HQ Squadron sponsored walk later in the year in aid of the Regimental charity 'Hope and Homes for Children'. With the high tide coming in, a bridge that was marked on the map was submerged and was nowhere to be seen which resulted in an impromptu river crossing by the group. The Adjt, **Capt Nick Peet** was firmly pointing the finger at our resident pathfinder **Sgt Rick Norman** for that one. The third day was the day when individuals could choose their own activity, the majority opting for surfing in Newquay and the remainder heading off on mountain bikes. The last activity of the day was a group clay pigeon shoot that saw the RSM, **WO1 Paul Anderson** walking away with the prize. He's obviously been practising since being selected for commission. The evening was taken up by an informal dinner at the local pub to say farewell to **WO1 (RSM) Paul Anderson** who is posted to 14 Sig Regt (EW) as the Families Officer and to welcome the new RSM, **WO1 Frank Roberts**. We wish you both the best in your new posts. Thanks must also go to **Capt John Williams** who took time from his busy schedule as OC Mil Trg Wg in Blandford to supervise the Rock-Climbing activity.

5th (QUEEN'S OWN OXFORDSHIRE HUSSARS) SIGNAL SQUADRON - BANBURY & OXFORD
EXERCISE WIGHT NIGHT
(or rather, Five and Friends have an adventure)
by 2Lt Simon Durtnal

The two day stop look and gasp tour kicked off on Friday night with a long drive down to the south coast to that well known Rivera and Coastal resort town of Portsmouth. (No we didn't stop at Joannas). Clutching our passports and duty free Five and Friends set sail for foreign climes. Little knowing what lay in store for them?

On arrival at the tropical and Exotic Island of Wight a resistance agent (PSI Ops, **Staff Simcock**) met them with urgent news. Following a coup by renegade islanders, Fishbourne, the port at which Five had landed and the eastern half of the island was hostile territory. The only way to safety was to flee on foot to the western side of the island and the safety of the deposed government's HQ at Jersey Camp. Aided by resistance agents (**2Lt Durtnal** and **Sgt Milner**) Five and their Friends (an American world-wide HF Communication unit the 422nd ABS/SCR based at RAF Croughton) were split into small teams and were smuggled out of Fishbourne. Once in the safety of the countryside the teams were dropped off at different secret locations and under cover of darkness made the breakout on foot. Through out the night the three teams battled the elements, of a warm cloudless night, full moon and rugged terrain. They endeavoured to strike out across country over gruelling distances, in an attempt to reach the first of three agent rendezvous.

WO2 (SSM) Ray Phillips and Maj Robert Stone

At each rendezvous, agents (**2Lt Durtnal, Sgt Milner** and **LCpl Docherty**) tested the teams with ingeniously devised mental tests such as Kim's Game, Sharon's Game and The Mensa Questionnaire. With such beauties as, what is your name rank and serial number? If a plane crashes on the boarder of Spain and Portugal where would you bury the survivors? And why can't a man living in Liverpool be buried west of the Mersey? No points for guessing who wrote these... ('Scouse'). Once answered the teams set out on their gruelling journeys to the next rendezvous, until by early afternoon on the Saturday the last obstacle to cross loomed up; the island's mountain ranges. With snow goggles and crampons fitted and summoning up the last reserves of strength, the teams made their desperate bid for freedom and scaled the peaks to reach the last rendezvous and home to freedom. Once reunited, Five and friends managed a greater feat of endurance by celebrating all night and into the wee early hours with lashings of ginger beer, cake and sticky buns. The next day Five and friends decided that it might be a jolly good idea to take the sea air before there return home, and visited the picturesque needles, and just prior to departing on the charabanc home, Five gave the Americans a good whooping at baseball. A great end to a marvellous adventure, and Five have been invited round for tea, buns and a re-match by our friends the Americans. HURRAH

FAREWELL – WELL ALMOST, MR RON PULLEN

On Tuesday 11 July 2000 the Squadron visited the Oxfordshire Yeoman Public House in Freeland to view the Yeomanry Exhibition. This coincided with the forthcoming retirement of our Caretaker, **Mr Ron Pullen**. **Ron** has been the Caretaker at Banbury since 1995 following a distinguished working career that has included, Heating Pipe Engineer,

National Service in the RA, Bar Keeping in Spain and Senior Store Man with the Civil Service at RAF Croughton. **Ron** and his wife **Joyce** have a daughter **Sandra** living in Banbury and their son **Colin** is a Staff Sergeant with 38th (City. of Sheffield) Sig Regt (V).

Ron & Joyce thanking the Squadron for their farewell gift

They have been full supporters of the Squadron taking a leading role in all social activities, we wish them well and the longest and happiest retirement ever.

PS: *The replacement caretaker declined the job, so Ron is with us for another two months.*

VISIT BY BRIG N. C. JACKSON MBE
COMMANDER 2nd (NC) SIG BDE & COTSWOLD GARRISON

The Squadron was visited by **Brig N. C. Jackson MBE** on Tuesday 5 July 2000. Following a briefing by the OC, **Maj Robert Stone**, the Brigadier visited Recruit Training, Security Training and saw the Equipment Husbandry following Ex Silver Lynx.

57 (CITY AND COUNTY OF BRISTOL) SIG SQN (V)
EXERCISE HORFIELD SALVATION

At the beginning of this training year our Commanding Officer indicated to all Squadrons that the regiments charity for 2000 would be Hope and Homes for Children. The aim of this charity is to give hope to children world-wide who have nowhere to live, due to war or disaster, by providing them with family homes. The Regiment's aim was to raise a minimum of £1500.

As TAC Horfield in Bristol is the location of the HQ of both HQ and 57 Sig Sqn, we decided to have a combined effort and **SSgt Tony Ward,** the Trg PSI of 57 Sqn, came up with the idea of what was to be known as Ex Horfield Salvation. The aim being to set up a display stand in the middle of Bristol shopping centre, both to display information on the charity and of course the Regiment and the TA. A course of just over a mile would then be selected, to weave in and out of the streets in the centre of Bristol, starting and finishing at the stand. This course would then be run continuously for a 24 hour period, by teams of four carrying a stretcher, suitably weighted to simulate carrying a child (quite a large one it turned out in the end)! The idea was taken up with enthusiasm and there was no shortage of volunteers for the weekend with plenty of sponsorship forms being completed. Saturday 29 July saw an early start for many of the team, setting up the stands in the town centre and preparing for a midday start. The weather was excellent, for sun bathing that is, not really for running as we where soon to find out, much sweat would flow over the next 24 hours. On the stroke of noon the first team set off to the sound of air horns and applause, weaving in and out trying to dodge the weekend shoppers. The reception from the people of Bristol on the day was great and collection boxes soon began to fill while the teams progressed. Mainly, it must be said, due to the somewhat forceful approach of **WO2 (SSM) Phil Smith** of HQ Squadron who I think missed his vocation in life and should have been in sales!

The 24 hours passed without any major incident and although very tiring it was considered worthwhile by all concerned, total distance covered by the teams was 119 miles. Was it a success? The Regiment's aim was to raise £1500 between all four squadrons. This one event has achieved that aim, it is hoped that when all sponsor money has been collected, to have raised in excess of £2500. Congratulations to all runners and organisers.

Sig Vicky Hawkins and Sig James Dawes with collection box and stickers in the centre of Bristol

The first girls' team, all smiles ready for their first run
(L-R): Sig Jo Christensen, Sig Jo King, WO2 (SSM) Jane Tuck and LCpl Emma Wells

The Start
Sig Rob Laing and Sig Lynton Seymour rear and Sig Chris Walker and Sig Darren Saunders up front start the 24 hour charity run

71 (YEOMANRY) SIGNAL REGIMENT BEXLEYHEATH

CO **Lt Col C. H. Turner**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) C. D. Tait**

The Commanding Officer and all ranks of the Regiment would like to congratulate **Maj Kathy Howard** on receiving the MBE on the Queen's Birthday Honours list for over 13 years of loyal service as RAO and, more importantly, as Regimental Mother. Congratulations also to **WO2 Keith Wraite** on his promotion to WO1, taking on the mantle of **SVWO**, and the Regiment welcomes **WO2 YofS Jason Budding,** his wife **Mandy** and **Cpl Nick Trethewy** as the new CO's driver. All have arrived on promotion, including **Mandy**, and we wish them all a most successful tour with the premier Yeomanry Signal Regiment. We sadly say farewell to **SSgt Murphy** who is posted to 21 Signal Regiment and **Cpl Al Hyland** who has gone to ATR Bassingbourne to scare the new recruits. Good luck and enjoy the easy life!

Sgt Phill Kent supervising Mr O'Toole on the LSW during the Civilian Visitirs' Day

This has been a particularly busy period for the Regiment with a Civilian Visitors' Day, Military Visitors' Day, Re-Opening the much renovated Inns of Court Shooting Pavilion at Bisley and hosting the Master of Signals and Signal Officer in Chief (Army) to spectate **Her Majesty The Queen Mother's** Centenary Pageant on Horse-Guards, as the Guidon of 68 (Inns of Court & City Yeomanry) Sig Sqn was paraded to its Royal Honorary Colonel. The highlight, however, was the visit of **Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal, Colonel in Chief** to the Regiment in Bexleyheath. We also managed to squeeze in a Regimental comms exercise around all the parties!

265 (KENT & COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON - BEXLEYHEATH

Sqn Comd **Maj Hugh Robertson TD**
SSM **WO2 Stuart McHenery**

We start by congratulating **SSgt Key** 'Caravan' **Hancock** and **LCpl Liz** 'Psycho' **Blaber** on their recent promotions and wish them great success in their new posts.

REGIMENTAL SKILLS WEEKEND

The Regiment held a Military Skills weekend from 23 to 25 June. It comprised a series of round robin range stands, which included grouping and zeroing, APWT, IBSR, FIBUA and Moving Target. Each team was four strong; the Squadron managed to enter five teams out of a total of eight. The competition was hard work in the desert heat of Hythe Ranges. There were some outstanding results in particular **Sig Sean** 'Todger' **Walsh** who scored a maximum on the IBSR.

Squadron Military Skills Team
Front Row (L-R): Sgt Mick Warrington, Sig Ash Walsh, Cpl Triss Swain, LCpl Ian Liscoe
Back Row (L-R): SSgt Steve Shelly, Sig Dave Wilton, Cpl Andy Keller, Lt Richie Woodhams, Sig Thompson, LCpl Ash Green

All Squadron teams performed admirably during the course of the competition, although we were piped at the post for first place. Sharpshooter teams managed second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth place overall. The Squadron excelled, as ever, at the post challenge BBQ.

EXERCISE WHITE HORSE II

This Regimental Comms Exercise took place over the weekend of 14 - 16 July and the Squadron deployed an NMC together with two NCRS stations on the Cinque Ports Training Area. Friday evening saw a tactical move into the site with some amazing driving skills displayed by **LCpl Sharon** 'Shazza' **Risley** and a close second place from **Cpl Barry** 'Rocker' **Morse**. Torches were not required for the move in as there was enough ambient light emitted from **LCpl Sean** 'Blondie' **Eyers.** Now all we were waiting for was the cheese straws to arrive courtesy of our super chefs, **Cpl Mandy** 'Fanny' **Shannon** and **Cpl Pete** 'Jonny' **Sturman**, keeping the cafe open 24hrs per day, seven days per week. The Dets had the joy of erecting antenna arrays during the night, which is a first for NCRS, although this did involve a small amount of cattle and sheep rustling! The weekend went without a hitch with perfect comms throughout. The only element that could have been changed was the weather, which was appalling for the duration.

UNITED STATES NATIONAL GUARD EXCHANGE JUNE 2000

Each year some 50 SNCOs, from all arms, take part in the TA/US National Guard (USNG) exchange programme. It involves joining a host USNG unit for their Annual Training exercise in the summer and the UK unit reciprocating at Camp in the autumn. The aim is to learn how units work and differ, in organisation, equipment, role and methods. The Regiment bid for two places and **SSgt Steve Shelley** and **Sgt Stu Ridgwell** were able to offer the best bribes (details are subjudice owing to legal action) to secure placement. They now take-up the story.

Like many things, it started with a phone call from the SSM, 'Would you like to go on an exchange visit for two weeks with the National Guard in the States?' After half a nanu second the answer was 'Oh, all right then, for the sake of Queen, Country and the Regiment.' There followed a briefing at RAF Uxbridge by HQ LAND and a USNG Major and SSM on the general plot, dos and don'ts etc. The key thing was to make contact with individual hosts; this we did by e-mail. – using our home PCs!

First stop Heathrow, 'Would you like to be upgraded from peasant class to Premium?' 'Oh, all right then, for the sake of.... etc etc.' We also met up with four others from 32 Sig Regt and 38 Sig Regt who were going to the same unit. We arrived at Washington (Boeing 747); wait followed by thunderstorm delay (quite impressive seeing another plane skirting around the lightening). Change planes (to a DC 9); off to Milwaukee; change planes (12 seat twin propeller job - we were convinced it had been crop spraying earlier that day) and finally arrived in Iowa shortly before midnight. Lost track of time and how many hours we had been up. Met by hosts and drove to the unit, 234 Signal Battalion.

The unit deployed the following morning, heading for Fort Hood Texas, home of armour and the air cavalry, not to mention numerous snakes, scorpions and poisonous spiders. It's a long way by convoy! Three days later with overnight stops in Kansas and Oklahoma (without bursting into song) we arrived in Texas. They said it would be hot and humid, they were right. Into the field for the non-comms element of the exercise. We had been issued with helmets (brain buckets) and Lightweight Body Vest (ammo pouch and water bottle webbing), M16s (with 203 grenade launchers), Section Assault Weapons (SAW) and MREs (Meals Ready to Eat). The water heater in the latter impressed us. Other, non-issued items also appeared in abundance — sunglasses and cigars. The unit's role is to provide telecom lines via an UHF line of site network. The HUMVs are a tad different to the good old Landrover 110, automatic and 6ltr engine. We quite fancied the M16 with 203 (optional extra — I'll take a dozen thank you) but it would not fit into the suitcase to bring back.

The US has a very different approach to their reserve forces. Their basic training is longer than ours is, some eight weeks; upgrade courses are longer also. They do not do weekday evenings, just a weekend each month. There is also financial assistance for college students, which make-up a large part of the manpower, and a pension! Employers are obliged by law to allow National Guard soldiers to do their bit. As well as a federal (central government) role, they can also be called-out by the State Governor under what we would call Military Aid to the Civil Authority/Community i.e. disaster relief, something which is not infrequent judging by the news on forest fires and floods that we saw. As when observing another unit, it is always interesting to see how others do a similar job. We compared notes on equipment and tactics. We also entered into deep philosophical discussions ranging from the role of the UK and US in the world today; to methods of personal camouflage (splodge it all over Rambo style verses minimalist zebra); to the intellectually demanding and fascinating topics of vehicle works tickets and ablutions in the field.

The last two days were spent in Washington playing tourist. This was good as many of the key sights were within walking distance, not to mention raiding the PX store. In summary, while there was a large amount of travelling (which enabled us to see a bit more of the country) it was a good experience working with the USNG and we would recommend it to any SNCO taking part, given the chance. We look forward to hosting the US exchangees and introducing them to joys of Yorkshire (two sets of waterproofs I think) for our Camp in Wathgill in September, will it be different from Texas?

70 (ESSEX YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON - CHELMSFORD

Sqn Comd **Maj Craig Tallents**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Paul Humphreys**

The Squadron has been through a busy period over the last few months with the Squadron Training, D-Day evening at Harlow, a Royal Visit, Nijmegan marches and a visitors day.

TRAINING

Starting with Sqn Trg, the Squadron organised Ex Sharp Target that comprised of the Squadron deploying to Fingeringhoe Ranges and completing the APWT and various ITD (A) s, rounding off the weekend with a BBQ prepared by the SQMS, **SSgt John Fensom** and **Cpl Steve Christie**.

'Take Five'
Sgt Nick Wilks (L) and Sig Ross Nugent during the Squadron Ex Sharp Shooter

D-DAY EVENING

882 Sig Tp hosted a D-Day evening at Harlow TAC on 6 June 2000. The evening comprised of lectures by former members of the Essex Yeomanry who were in the first wave of Op Overlord, displays of memorabilia and photographs were there for all to see. An excellent evening was had by all.

ROYAL VISIT

The Regiment hosted **HRH the Princess Royal** at a training night in June. Members of the Squadron manned a display on Trade Training as part of the overall presentation to **The Princess Royal**. The OC **Maj Craig Tallents, WO2 (SSM) Paul Humphreys, WO2 'Pip' Piper** and **Sgt Mark Middleton** were among those who were presented to the **Princess Royal**.

HRH The Princess Royal with OC, Maj Craig Tallents and Sgt Mark Middleton

NIJMEGAN MARCH 2000

SSgt Jason Barsley the Squadron PSI led a team of willing volunteers to Nijmegan to complete the gruelling three days of walking in the Dutch countryside. The stories of blisters are still echoing round the corridors of the TAC. The team consists of **WO2** 'Pip' **Pieper, SSgt Jason Barsley, SSgt Jim Swain, Sgt Gilbey, LCpl Cloughton, LCpl Smith** and **Sig Nugent.**

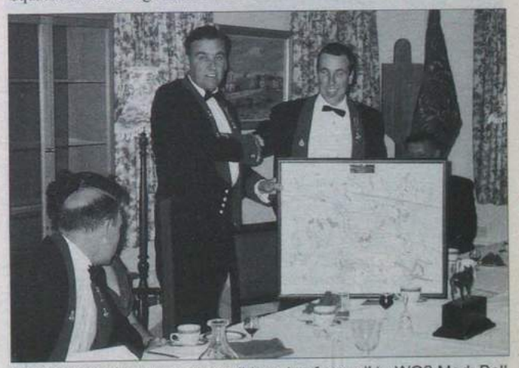
VISITORS' DAY

The Deputy Mayoress of Chelmsford, **Cllr Maureen Moulds, Col Kevin Fizgerald** Chairman of the RFCA for East Anglia and **Col David Castles**, The Essex Yeomanry Honorary Colonel, were among the dignitaries who attended the visitors day in June 2000. The Regiment was on the ranges at Hythe and as part of the visit the guests watched a Falling Plate competition. The competition final was between two teams from the Squadron.

Cpl Farn, Captain of the winning team receives the 'Drapers Cup' from Mr A. Lang MBE
Clerk of the Worshipful Company of Drapers

FAREWELL AND HELLO

We say farewell to **WO2 Mark Bell** who commanded 881 Sig Tp for two years and served with the Squadron for 22 years who has left us to join 45 Sig Regt at Colchester, we wish him well for the future. The Squadron WOs & Sgts dined **WO2 Bell** out on 3 June 2000.



WO2 (SSM) Paul Humphreys (L) saying farewell to WO2 Mark Bell at the Squadron WOs & Sergeants Dinner Night

We welcome **Sgt Dave Catlett** to the Squadron as our new PSI (T) who joins us from Northern Ireland.

DO NOT SEND US DIGITAL PHOTOS

as they are, on average, only 72 dpi
For publication they need to be a minimum of between 300 and 400 dpi

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

20 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

Sqn Comd **Maj I. G. Standen**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. Lawes**

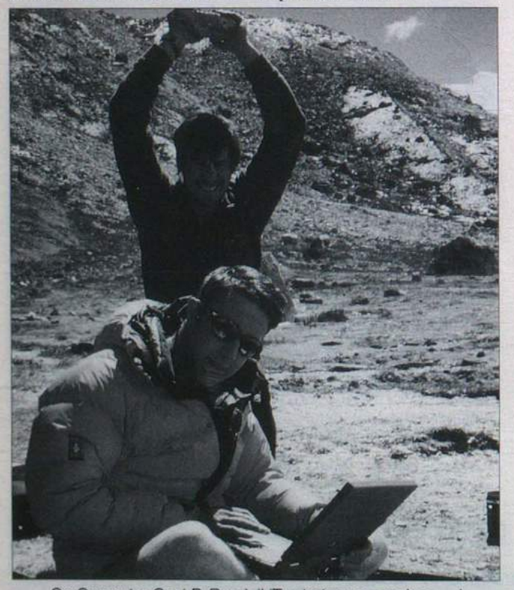
GOODBYE

A sad farewell goes to **WO2 (YofS) Walker** who is moving on promotion to 1 (UK) Armd Div & Sig Regt as the Regimental Yeoman. Renowned for his resourcefulness this was particularly apparent on the recent Squadron battle-camp at Haltern where the ranges are fairly widely spread and transport at a premium. Undeterred the Yeoman and the Foreman found the easiest way to get around from range to range was by bike!

BRITISH SERVICES KANGCHENJUNJA EXPEDITION 2000
by Capt Paul Randell

THE TEAM

Brig David Nichols RM	**Maj Andy Edington** RE
Capt Tom Martin RGR	**Capt Euan Lawson** RAMC
Fg Offr Emma Smith RAF	**Lt Ben MacInnes** REME
Lt Dave Goldsmith RN	**POAEA Steve Bright** RN
LCpl Justin Swift RM	**LCpl Mark Reed** AGC
Lt Paul Randell R SIGNALS	**LCpl Mark Lewis** RE



On Computer Capt P. Randell 'To start press any key .... '
Capt Randell - 'where is the any key?'

The day had finally arrived almost two years since filling out the application forms. Through several training meets, a reserve promoted to a full place, even more training and now at Heathrow airport, the British Services Kangchenjunja Expedition was finally starting in earnest. The expedition comprised of two teams, a main team to climb Kangchenjunja, the third highest in the world after Everest and K2, and a junior team of which I was a member climbing Ramtang, a subsidiary peak of 'Kanch' which is 6700m high and unclimbed since 1930. The only question in my mind was had the OC really given me two months off? After struggling with some 100 expedition barrels through check-in and posing for photographs with executives of Quatar airways, one of the sponsors, we enjoyed relaxing flights via Quatar to Kathmandu the capital of Nepal. Our first three days were to be spent here sorting kit and in my role as communications representative for the junior team the majority of this was spent on the lawn of the Summit Hotel struggling with handheld VHF radios, solar panels, sat-phones and laptops. Unfortunately **Roddy McAuther**, the main teams comms man had even less of an idea than I. However, with the help of the Gurkha Signals workshop at BGN, we had all but one system up and running by the time we left Kathmandu.

The flight to Suketar, a small dirt airstrip cut into the hillside of eastern Nepal was interesting enough. The fear factor heightened for those in the second plane as halfway through the flight the co--pilot leant back to ask if any of the passengers could spare a few batteries as the plane's GPS had just run out! Once safely back on terra firma our trail led us north and east through pristine countryside unspoiled by western tourism. The trek to the main team's base camp took twelve days walking, an average of six hours a day. With little to occupy people when not walking welfare e-mail via sat-phone became a major feature of the trek, a constant battle to charge batteries by solar panel, educate the computer illiterate and solve a multitude of minor technical problems. Daily SITREPs and digital photos were also sent back to the UK for the expedition's website.

On parting with the main team we continued for a further seven days trekking to reach our own base-camp at Pangpema. Once the accommodation and mess tents had been set up, Team 1 and Team 4 of our strongest climber's set off up the glacier to establish! Camp 1 and mark the route to it. This was followed .by days of carrying loads up to stock the camp with the following extract describing a typical day.

Once a camp has been established load carriers began to stock it with food, stoves, climbing hardware and other necessities. The process started at 0400hrs with a cautious look outside the tent to check that the weather conditions are suitable. The morning showed some low cloud on the glacier but otherwise it was clear. Breakfast is hard work, at altitude, and first thing in the morning food has to be forced down. This is hard enough but keeping it down is often harder. Fortified with as many calories as possible we setoff at 0500hrs.

My load today 4-man days supply of rations, two drinks packs, (essential for keeping hydrated) a 50m rope and a minimum of my own personal kit. The moon is almost full and there is no need for head torches as we descend 200m from base camp across the lateral moraines onto the Kangchenjunja glacier. Route finding on the glacier is different to normal navigation. Bearings have little or no use amongst the jumble of rocks and boulders, forming valleys and ridges up to 20m high which are often punctuated by glacial pools and ice cliffs rearing up through the rubble. The route is partially marked by cairns and wands although no crossing ever seems to take the same path. Prominent landmarks are linked together, the trench, the volleyball court, the ridge until you arrive at the far side of the main glacier where it meets a subsidiary coming from the south. Here, where they impact, are large crevasses and ice-cliffs which we cross at a fixed location where solid rock and ice make it safest.

The next section takes us up a wet glacier with mostly snow and ice with less moraine. As the crevasses are mostly closed, we move un-roped and without crampons, speeding our progress up the glacier. On the rock sections the surface ice, often `dinner plates' underfoot, cracking with alarming violence, no danger but alarming none the less. As the sun rises more features of the amphitheater of mountains become clear, and ahead of us Kangchenjunga, 3km of vertical ice, snow and rock rearing above us, dominating the glacier. We bear left in front of its face, still some 2km distant, and move under the icefall at the base of the Mouse Glacier, the location of our first camp. The journey has taken four hours. The sun is now up and we apply suncream, put on hats and glacier glasses. The loads are stashed next to the two tents and after a quick drink and bite to eat we head down, racing the full heat of the sun which will turn the glacier into a frying pan. The route down is quicker following our footsteps and the cairns placed on the earlier load carries and the initial recce of the glacier. We cross the main glacier through the moraine to the base of the 200m climb to base camp. Even with lightened packs progress is slow, breathing laboured with frequent stops. The tents of base camp are reached at 1100hrs, offering shade and fluid.

CASEVAC

The process of stocking Camp 1 was advanced and it was decided to push Team 1 forward to establish Camp 2 at around 6000m. This required route finding up the fractured and crevassed nose of the Mouse Glacier, along the glacier itself to the bottom of Ramtang. Teams 2 and 3 including myself had just finished a load carry on 23 March, returning to base camp around 11 00hrs when we received news on the lunchtime VHF radio check that all was not well with Team 1. They had set of early, navigated the glacier to a point at 5700m. By this time the sun was up and they were forced to abort any attempt to push the route further. The tents and other equipment were cached and then they turned around making it back to Camp 1 by 1030hrs. **Mark Lewis** was complaining of feeling very weak and **Justin Swift** was also exhausted from their efforts. Over the radio it was agreed the two would descend at 1500hrs when the glacier was cooler, this to be confirmed by a further radio call to base camp. When this came it was clear the situation had deteriorated. All four members of the team were now in descent aiding **Mark** who now had an acute headache, blurred vision and poor co-ordination, classic signs of High Altitude Cerebral Oedema (HACE). This is a potentially fatal condition which results from a swelling pushing on the brain and is one of a multitude of medical dangers posed by the extreme pressures which climbing at altitude puts on the body. The team had already administered steroids to reduce the swelling on the brain and had correctly elected to descend with all haste; two decisions which probably saved **Mark's** life. Team 2 including **Euan Lawson**, the team doctor, quickly packed some medical supplies and descended from base camp onto the glacier to assist the now exhausted Team 1. Team 3 remained at base camp with both VHF and Satphone comms should a CASEVAC become necessary. When Team 2 reached **Mark** he was on the verge of coma. Oxygen and further drugs were administered intravenously to ensure a quick reaction. This resulted in some improvement, enough to enable **Mark** to stagger with assistance up the moraine to base camp. Since **Euan** had confirmed Team 1's diagnosis of HACE a CASEVAC was now essential. By this time it was late afternoon and as with valley systems in many mountainous areas we were under thick cloud, preventing helicopter access, tenuous as it was anyway at such high altitudes. A helicopter CASEVAC was thus arranged for first light the following morning. On arrival at base camp **Mark** was given a fuller medical examination in the mess tent and a small team of us prepared to carry him down to a lower altitude, the only sure way of reducing the pressure on his brain. By the time I had packed my kit including the Satphone a storm had blown in and driving snow had reduced visibility to tens of meters. **Euan** now had the harsh decision, descend with **Mark** on the back of a porter in blizzard conditions along a tenuous rock path risking a fall or hypothermia to his exhausted patient or remain with him in base camp but without the beneficial effects of further reduction in altitude. **Euan** chose the latter, a relief to all who would have had to descend with him in the storm, and in retrospect the right decision for **Mark**. With the combination of the drop in altitude from Camp 1, drugs and oxygen he had soon made a remarkable recovery from the edge of coma to talking and complaining that the jokes everyone was making at his expense made his head hurt more when he tried to laugh. This given he was still clearly mentally impaired, speaking in a slow deliberate voice and with poor balance. This was still the case in the morning when the helicopter, struggling to remain aloft in the thin air arrived to take him to Kathmandu. Later that day we received a SITREP on his condition from our Kathmandu contact. A scan had revealed not only bubbles on the brain - HACE, but also their preliminary effects on the lungs in the form of High Altitude Pulmonary Oedema (HAPE), but he was expected to make a full recovery. The realisation that this could happen to one of the more experienced members of the team who had previously climbed on Everest and Mt St Vincents, in Antarctica was a sobering thought indeed.

CAMP 2

The following day saw heavy snow brought on, our Sherpas informed us, by the Gods' displeasure at the nocturnal activities of an American and German couple who were -temporarily sharing Pangpema with us. We stayed tent bound for the day with occasional forays to the mess tent for food and to dig out the tents when the build up became to deep. Due to **Mark's** CASEVAC the teams saw a slight rearrangement which resulted in my move from Team 3 leader to Team 2. The following day saw Teams 1 and 2 moving up to Camp 1, the plan being to use both to establish Camp 2 with Team 3 supporting us from base camp. Team 1 would then move to the top camp for our first summit bid. The move to Camp 1 proved uneventful and we spent a pleasant afternoon under a tarpaulin rigged to provide shade, watching avalanches cascade down the north face of 'Kanch'. This calm was momentarily interrupted by one particularly large avalanche, which as it descended, knocked off more snow ledges and grew to a frighteningly large size powering down the glacier. Whilst the camp was positioned to avoid the main force of just such an avalanche we still received a full five minutes of very cold snow. The following morning we rose at dawn, leaving the camp at 0300hrs and began the load carry up the Mouse Glacier. Due to the snow and increased altitude our progress was slow, compounded by two of our number who, due to vomiting and general weakness turned around, their loads being distributed between the remaining six of us. By 0700hrs we had reached the site of Team 1's previous cache, still 300m of ascent short of our planned sight for Camp 2. We added our loads to the growing pile and descended back to Camp 1 resolving to start even earlier the following morning. Whilst resting in the shade of Camp 1 the teams saw a further reorganisation with two of our number descending back to base camp and Team 1 becoming **David Nichols, Ben MacInnes, Dave Goldsmith** and myself.

SUMMIT BID

At midnight we rose and after a quick breakfast set off again to Camp 2. We reached our equipment cache, adding this to our already heavy loads and continued reaching our chosen site at around 0900hrs. The tents were quickly erected and dug into the snow and after taking on plenty of food and fluids I fell into a disturbed and restless sleep. The following morning I did not feel at all rested and after parting company with my breakfast was dragged over the first section of glacier to the start of the ridge by a concerned **Dave**. As he had little climbing experience it was decided that all four of us would return the next morning when hopefully I would be in a state to lead the steep 60^0 neve that lead up the side of the ridge towards the summit. Luckily my body seemed to acclimatise to the new altitude, this resulted in a good night's sleep and me feeling much stronger. We retraced our steps and we started up the neve. Watching the other pair above me and the incredible panorama above, below and around me I set off, both axes and crampon front points biting solidly into the hard snow. The 50m of rope saw me on the ridge proper from where things flattened out briefly. **Dave** climbed to my position and then moved on to the start of the next steep section. Here we stopped and after catching our breath discussed the next section of the route. A further steep pitch would take us to some near vertical blue ice that the other pair was currently making very slow and careful progress up. Higher still things seemed even harder. I expressed my doubts to **Dave** about the next section and we decided that I would lead the next pitch to the base of the ice section to get a closer look and discuss the problems with **David** who was belaying from there. A slow 50m later our doubts were confirmed. It was considerably harder than anything I had climbed before, and 6400m and two days from help seemed to be a bad place to start experimenting. **David** with his customary habit for understatement commented that it seemed to be getting a bit tricky. **Dave** and I rapidly descended to Camp 2 from where we watched the other two team members' slow progress in increasing winds as **Dave** concocted a fruit jelly to celebrate our safe return. Some 100m further on from our high point they also turned round making it back to the tents and half a jelly for 1200hrs. They had reached a section where further progress was impossible. **David** rated that the difficulties made it the hardest climbing he had done in the Himalayas in 30 years. On the radio we informed the others of the problems and heard the news that only two of the remaining climbers were fit and acclimatised to move up to Camp 2 for a second summit attempt. We met them the next morning passing on our thoughts on the route and is complexities then continued on through Camp 1 back to the luxury of base camp. The afternoon was spent gorging on food, enjoying the surplus of oxygen and for me the epic task of shaving a month and a half's beard growth with just a Gillette and a pair of nail scissors, a task taking a full hour.

THE RETURN

The two remaining members of Team 2 faired no better than us and after reaching the same spot as **Dave** and myself descended. After several days removing all kit from the mountain we loaded the yaks and set off for the seven-day trek back to Suketar. After battling leeches, rock falls and the internal flight we arrived back at the Summit Hotel for our reintroduction to civilisation. Mattresses and showers have never felt so good!

THE COMRADES MARATHON - *by LCpl Moss*

It's not often that the opportunity arises in an Armoured Brigade Signal Squadron in Germany to travel much further afield than Sennelager Training Area. Thus, when the opportunity arose to participate in an exercise in South Africa, we could not resist. **SSgt McLellan** (REME) had been secretly plotting a 10-day cultural' trip named Ex Mailed Comrade. This was an exercise on which he would take seven fit soldiers to compete in the 75th Durban to Pietermaritzburg, Comrades Marathon. A 56-mile ultra marathon dubbed 'the ultimate human race'.

As the event approached the pressure placed upon **SSgt McLellan** was becoming more evident. Team members had withdrawn, sponsors were not paying promised money, and flights weren't booked. Finally everything fell into place at the last minute as untrained replacements were recruited. The team was **SSgt Eddie McLellan** (REME), **Cpl Dex McFaul** (REME), **LCpl Andy Moss, LCpl Mick Daley** and **Sigs Carl Hepworth** and **Pete** and **Hayley Armour**, six of whom were veterans of Ex Vinzents Dash, the unit's Banja Luka to Paderborn run at the end of Op Palatine. On the morning of 11 June we began our journey to Frankfurt airport, on to Johannesburg, and finally reaching our destination of Durban a whole 24 hours after setting off. We now had four days to mentally prepare for the biggest physical challenge of our lives. **Cpl Dex McFaul**, taking part in his third Comrades Marathon shared with us the wealth of his experience, scaring most of us half to death. After meeting up with an old friend, **Pieter**, an RSM in the South African Defence Force, **Cpl McFaul** organised a night in their bar, as well as a BBQ, locally known as a ' brae feast'. Both events were very

enjoyable, and the officers and soldiers were extremely hospitable. We continued to socialise together and generally relax during the build-up to the event. We registered at the Expo Centre in Durban two days before the race, and each received a 'goodie' bag containing the official race T-shirt, race hat, and all sorts of other toiletries, food, stickers, even a box of macaroni which was put to great use by **LCpl Daley**. After a week of anticipation, excitement and preparation, 4 o'clock on Friday morning had finally arrived. It was a dark and fairly warm morning as we, and 24,000 other runners, arrived at the start line. None of us (except **Cpl McFaul**) knew what emotion, pain and in some cases agony we were about to endure.

After 14kms we encountered the first of 'the big five'. Five hill climbs that offer punishment and reward in equal measure. Cowies Hill was tackled on fresh legs, and so allowed us to take in the atmosphere and enjoy the scenery. Next came Fields Hill, Botha's Hill, Inchanga and finally Polly Shotts, each with increased difficulty. From the beginning we had decided to run in pairs. **Cpl Dex McFaul** and **LCpl Andy Moss** led the way reaching the half way point in just over four hours, followed by **LCpl Daley** and **Sig Hepworth**, with **SSgt McLellen** and the **Sigs Armour** not far behind. Regular water stops, lots of Vaseline and the occasional banana kept us all on target to finish the race inside the cut off time of 12 hours. With only 24kms to go **LCpl Moss** had to have a swollen and increasingly painful ankle checked by a doctor. After being advised to stop because of a possible fracture, **LCpl Moss** decided he knew better and didn't wait around for a second opinion, carrying on with the race. All seven members of the team were re-united at the finish, having completed the distance, and comfortably within the time. The sense of 'comradeship' after the race made every painful mile worthwhile.

The next day the local hospital confirmed that **LCpl Moss** had indeed fractured his ankle and was to spend the remainder of the exercise on crutches. This actually worked in our favour. **SSgt McLellen** and **LCpl Moss** were placed in business class for the return journey, with everyone else receiving complementary first-class meals and champagne. The Comrade's Marathon is a phenomenal event and something that we certainly will never forget. Bruised feet and sore limbs apart the entire team thoroughly enjoyed the whole event and can't wait for next year.

EXERCISE RHINO SPEAR - *by Sig Kate Jermany*

(L-R): Capt B Fitch and WO I (RSM) Lawes
RSM to Capt Fitch -
'So we do have a Recce Officer then Sir...'

Ex Rhino Spear was a 1st (UK) Armd Exercise in which the Squadron was tasked with providing the Headquarters for the Divisional Support Group (HQ DSG). The Exercise ran smoothly and uneventfully except when **Sig Barritt** was tasked to drive lkm down the road to deliver a staff officer to a meeting. **Sig Barritt** being a dedicated soldier and one who always carries out his tasks, waited as instructed to pick the staff officer up after the meeting. The smell from the cafeteria outside the building distracted **Sig Barritt and** after a quick snack he returned to his vehicle. What **Sig Barritt** had not realised was that the staff officer had returned by foot to the headquarters leaving **Sig Barritt** waiting... indefinitely. A search party went out for **Sig Barritt** after ten hours and he was found after being away 12 hours waiting in the spot the staff officer had left him. Was it dedication to duty or the extensive array of 'bratties' and stickies in the Cafeteria!

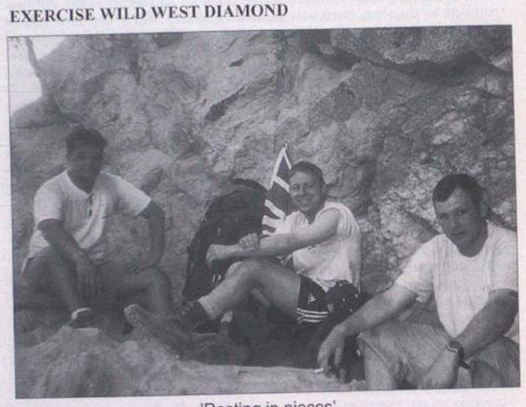
ALPHA TROOP - *by Cpl Robins*
Tp Comd **Lt S. Hughes**
Tp SSgt **SSgt M. Payne**

Alpha Tp would like to say goodbye to **SSgt Payne** who will be leaving us shortly to move up to 1 Battalion REME in Osnabruck, taking with him the Troop's best wishes in his new job. **LCpl Coverley** is also flying the nest and heading over to 15 Sig Regt, good luck and all the best. We would like to welcome **SSgt Burrows** on his arrival at the Squadron and **Sig Reeve** who has moved from Bravo Tp into Alpha Tp. Congratulations go to the newly promoted **Cpl Benson**. Another busy period has struck the Troop to keep the fleet of mystery machines in good working order to deploy on Ex Rhino Spear as the Headquarters of the Divisional Support Group. Normal exercise difficulties were doubled with the addition of preparation for RSIT, which awaited us on our return to barracks. Contrary to popular belief it is not all work and no play, as the busy period was thoroughly 'rewarded with the Squadron Summer Ball. The Ball was a perfect end to an almost perfect day when Alpha Tp almost won the Inter-Troop Athletics, had they not of been disqualified in the 4 X 400m relay. (Despite winning by a clear 60m, we managed to achieve third place overall). **Cpl Robins'** attempt to avoid the exercise came to an abrupt end when he was making his way to Army Water Polo and came off his bike.

BRAVO TROOP - *by LCpl King*
Tp Comd **Lt P. N. Randell**
Tp SSgt **SSgt J. Crabb**

Well it has been an eventful month, with a few new faces appearing around the Bravo Tp garages. We will start by giving a warm welcome to **LCpl Dickenson** and to **Sig Walker** and **Sig Cooper**, who arrived mid way through Ex Rhino Spear. He wasn't quite that lucky, as he was running round for the staff in the main complex of HQ DSG Main within a few days of his arrival in Sennelager. Next we welcome, straight from the factory **Sig Kean** and **Sig Walker** (yes, another **Walker**!) We have lost **LCpl Kelly MacGregor** to 1 (UK) ADSR. And finally we have **Sig Rachel Reeve** who has had the opportunity to shine amongst Alpha Tp for the rest of her tour with the unit.

EXERCISE WILD WEST DIAMOND



'Resting in pieces'
(L-R): Sig Barritt, LCpl Trott and LCpl Knox

The going hasn't all been easy for certain members of the Squadron as **Sig Scott Kean** tells:

*'On 21 May a nine person team from 20 Armd Bde HQ & Sig Sqn (200) led by **Capt Paul Randell** and **SSgt Jim Crabb** left for a three-week adventure training expedition in the Western United States. The main objective of the trip was to make the ascent of Mount Whitney (9, 450 metres), the highest summit within the continental United States. To the dismay of all the team our progress was halted due to the severe snow and ice storms we encountered. However, several other challenging treks were accomplished in the Yosemite National Park, Death Valley and the most rewarding of all both for its natural beauty and breath taking size, the Grand Canyon. With a few days R&R in Los Angeles which included a visit to Hollywood and a round of golf, it was a superb way to round off a trip that was enjoyed by all.'*

SUPPORT TROOP - *by LCpl Hall RLC*

Support Troop win the Inter Troop Football Competition
Front Row (L-R): LCpl Heydon, Sig Holmes, Cpl Smith, LCpl Hall, Sgt Bean
Back Row (L-R): WO2(FofS) Dawson, Sgt Gibbins, Sig Bishop, Sgt Moore, SSgt Robinson, WO1(RSM) Lawes

Tp Comd **Maj M. G. P. Bohanan**
Tp SSgt **SSgt H. Cappleman**

Support Tp have had a very busy time over the last six weeks but have still managed to socialise and say goodbye to **Sigs Bishop** and **Crosby** who are off to sell the 'Big Issue' on the streets of Sunderland. Congratulations go to **Cpl Doick** on his selection to Sergeant. The Troop even managed to win the Inter Troop Football competition. (We had the RSM playing for us! God moves in mysterious ways but the RSM doesn't!))

MAINTENANCE TROOP - *by Sgt G. Brown*
Tp Comd **Capt S. Gough**
Tp SSgt **SSgt M. Yates**

A warm welcome goes to our new Troop Comd/Ops Officer, **Capt Simon Gough** (in case anyone in the Corps doesn't know, he got a FIRST for his degree at RMCS Shrivenham, managing to drop the hint to everyone from Signaller to Brigadier), well done Sir! We would also like to welcome **LCpl Levi** and **LCpl Evans** who have come straight from Blandford. We would like to wish **Capt C. Crowther** all the best on JDSC and in the future. We even managed to win the Inter-Troop Rugby Competition.

Maintenance Troop win the Inter-Troop Rugby Competition
Front Row (L-R): LCpl Levi, Cfn Chalmers, Sgt Brown, Sig Pidhajeckyj, Cpl Shotbolt
Back Row (L-R): SSgt Yates, Sgt Kenyon, LCpl Evans, LCpl Stoneman

19 MECHANISED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (209)

Sqn Comd **Maj Paul Peel**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Steve Mitchell**

Nursing a few sore heads after adventure training, we moved on to the military training package of the year. We survived two weeks on the range without casualties, which meant that the Squadron could progress on to Ex Panthers Claw, a live firing battle camp on Otterburn Training Area. Before the camp, we had time to say goodbye to a number of key personalities from the Squadron. It is with regret that we lose **WO1 (RSM) Steve Mitchell** to Civvy Street. Many thanks for all your work here, and especially for organising your own (memorable) leaving do. We wish you all the best in the future. From the training wing, we also say goodbye to **SSgt Bob** 'Austin Powers' **Low**. Good luck in Germany. 20 Armd Bde beware!

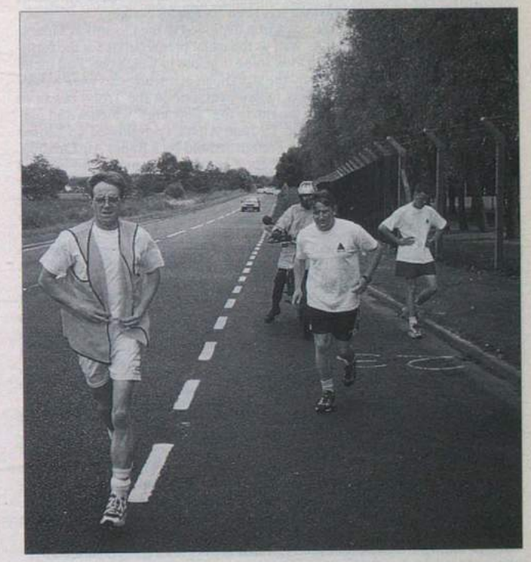
ALPHA TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt John Griffiths**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Jase Smithurst**

The Troop continues to stay busy, continuing with the normal saga of vehicle maintenance, whilst at the same time getting into green mode for the Squadron battle camp. The two weeks on the range were great and everyone now is looking forward tremendously to a week field firing in Otterburn. Well, some are. The Squadron Half Marathon saw a very good turn out from the Troop, with lots of people surprising themselves with the fact that they could actually run thirteen and a bit miles, (although everyone knows that **Cpl** 'Ski' **McKie** walked a bit). As another four weeks leave loom it is time to bid farewell to no less than seven members of the troop. The Tp OC leaves to go parachuting in Colchester, **Sgt** 'Geordie' **Pearson** leaves for a ridiculously paid job in Civvie Street, alongside **LCpl** 'Russ' **Abbott, LCpl** 'Monty' **Monteith** and **LCpl** 'Dishy Dave the Rave' **Moore**. **Cpl Neil Jones** leaves on promotion to 2 Sig Regt and **Cpl Dave Berry** goes to further his contacts within the Corps at Blandford, all the best fellas. Recent arrivals include **Cpl Simpson** from 14 Sig Regt (EW), **Cpl Giddens** from 3 Div, **Cpl Whittaker** from Blandford, **Sig Wellburn** from 1 Div and the new boss, **2Lt Graham Clarke**. Here's looking to Agricola 5.

BRAVO TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Simon Bristow**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Mick O'Brien**

As usual Bravo Tp have been working and playing hard over the last few months. It started with the Troop's turn adventure training when the Troop engaged in various activities, some more adventurous than others. Of particular note were **Sig** (female of the species) **Rakocevic's** amazing spiderman impressions during rock climbing and enthusiasm to practise capsizing her canoe. However, the real adventures were to take place in Barnstable during the evenings, especially when **Sig Phil Moore** donned his wig and artificial chest to stun the town with his cabaret act! Being as generous as we are, we ran from the East Coast to the West to raise money for Beaumont Hill School in Darlington, a school for mentally handicapped children.

There were 26 weary faces leaving Tynemouth at 0350hrs in the morning, long before the sun came up and the same faces at 1400hrs, sitting in a pub in Tynemouth. Of the 76 miles, each member of the Troop did the first and last mile and a 3mile leg in between, some were harder than others. Since then, we have prepared for Battle Camp by spending two weeks on the ranges, the highlight of which was **SSgt** 'Bruce Lee' **O'Brien's** mad samurai impressions (complete with headband) during bayonet instruction and **Sig** 'Zena' **Addy's** fearsome war cry! Finally, there has been the ever-present comings and goings. **Cpls Steve Lowery**, 'Taff' **Langley** and the incredibly ancient **John** 'Grandad' **Hart** all leave for pastures new, good luck all of you. To attempt to replace them we are joined by **Sigs Neil Harrison** and 'Big Al' **MacPhee**. Welcome to you both.



SUPPORT TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt (QM) Graham Reith**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Steve Legg**

The last couple of months started with Ex Puib Ebor, adventure training in Barnstable, North Devon. The River Taw was part of the early morning wake-up routine which involved a short run down to the river-bank, then a quick dip in the nice, warm water (cunningly disguised as mud) and back in time for breakfast. Many of the activities were led by Support Tp, including mountain biking with **SSgt Bob** 'Oh no, we've lost another one' **Low**, hill-walking with **SSgt John** 'It's just a little hill' **Gorman** and canoeing with **LCpl Al** 'That was a big wave' **MacKay** and **Sig Mark** 'Suicide-inclined' **Stafford**. Welcome to all newcomers to Support Tp: **Sigs Andy** 'Sooty' **Sutcliffe** and **John** 'Feltcha' **Feltcham** and **SSgt John Gorman**. Goodbyes to the two chefs, **Sgt Dave Halliwell, Cpl Jason Jones** and also to **Lance Comical Ricky** 'Lichtfuâ' **Lightfoot** who leaves for 1(UK) Civ Div.

EXERCISE PANTHERS CLAW

After two weeks of running up and down firing points in Catterick, we finally found ourselves in sunny Otterburn playing infantry. To those of

you who haven't done it for a while, it's like paint balling without the paint but a bit more organised. The exercise was split into two parts, involving both blank and live firing. The live firing, run by **Capt Pete Young** built up from pairs fire and manoeuvre to section attacks with casualties. **Sigs Marshall** and **Best** showed that they were shy of water, and were wary of entering a small stream to keep low. The reason was understood when **Sig** 'half-pint' **Best** stepped in and practised her front crawl! **Cpl Hill's** section were like children playing in mud pies when it came to cam cream, and their overall enthusiasm led to them winning the best section award.

As a parting gift from **Capt John** 'Airborne' **Griffiths**, the blank phase started with a short bimble from Otterburn Camp to the first basher area. With everybody suitably warmed up eight hours later, they prepared their defences in a wood which they shared with a few million ants. Our thanks to **SSgt Mick** 'Sadism' **O'Brien** for nominating this to be our home, it wouldn't have been the same without the ants to keep us company! Recce patrols later went out and only one patrol successfully managed to lose their DS, (though I expect others tried). They returned at varying times throughout the night, but there was no surprise when lo and behold, the enemy found us and attacked at around 0600hrs. With many people ready and waiting, I wonder if they had been tipped off? Or are we that predictable?

After a move to another harbour area, the sections practised their fighting skills by attacking the enemy, and culminated the phase with a platoon attack, though **Cpl Smith** appeared to think it was a section attack, and his section took all the positions themselves. The exercise culminated with a LAW shoot for 25 lucky people from the Squadron. All who did it thoroughly enjoyed the experience, though it went to **SSgt Bob Low's** head, with a nosebleed as thanks for his services as safety supervisor. Well done to all who took part, and thanks to the DS and admin staff who missed out on the fun parts but nevertheless made it possible.

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

Sqn Comd **Maj I. Hooper R SIGNALS**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) C. D. Drew**

ALPHA TROOP - *by Sig Currie*
Tp Comd **Lt J. K. Hawkins R SIGNALS**
Tp SSgt **SSgt J. J. Walker**

This month in Alpha Tp has been extremely busy with the Signallers and Lance Corporals taking part in Ex Aldrins Step and the Troop preparing for Ex Iron Hawk (Med Man) which will begin in Canada at the end of August. The main event however has been Ex Eagles Strike.

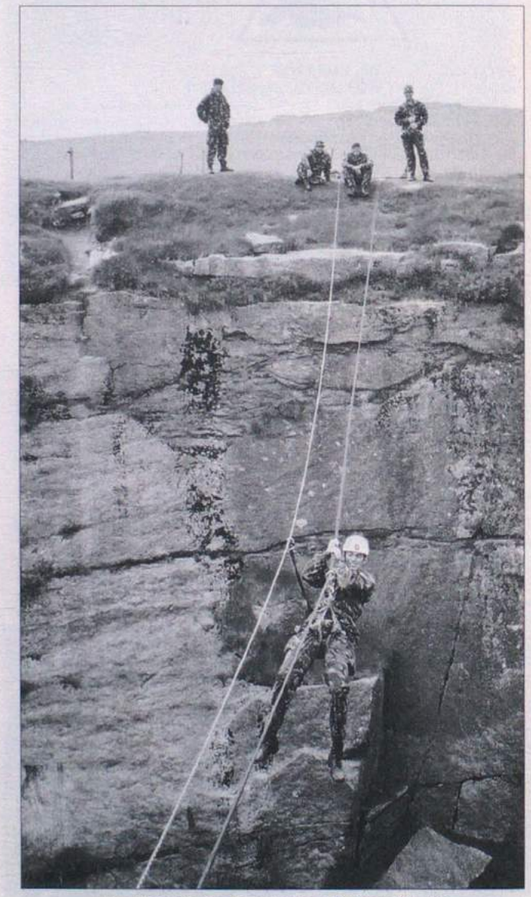
On 10 June elements of the Squadron deployed to the Operation Mounting Centre at South Cerney. As well as the usual preparations for the forthcoming 'Operation', the Troop took some time out to watch the 'Full metal jacket' style of PT undertaken by the American elements who were participating in the Exercise. Needless to say everyone in the Troop began to compare the 'lightning' pace of the run to the 'slow jogs' which we all participate in back at Colchester. On 15 June Alpha Tp followed up behind the Parachute insertion onto West Freugh airfield by a Rapid Air Landing. The flight up was a new experience for a certain **Sig Ancell** who insisted (as this was his first time in a Hercules) that I should take a photo of him using the luxury urine collector at the back of the aircraft. Only fleeting glimpses of **LCpl Watts** were seen on the airfield as he was detached to his airborne 'brotherhood' namely, Charlie Tp. **LCpl Perry** and **Sig Bellamy** were detached to 4 Regt AAC to assist in providing comms back to Brigade HQ. This did not go to plan and the couple found themselves somewhat surplus to requirements. Meanwhile, back at Brigade Main HQ, new boy **Sig French** was making an all out effort to be the one member of the troop to be awarded the most crates on the exercise. This was due to his craving for driving over things such as **Cpl Farnes'** washbowl, and just so as not to leave anyone out jacknifing **Sig Bellamy's** trailer which led to a lot of, 'That's gonna cost you mate!' type of phrases from the REME. With the enemy defeated, the Troop returned to Colchester for a nice weekend off.

Alpha Tp would like to officially welcome **Sig French** and **Sig Etchell** into the fray of our world, and we wish them well here in the Squadron. A big well done to the 'athletes' of the Troop who managed to win this year's Inter-Troop Athletics, and a special thank you goes again to **Sig Ancell** for the entertainment your face provided us in the long jump competition. Bye to all the Troop members who are off adventure training in Spain on Ex Medes Meander, we're sure you won't be drinking too much. Everyone here is looking forward to their well-earned summer leave in the next few weeks and will be back refreshed towards the beginning of September.

BRAVO TROOP - *by LCpl Lawson*
Tp Comd **Lt R. A. Hamilton R SIGNALS**
Tp SSgt **SSgt P. D. Bartliff**

The last couple of months have been as hectic as usual with most of the guys on standby to deploy with PJHQ or any other trouble spot on Earth that you care to mention. Thankfully the standown from this role has been given and the Troop has managed to get in some of its own training. **LCpl Childs** organised a leadership week which included visiting the Submarine Escape Unit at HMS Dolphin, and the Helidunker at RNAS Yeovilton where **SSgt** 'Corps Water Polo Player' **Bartliff** suddenly became water shy. The following week was a savage cadre course compliments of our boss which climaxed with a 40 mile tab over Dartmoor carrying out various stands en route. Luckily this included a four hour enforced rest so naturally no-one had any excuse not to be full of beans. As a reward we finished with a BBQ, beers and about two hundred midge bites. **LCpl** 'Goodstuff' **Good** would like to send a heartfelt congratulations to **Sig Hack** for beating him in this personal show of strength and resilience. The Troop would like to welcome **Sgt Thornton, LCpl Young, LCpl** 'Wigger' **Taylor, Sig** 'Geordie Maggot' **Wealleans** and wee 'Spud' **Slater.** Finally the Troop would like to wish **LCpl Thorpe** and **LCpl Good** all the best on their course.

EXERCISE ALDRINS STEP, 26 – 30 JUNE 2000



Sig Ancell traversing a ravine at Check Point 2

With the Troop Commanders and Corporals having had a good run out on Ex Lion Sun last year, it was felt that it was about time that the Signallers and Lance Corporals were put to the test. Thus the tasking went out from the OC Sqn and Ex Aldrins Step was created, to teach, develop and assess the basic leadership skills required of a JNCO in the Air Assault Signal Squadron. Pre-training, for the exercise, took part on 31 May – 1 June 2000 and predominately concentrated on introducing the cadre to basic estimates and developing their navigation skills. All too soon though the 26 Jun 00 descended on the cadre and 37 anxious-looking soldiers paraded outside SHQ ready for the off.

The first day and a half covered leadership theory and the importance of various aspects of leadership including organisation, delegation, discipline and integrity. The cadre was split into seven patrols and further lessons concentrated on developing teamwork as well as giving them the opportunity to meet and work with members from the other troops. It was with even more anxiety that the Cadre paraded on Tuesday evening, only in the knowledge that they were heading towards 'somewhere near Dartmoor' and that they would be on the hills for the majority of the time. In fact the first port of call was to the Royal Marines Commando Training Centre at Lympestone. The cadre arrived at 0300hrs on Wednesday and were presented with a written problem and given three hours to come up with and present their solution. The problem included grids of a number of checkpoints which the patrols had to visit in a 32hr timeframe, as well as various time and area restrictions which had to be taken into account in their estimates. After delivering their estimates, the patrols formed up ready for the road move up onto Dartmoor.

Needless to say that when two Royal Navy Sea King helicopters turned up and the cadre were told that they would be dropped somewhere within 1 ½ kms of their original start point, there was some frantic action as maps came piling out as the patrols began to look at likely landing sites. After a 25min helicopter ride, the patrols were inserted at various points around the training area and set off for the check-points. In all each patrol covered around 60kms as they tabbed to each of the fifteen check-points, ten of which had command tasks that took on average 30mins each to complete. On completion, the patrols made their way to one of two finish points and were extracted to an admin area. There, a BBQ and beers were waiting for the cadre which was met with instant relief by those who had participated. The exercise proved to be a great success and the fears of many that the event was going to be a real 'beasting' came to no avail. However, it was with much embarrassment at the service station on the way back that the 37 sore footed soldiers were beaten off the bus by a SAGA tour of OAP's that happened to pull up at the same time!

EXERCISE NORMANDY 2000 OVERLORD - *by LCpl Good*

The merry crowd of Airborne Warriors left Colchester at stupid o'clock on 4 June 2000. The chosen few were on a special mission to jump into Normandy like our World War II comrades before us. The men for the mission were **WO1 (RSM) Chris Drew, SSgt Pete Hatton, Sgts** 'Pathfinder' **Combe** and **Kenny Rayson, Cpls** 'Fatty' **Fernie** and **Knibbs, LCpls** 'Crow' **Browning**, 'Goodstuff" **Good**, 'Pez' **Perry**, 'Fish' **Salmon** and **Sig** 'Air' **Bourne**. The flight to the DZ was an experience in itself, a hot and uncomfortable ride for everyone. The jump went in at approx 1545hrs which was another experience as **LCpl Good** not only had an air steal but an entanglement as well! All the other lads managed to have a safe and enjoyable jump and once on the ground **Sgt Combe** met **HRH The Prince of Wales** and **General Jackson.** After the pleasantries the lads were given food, and a kippage area in the town of Merville. Once suitably rested the team went in search of some light refreshment and took off into the nearby town in search of lager and local wine.

On 5 June a battlefield tour was squeezed in encompassing Pegasus Bridge, the Merville Battery and the military cemetery in Ranville before the return to sunny England. Thanks go to **Lt Courage** for organising the trip.

Exercise Normandy 2000 Overlord
Back Row (L-R): WO1 Drew, Sgt Rayson, Cpl Fernie, LCpl Good, Cpl Knibbs, LCpl Browning, SSgt Hatton
Front Row (L-R): LCpl Perry, LCpl Salmon, Sig Bourne, Sgt Combe

CHARLIE TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt O. T. B. Courage**
Tp SSgt **SSgt P. Hatton**

Life has continued to be extremely hectic in the Troop with a busy exercise and training programme. However, one sad event has recently dominated our time. **Cpl Al Joy**, who had been battling against leukaemia since being diagnosed last September, passed away in the early hours of Tuesday 2 August. Following a successful bone marrow transplant **Cpl Joy** contracted pneumonia whilst the Squadron was on Ex Eagles Strike. Initially given two days to live he battled on for 25. His funeral was held on 8 August and many Squadron members came off leave to ensure **Cpl Joy** was given a full military send off. **Al** will be sorely missed by the whole Squadron and we convey our deepest sympathy to his family.

As well as this sorry goodbye we say hello to **Sig Hackford** who has joined the Troop straight from training. Also congratulations to **Sigs Donnelly, Duff, Dunseith** and **Newell** on passing P Company.

EXERCISE EAGLES STRIKE - *by LCpl O'Donnell*

Ex Eagle's Strike was this year's major brigade exercise involving the 2nd Battalion of the Parachute Regiment and 4 Regiment Army Air Corps in a medium intensity scenario. As usual the Squadron initially deployed to the Operations Mounting Centre at South Cerney to conduct low-level training and prepare for the parachute insertion.

The exercise itself took place in the Galloway area of Scotland and was to start with a jump onto a beach. Unfortunately, the weather had other ideas with high winds forcing the jump to be cancelled. We therefore resorted to plan B and TALO'd into West Freugh airfield once the enemy positions there had been destroyed. On the ground we established the Brigade Light Tac headquarters in a small outbuilding on the airfield. At this stage **Sig Bourne, Sig Fyfe** and myself were attached to 2 Para to provide comms from their headquarters back to Brigade. We were welcomed with open arms as they had no operators. They couldn't believe they'd been sent more bods to stag on the radios. However, once the battalion was re-tasked we deployed forward by helicopter as part of CO's Tac. The battle was brilliant with 2 Para pulling off an attack onto positions in Dalbeattie in true airborne style. The attached American Company from the 101st Airborne Division fared less well as they were withdrawn after loosing so much kit as to be non-deployable. I'm sure they came here for the R and R and not the war!

Despite the battalion 2IC getting the good news in the back during a white flag negotiation the war was finally won. We stayed with 2 Para for the final phase which involved a parachute insertion into Thorpe DZ. The weather was fine and it looked like the jump was going to go in. However, unfortunately there had been an administrative error. The DZ had been booked in local time and we were working in Zulu time! During the aircraft's final approach it was discovered that artillery shells were whizzing over the DZ as the area is also used as an artillery range. The CO promised that someone would get hung for the mistake. This worried me as trouble always rolls downhill and it normally stops at me! All in all the exercise proved to be a very interesting experience. Working so closely with the battalion commander during the battle meant that we got to see the bigger picture.

LCpl Chamberlain (L) and Sig Bellamy flying into location by Chinook

SUPPORT TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt S. A. Clarke**
Tp SSgt **SSgt P. Latimer**

EXERCISE EAGLES CHALLENGE - *by LCpl Browning and Sig Pye*

Ex Eagles Challenge was a week-long adventure training package for members of Support and MT Tp and took place in the allegedly sunny climbs of Newquay and Cornwall 11-16 June 2000. The Exercise was organised by **WO2 FofS** 'Wannabe airborne?' **Sturman**, who was supported by **RQMS** 'Taff' **Furnival** and **SSgt** 'Nooky bear' **Latimer**. A good time was had by all, especially the advance party who had 'to prepare the camp' for the arrival of the main body. How this involved so many late nights in Newquay remains a mystery to all but those who were there.

Rock climbing was unfortunately the worst affected by the weather out of all the activities undertaken. The area had lots of good climbs on the cliffs around the bay but the rain rarely relented to let us take the opportunity to attempt them. Occasionally we did manage to get some climbing time in which included an abseil route off an overhang above a large cave entrance. This tested the bottle of many and proved a great laugh. Less susceptible to the atrocious weather was the surfing. The Australian instructors made it look really easy much to our annoyance. Instruction began with mastering how to get on the board and catching the waves. Consequently we spent most of the time fighting the waves and trying to stand up, only to be thrown back in the water. This again proved to be extremely amusing and gave us plenty to talk about over a few beers in the evening!

12 MECHANIZED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

Sqn Comd **Capt L. Hendricks**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. G. Jackson**

Since arriving from Bosnia in June, the Squadron Headquarters has been exceptionally busy. After the mandatory medals parade it was all hands to the pump ensuring people got away on their well deserved post-tour leave. The OC, **Maj Scott Workman**, was posted to Central Building in London early July, leaving the 2IC, **Capt Lee Hendricks**, in charge of the Squadron until the new OC, **Maj John Charnock**, arrives in August 2000.

We have said farewell to **Pte Charlie Smith** (Leave & Movements Clerk) who after three years army service has decided that a career in civvie street is the way ahead; she will be greatly missed. Whilst in Bosnia, **LCpl Jaihadabur Gurung** also departed the Squadron office. He returned to 1RGR, who are due to return to Brunei this year. He was replaced by **LCpl** 'G10' **Jiten** in June who takes on the role, amongst other job titles, as the Registry Clerk.

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Ed Dickson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Dicky Dyer**

Alpha Tp is now back at 'The Shot' after the six month holiday in Bosnia. We departed Bosnia in style, culminating in the BRITFOR Sig Sqn end of tour party. It was a Fancy Dress Night with most of them being from Comms Tp. We decided to go as WWF wrestlers (very tenuous). The main event of the evening was the 'Royal Rumble' with a special mention to **Sig** 'It's not fat, it's muscle - honest' **Tubb** who took on all comers and proved to be a true champion. The final bout of the evening between OC Comms Tp, **Lt** 'Doris' **Day** and OC Mobile Tp, **Lt** 'Dave' **Hazelwood**, came to a premature end due to Commissioner Workman (The OC) deciding it was time for bed. On returning we had two days at work before our much-needed End of Tour Leave. The OC Sqn took us all out for a final tab onto the area before being posted. Most people approached the event with fear and trepidation but were very relieved when only one mile into the march there was a landrover waiting with beers - Cheers Sir! Now we are back at work, the hard slog of fitting out and getting to grips with the panzers before our hectic exercise period begins - never mind only three weeks until summer leave! The Troop would like to say hello to the new Troop Commander **Lt E' Dickson** and his spotty dog **Molly, LCpl Dale** 'Wild in the aisles' **Petty, Sigs** 'Webster' **Web**, 'Loud Bloke' **Grochowina** and 'Herbie' **Hide**. We would also like to say goodbye and congratulations to **Cpl Paul** 'Grenade' **Coxon** on his posting to 2 Sig Regt on promotion to Sergeant and **LCpl Dave** 'Skinny' **Reid** on posting to the EOD (**Dave**, apparently the course is harder than your 2-1 entrance exam!)

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Tom Day**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Wilcox**

The Troop is now back at work after post tour leave with the rest of the squadron. Whilst the Troop was away on Op Palantine the rear party had kindly volunteered their services to move all the troops possessions from their current location to a new set of garages and offices 400m down the road. This they achieved and only managed to lose a few items. It is now all hands to the pumps to get the Troop fitted and ready to deploy on a series of exercises in October. With the majority of personnel never having worked on armoured vehicles the learning curve has steadily risen to it's current vertical position.

Amongst the organized mayhem that currently is our working day, there have been the usual postings in and out and even the odd promotion amongst the troop. Congratulations go to **Cpl Keith Langan, Cpl Griffiths** and **Cpl** 'Si' **Barker** on being selected for promotion to Sgt, also farewell to **Cpl** 'Taff' **Davies** who goes all the way to Alpha Tp, and good luck - you will probably need it.

Travelling further afield are **LCpl** 'Rick' **Turner** who is posted to 249 Sig Sqn and **Sig** 'Del' **McDowell** who is off to experience the delights of 1 Armd Div Sig Regt.

Posted in we have **Sgt** 'Trev' **Allan** from 1 Armd Div Sig Regt, **Cpl Sarah Guthrie** who arrives in the Troop from the flesh pots of Blandford. Also posted in from Blandford we have the fresh young faces of **Sigs Stockdale, Dunkin, Shrubsole** and **Burfield**. With summer leave only just around the corner the Troop hierarchy are coming up with the usual jokes such as, 'Any volunteers for summer duties?' and many other pearls of wisdom they seem to find amusing.

Q TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Guy Richards**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Greaves**

Q Troop is now back together after being spread to the four winds during our recent tour in Bosnia. With a well-earned four-week leave under our belts its all hands to the pumps to make ready our new working areas for the busy times ahead. The areas are proving to be a challenge in itself with the QM's department, LAD and the MT having had to move locations twice in the last three months.

The Troop personnel have gone through a lot of change over the last couple of months. Out go **Capt** 'George' **Burrows, Sgt** 'Bri' **Sheard, LCpl Shane Crozier, Cpl Chris Hemmings, LCpl Neil Port** and **LCpl Dougie Hall**. Goodbye to you all and good luck with your respective futures. Hello to the Blandford six, **Sigs Debs Burke**, 'frankie' **Collins**, 'Debs' **Fairbrother, Dave Hammond, Janine Hedgecock**, 'Gaz' **Nicholson**; I'm sure Aldershot and Montgomery lines can match the facilities of Blandford.

Congratulations are also in order and these go to **Sgt** 'Bri' **Sheard** and his wife Nicki on the birth of their daughter, **Sgt** 'Gordy' **Gray** and his wife Leigh on the birth of their daughter, and **Cpl** 'Dis' **Disley** and his wife on the birth of their daughter. It must be something in the Aldershot water supply.

Congratulations also go to **SSgt** 'Deano' **Whitworth, Cpl** 'Kev' **Dade, LCpl** 'Big Mase' **Mason** on their recent promotions.

241 SIGNAL SQUADRON

This has been a busy couple of months for 241 Sig Sqn. The Squadron has doubled in size by taking over the I&S Troop of 243 Sig Sqn. The main element of 243 Sig Sqn is moving lock, stock and barrel into Wilton to be in support of Land Command. This now leaves 241Sig Sqn as the ACISG Signal Squadron for the whole of the 5 Div area; we seem to spend more time on the road than the average travelling sales person. During this take over the service desk also took over the responsibilities for tasking and fault control from both the Corsham help desk and the Bulford help desk. This has had quite an impact on the amount of calls coming into the Donnington service desk. **Cheryl, Julie, Jan** and **Pat**, the Service Desk Supervisor, have had to put away the knitting patterns and the Bella magazines and join the real world. The take over certainly wasn't plain sailing but hopefully we can go forward with one aim and that is to give a first class service to all those people out there.

The Squadron held its annual summer barbecue and thanks to the excellent organisation by **Cpl Robinson** everyone went away well fed and watered with the odd one or two socially confused. The fact that the Disco did not turn up did not phase **Cpl Robinson** who let her fingers do the walking in the yellow pages and had a replacement disco setting up within the hour.

EXERCISE MERCURY GLYDERS

Ex Mercury Glyders was a Squadron Adventurous Training exercise which took place in Snowdonia, during May 2000. The exercise involved hill walking for three days over Snowdonia and its various peaks. It was an excellent time for departments and troops to get some fresh air and earn some new nicknames. For military members it was 'arduous and very wet', and from the civilian side it was 'team building and pub lunch'. All are now looking forward to going to the Lakes in October, (not to mention Pasha's in Morecambe).

YofS Wedge (centre) with his civilian sherpa's on the Devil's Kitchen with Llyn Ogwen in the background

HAIL AND FAREWELL

Welcome to **Capt Bill (TOT) Simpson**, who has arrived from Northern Ireland on Commission and is double hatted as OC of the Bulford Tp and is also a member of the Squadron Ops Team within SHQ. Also to **SSgt Colin Brown**, who has been posted to Tech Troop, and **Janet Mannering** who takes up the post of EO IT. Goodluck to **Cpl Michelle Sheppard**, who has decided to leave the green stuff, increase her family and become a full time housewife. Farewell to **LCpl Mick Leet** who has also decided to leave and get a proper job, all the best to you and your family.

243 SIGNAL SQUADRON

QUEEN MOTHERS BIRTHDAY PAGEANT
WEDNESDAY 19 JULY 2000-08-02
by SSgt Lindsey Manktelow

I was overjoyed when I and **LCpl Morris** (11 Sig Regt) were asked to represent the Corps at **Her Majesty the Queen Mother's** Birthday Pageant. Not realising the importance of the event, I arrived at Chelsea Barracks on the evening of 17 July. The parade square was alive with people, mainly the Royal Navy still practising (later it became obvious as to why they had to). We were informed of the parade timings for the following morning and as we had arrived early it was an ideal opportunity to see something of London.

The following morning was unbelievable. The amount of troops present was astonishing from such varied units as the Black Watch, the Irish Guards, the 9/12 Lancers, the Royal Anglians and many more even representing the Commonwealth from Canada and New Zealand. Then there was the Women's Army Detachment which consisted of various cap badges in which females serve. We were representing the WRAC which **Her Majesty the Queen Mother** was patron of for so many years.

The first practice was sketchy and on seeing the Garrison Sergeant Major of the Guards who is all of 6' 8" tall (without his bearskin on). I thought it's not going to take him long to whip us into shape and it didn't. We moved to Wellington Barracks where we continued for two days practicing the format for the parade, in blistering heat. It seemed the actual parade was never going to happen but after the last rehearsal and with half an hour to get into No2 dress it was finally happening. We lined up for parade at 1600hrs and it seemed the whole of London had turned out for this magnificent event. The excitement was too much and when we marched on and saw the thousands of people in the stands and the Royal representatives, all the sweat and pain had been worthwhile. On the arrival of **Her Majesty the Queen Mother** who looked absolutely radiant the whole of Horse Guards Parade erupted in elation. It was a great honour to have been given the opportunity to take part in such a parade, one that will never be forgotten.

ON PARADE!
(L-R):LCpl Morris and SSgt Manktelow pose with a colourful escort

RETURN TO WILTON - *by Capt (Retd) Bob Wright*

For all those past members of the unit including all those who served with 10 Sig Regt. You will wish to be aware that the unit is once again located in Erskine Barracks, Wilton. With effect 1 June 2000 the unit moved from Ward Barracks, Bulford and are now located in Elbe Block, Erskine Barracks. The wheel continues to turn!

259 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. H. Fraser**
SSM **WO2 Tredwell**

The Squadron bid a sad farewell to **WO2 (SSM) Dean Ewing**, who goes back to 7 Sig Regt, from whence he came. We wish **Dean, Donna** and the family all the very best for the future. In his place we welcome **WO2 (SSM) Dick Tredwell** and his family, fresh from the stresses and strains of life at Sheffield UOTC. We wish you a happy tour or at least it will be when your wife gets back from Bosnia to help you with the kids!

AIRFIELD TROOP

Tp Comd **2Lt Kate Milner**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Bob Stenhouse**

There are plenty of hellos and goodbyes this time from 'The mighty fighting Airfield Troop'. Gone is **Lt** 'Ginger Rogers' **Kemp** to the sunny delights of Bulford, whilst **Sgt Parton** has fuelled his desire to become Van-Damme and opted for a posting to N. Ireland. Farewells also go out to Tweedle dumb and Tweedle dumber, **Gaz** 'Mr Lover-lover' **Fuins** and **Aidi** 'Tug-boat' **Bennet**. Arrivals have been swift in coming, **2Lt Milner** has arrived from RSS Blandford, as well as **Sig** 'Malcom' **Goddard** (the new ships cat!) and **Cpl** 'Rock and roll' **Creeley**, who has retraded from Dvr-Lineman to Tech-tea boy. **Sig Prigmore** has also turned up and is determined to get the Troop's fitness up to Para standard, just wait until he puts on the Cyprus stone! Welcome back **Sig Holley** from the war-zone and goodbye to **SSgt Stenhouse, Sig Milevsky** and **Sig Wells** who have left us for Kosovo, and **Cpl** 'Randy Dudd' **Rudd** who has gone to the Falklands. A final mention goes to **Cpl** 'Goose' **Paterson** who has taken up flying lessons…. the crash-comms crew is now on full alert!

EPISKOPI TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Sarah Covey-Crump**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Jim Duncan**

A busy time for the Troop at the moment, what with plenty of visitors and, not before time, a few new arrivals to boost the numbers. A hectic few weeks began with the addition to the Troop of a pair of officer cadets eager to be shown around the island and find out what a working unit is like in Cyprus. Needless to say they have returned to the UK looking remarkably brown! The SOinC, **Brig Burton,** and the Corps' RSM also paid us a visit. They toured the Squadron and then bravely fielded questions on the future of the Corps' in the Jimmy Club. A few days later we also had the pleasure of the company of the Chief of Staff, **Brig Radcliffe OBE**, who came to have a look at the Troop and see how things were going.

At last we have the chance to welcome some new people into the Troop instead of just saying goodbye to old friends. This month the Troop is delighted to say hello and nice to meet you to **LCpl** 'Fozzy' **Foster**, who is newly qualified as a Telemech after retrading from Driver Lineman. **Cpl** 'Piggy' **Lee-Davis** has arrived from 39 Inf Bde and **Sig Mark Creighton** has moved down to Epi from Dhekalia. Finally a warm welcome to our new Troop 'Daddy', **SSgt Gary Mathieson** who moved from 3 Bde on receiving his promotion.

The highlight of the month, however, has to be the presentation of medals by the Garrison Commander, **Col A. A. A. Beattie. SSgt Jim Duncan, Sig 'Alfie' Garnett, Sig Robbie Williams** and **Sig Kev Moss** all received their Bosnia or Kosovo medals. **SSgt Jim Duncan** and **Sgt** 'Ant'

Tranter were both presented with their Accumulated Service Medals.

DHEKELIA TROOP
Tp SSgt **SSgt Bryant**
MEDAL PARADE - 3 JULY 2000

Over the past two years 259 Sig Sqn have been maintaining a commitment to Kosovo and Bosnia. On average there are five installation technicians detached from the Squadron at any one time. As the Balkans are becoming increasingly more stable the call has been for fixed communications to replace the temporary set ups that were originally used. They have worked for different nationalities, including the Norwegian, Italian and American forces. Despite the obvious differences between the Balkans and Cyprus, the soldiers gain a vast amount of valuable operational experience and continue to learn more about their Trade. The vast majority enjoyed their tours and some are keen to go back. On 3 July 2000, Col Beattie, the Garrison Commander, presented the soldiers with their medals on a parade held in Happy Valley. The following received their Kosovo or Bosnia Medal: **SSgt Duncan St, Cpl Rudd, Sig Bate, Sig Garnett, Sig Hobson, Sig Joughin, Sig Moss, Sig Murphy, Sig Stables, Sig Stanley** and **Sig Williams**. In addition two members of the Squadron received their accumulated service medal for three years on an operational tour. **SSgt Duncan** and **Sgt Tranter** both served in Northern Ireland. **SSgt Duncan** was employed as the British Telecom Liaison Officer and **Sgt Tranter** as a rigger.

JOINT SERVICE SIGNALS UNIT (DIGBY)

by LCpl Edwards and LCpl Freeman

Monday 6 March 2000 shall long go down in the history of the British Forces as the date when 'Jensen's Heroes' gathered to begin a 'rigorous' eight-week training programme known as Contingency Military Training Course No 2 (CMT2), in preparation for attachment to SRRC3. Week One began with a couple of days Land Rover familiarisation and mil training at the Ground Defensive Training (GDT) Flight. This was followed by a short exercise that will live in the memory for the immortal statement, 'I need a medic!' by a now sadly departed RAF Corporal, as the beastmaster **Cpl Mulvaney** 'jogged' us around the perry track.

The following weeks consisted of lessons on convoy drills, map reading, actions on IVCPs and a NAVEX starring **JT Ian** 'flatulence - I can't find Digby village' **Bentley**, which required us to visit various checkpoints around Lincolnshire and note various features. We also had an excellent two days at Leconfield of cross-country driver training. GDT provided GPMG and pistol training, but unfortunately we were unable to fire the GPMG in case we shot any aircraft down! A different matter was the pistol training and we had some good weather for the shoot out on the 25m range, which was great fun. Weeks Four and Five concentrated on learning to move underslung loads, mainly the Land Rovers, by support helicopters. This gave us an insight into how the 'real' RAF works and how it all comes together on a wider scale. From this we gained the qualifications of either Rigger Marshaller, or Landing Point Commander for the Cpls and above. The highlight of this was a Chinook flight to Fulbeck training area, then flying the rigged vehicles and helicopter handling teams back to Digby airfield. For those of us generally restricted to the office it was a fantastic experience to be working under the downdraft of a Chinook and its load.

CMT conduct landing point training

The training continued with IT, and everyone came away with a plethora of certificates and handbooks thanks to the IT training suite. Everyone learnt something, despite our initial beliefs that we were already experts on many of the applications (How wrong we were!). Theatre skills were introduced into the programme with an unforgettable mine awareness video that made even those with the strongest stomachs feel queasy. This concluded with us out on the airfield, poking the ground looking for training mines. It was fortunate that the mines were only training aids as **LCpl Julie Somerville** forcibly prodded an anti-personnel mine, 'just to confirm it was one'.

The training culminated in an eagerly awaited confirmation exercise 'Icarus Defender', a gruelling five day FTX at Barnham and Stanford training areas. **PO Jack Warner** took the helm first, setting a high standard for others to follow as each team member took turns to command. Little sleep was had as we were constantly on the move, yet morale was kept high by **LCpl Julie Somerville's** tin of chocolate biscuits (Cadburys of course). The worst, yet funniest, night came when after being bugged out by **WO2 Jenson**, we found we only had one sleeping bag between five of us. This was a salutary lesson in personal admin that will not be forgotten. Led by **LCpl Greg** 'that wood looks good' **Edwards**, we were led off the designated block of the training area and into entirely the wrong forestry block. Here we shivered our way through the night with a worried **Q Jensen** unable to find us, despite walking the whole of the correct training area with CWS and **JT Tim Ward's** efforts to summon him through the medium of snoring. At first light we were presented with the strange, yet beautiful, sight of **LCpl Sarah** 'Olive Oil' **Freeman** dealing with one of nature's calls! Having packed the essential 'Lofty Wiseman SAS Survival Guide' we set about building two exceptional shelters that only our memories and photographic evidence shall prove existed. After relocating to the correct grid, where **Q Jensen** eventually found us, we received orders to extract to the ex HQ building on foot. There we were greeted by Endex, fish and chips, beer, and a debrief around a log fire in a derelict farm on Stanford Training Area.

Following CMT2 we all enjoyed glorious weather during a week of adventure training in Snowdonia, based at the Nuffield Centre in Llanfairpw.....you know where we mean. This was an excellent opportunity for the team to relax and enjoy themselves after some hard work on CMT. That said, some members of the team found more adrenaline pumping on Tryfan than at any stage during the CMT!

CMT conducting adventure training in Wales, (L-R): PO Dredge, JT Ward, LCpl Sommerville, Cpl Duke, JT Bently

In summary involvement in CMT2 was fantastically enjoyable, superbly supported by 4 Sqn, thanks to the OC, **Maj Dennis Weir, Q Jensen** and other training staff involved for all their efforts and patience. Everyone learnt a great deal and it's a good opportunity to get out and about, see other aspects of the forces, gain extra qualifications, enhance and refresh military skills, and most importantly have a laugh. If you are getting fed up with being desk bound at the JSSU and are in need of a challenge try CMT - you'll love it.

The following bulletin was recently released by the

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

In the light of the rising frequency of human/grizzly bear conflicts, the Alaska Dept of Fish and Game is advising hikers hunters and fishermen to take extra precautions and stay very alert for bears while in the field.

'We advise outdoorsmen to wear noisy little bells on their clothing so they will not startle bears who are not expecting them. We also advise outdoorsmen to carry pepper spray with them in case of an encounter with a bear. It is also a good idea to watch out for fresh signs of bear activity. Outdoorsmen should recognise the difference between black bear and grizzly bear manure (scat).

Black bear scat is smaller and contains lots of berries and squirrel fur.

Grizzly bear scat has little bells in it and smells of pepper.

1 (ROYAL BUCKINGHAMSHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS)

Sqn Comd **Maj David Raleigh**
SSM **WO2 Dave Scott**

A busy couple of months has been dominated by the SC Course Final Exercise in Southern Africa. We had hoped to see the introduction of our fleet of replacement equipment and vehicles, but after a second week in the sun at Newquay running a User Trial we realised that this was not likely to be the case. A few more lucky individuals (like **Sgt Simon** 'I'm so looking forward to my Sergeants Course' **Marvel**) therefore managed to sneak off to Africa, although they couldn't get the contractors to pay for that trip. The OC managed to get out to visit the detachments in Africa, so visiting all the relevant countries for a second time in three months. He has subsequently been dined out, by the Regular Squadron hierarchy and the Technical Department, in style in the Mansion at Bletchley Park. As these notes go to press, he is about to start his handover to **Maj Simon Gregory**. Congratulations go to **Cpl Gaz Woolley** on his overdue promotion, and to **Cpls Kev Heaton** and **Jase Broome** for being selected for their promotions to Sergeant. We have said farewell to **Cpl Simon Hodgson**, off to Northern Ireland, **Cpl Leslie Jay** to her T1, and **LCpl Jim Smith** to 1 (UK) CivDiv. Further congratulations go to **Lt Angus Evers** for passing his JOTES at last, and **LCpl Simon** 'Robbo' **Roberts** for passing P Coy.

SC COURSE 1/00 - *by LCpl Sonja MacMillan*

In the beginning there were seven eager-to-please, unassuming individuals who started the Special Communications Course at Bletchley. Oh how it all changed! We could see from the off that it would be a hardship being on the course when we spotted the pool table. We spent many hours after work doing 'extra skills'. Not at any time did we deviate from the skills room to watch S Club 7 or play pool; that would have been weak and un-military. **LCpl Dave Marshall** somehow managed to stay the course, despite agreeing with the YofS that he was as 'thick as a whale omelette'.

After ten fun-filled weeks of typing and morse we met the Puma crew and practised some swarming. There was an interesting aroma in the air as we flew low-level, and then not content with a helicopter we practised marking Tactical Landing Zones (TLZs) for a C-130. The crew obviously were not impressed with **Cpl Benny** 'course rep' **Hills** hair and tried to give him a grade one with the props. We also visited HMS *Cardiff* to see how the Navy Communications systems work on a Type 42 Frigate. It was here that I made a mental note not to wear a skirt-suit when visiting vessels with ladders. Cheers for the warning lads!

The most testing part of the course for most of us came in week 11. Helidunking. It still fills me with dread now, just thinking about it. DS **Cpl Gaz Woolley** take note - when they tell you that, '.....you are No 6 and last out,' that doesn't mean, '.....every man for himself and first out.' I don't know how we would have filled our evenings if **Capt Richard Newhouse** hadn't given us such interesting lecture subjects. Osama bin Who? **LCpl Mark** 'Slick' **Garbus** enthralled us all with his interpretation of the UN - 'Pro-Plus anyone?' The 16-week long course ended with a confirmation exercise in Africa. Three detachments were deployed to Zambia, South Africa and Malawi, which for me was fantastic. If nothing else did, this made the course worthwhile.

We are now set to start our new careers with Special Communications - Any one out there who is thinking of doing something different should definitely apply for this! The next Assessment Course will be in February - Application Forms are in SOinC PD 206.

Maj Simon Gregory explains the finer points of Special Comms to LCpl Mark Garbus

Ex GLOBAL LYNX 3 - PRETORIA

by Cpl Benny Hill and LCpl Chris Elliston

Leaving a wet afternoon in Bletchley on 28 of June, for the sunnier climes of Boekenhoutskloof training area, near Pretoria, South Africa, we felt a nervous anticipation of what was to come. What awaited us was a hut in the middle of a game reserve, where the Pretoria contingent of the SC course were to spend the next two weeks under the close scrutiny of the instructors. Far from being a 'Blandford' type assessment exercise, we found we were left to our own devices, and given enough rope to hang ourselves, with the sole responsibility of Comms resting firmly on our shoulders. What followed was an extremely busy comms phase, designed to put us under a realistic amount of pressure, as well as the opportunity to sample the local hospitality when the comms were wound down at the end of each day. The TA contingent **Cpl Pete Litchfield, Cpl Al Shrewsbury** and **Sig Karen Clarke** helped generate the traffic and constituted the extra manpower that a busy base station requires.

The Hosting Units, 1 and 2 Sig Regts extended the warmest of welcomes, allowing **Lt** 'Marco' **Breytenbach** and **Cpl** 'Wiele' **Myhurgh** to be our guides for the week, introducing us to the local South African version of the BBQ, the Braai, and to some of the local nightspots. Towards the end of the week, we put on a display for the South African Army of some of our equipment and antennas. We were shocked by the number of senior visitors; there were four Major Generals, six Brigadier Generals and two Rear Admirals, as well as plenty of Colonels to make up the numbers. This further tested our presentation skills, as well as social skills at the following function.

At the end of the exercise we had an R & R phase, which we spent at Sun City, South Africa's premier holiday location, where some of the group went on a day Safari. It proved to be a hard but rewarding final exercise. All of us will be vying to take part in next years exercise also planned for this magnificent country.

MALAWI DETACHMENT - *LCpl Garbus*

For **LCpl Dave Marshall** and myself, it was off to Malawi for our final exercise, our first time on the African continent. Once in location, our first task was to establish a communications centre, in a disused office at Lilongwe airbase, which is a short drive from the Imperial Hotel where we were accommodated. After the initial set up, the comms phase ran smoothly and we were able to confirm our competence and skill on the equipments and procedures learnt over the last four months.

On the fourth day the 'scenario' dictated that we had to move, so we tore down and proceeded with the 2.5hour drive to Fish Eagle Camp, in the Salima district of the country. The location itself is an old holiday camp, situated on the scenic shores of Lake Malawi. Once in location, we had to quickly establish another communications centre, again working from a disused office. The real estate available was somewhat limited in comparison to the acres of fields we had to work with previously, so it was time to employ a bit of initiative. **Dave** "Tree Frog" **Marshall** leapt to the rescue, and made good use of the trees and other natural supports for attaching our antennas.

LCpl Dave Marshall shows off his SC Morse skills in Malawi

The Malawi Armed Forces College (MAFCO) invited the detachment to conduct lectures on HF comms at their establishment towards the end of the exercise period. It was expected that the audience for these lectures would be young Signallers and JNCO's. Imagine our surprise when we were faced with a class full of Warrant Officers and Senior Officers! The lectures themselves were a tremendous success, and beneficial for both Armies involved. On the Malawian's part, it was a good insight as to how the British Army communicates. For **LCpl Marshall** and myself it was the first time that either one of us had ever been given the privilege of instructing a foreign Army. Throughout the exercise, support from the Malawi Armed Forces was second to none, and we look forward to visiting their beautiful country in the future.

ZAMBIA DETACHMENT - *by LCpl Evans*

There I was, a cold and squally drill night at Bletchley TA Centre - 'Ah, **LCpl Evans**, how do you fancy two weeks in Africa?' So after a quick bout of negotiations with 'she who must be obeyed' I found myself on a British Airways flight bound for Lusaka in Zambia. The Det consisted of **LCpl Mark** 'Mum said wear a vest' **Gower** (Det Comd), **LCpl Sonja** 'I don't do mornings' **MacMillan** and myself. On arrival at Lusaka International Airport we were greeted with a red carpet and Guard of Honour. Unfortunately not for us, but for the Zambian President who was on our flight. We had collected our Nissan 4x4 and kit from the High Commission, and drove along a dirt track to Ngwere Estate, north east of the city. As it was a test for **LCpl MacMillan**, the set-up was soon accompanied by plenty of JNCO pointing and shouting by the DS, who also doubled as Det Comd. Soon comms were in and it became apparent that as a Det we had struck gold. Not only were we in a fantastic location on the edge of a tobacco farm, but we had our own chef, **Joseph**, who cooked and cleaned, and washed and ironed for us! We also adopted a Det Dog called 'Ewee', a native Zambian animal who thought we were good enough to feed her. She literally sang for her supper although we never worked out the tune.

Despite our heavy work schedule we found time to receive visitors, most notably the current OC and his replacement. We also received the Zambian Army, local expatriate farmers, and possibly the Zambian Police. The last two days of the exercise was supposed to see us move to the Zambian School of Signals at Kabwe, but this was cancelled. Because of this, we moved to nearby farms with a minimum of kit - select a site and then time ourselves to send a signal to Pretoria. By the end of this phase not only were we quite slick but also full of cups of tea and home made cake. We were constantly amazed by the locals' ability to say - 'It doesn't matter if we're not here, set up where you like and have a nice time!'

Then as if by magic it was Endex! Kit was packed and returned to the BHC and we were off on safari, camping in the Lower Zambeze National Park. After a short detour around 40 large elephants, we arrived at the campsite and pitched up on a river bank opposite a herd of very noisy hippos. The following day we saw her. The most beautiful thing I think I've ever seen, a female leopard sat watching us from behind a tree. As we moved closer she wandered out, stretched and posed for some photos then disappeared. Driving back to civilization, Sonja shouted 'two elephants' - and there they were not ten feet from my door. Both animals just swished their ears as we used up rolls of film, slowly driving past this once-in-a-lifetime encounter. That was Zambia. An experience I'm glad to say was one of the best in my life! So if you're Regular or TA, get your papers in and it could be you!

The Zambian Detachment
ably lead by LCpl Mark Gower

NEWS FROM THE UOTCS AND CADETS

12 TROOP (ROYAL SIGNALS) LONDON UOTC

by WOC'dt Beth Richardson

INTRO

Spring saw a few changes to 12 (Royal Signals) Troop. The departure of **SSM Harry Kemp** to Blandford brought the arrival of **SSM Carl Tucker** from 2 Sig Regt in York. We welcomed the new intake from Athlone Coy (the ULOTC training company) following their pass-off parade at Woolwich in March. On our return from the Easter break it was then time to wave our Troop Commander, **Capt Joel Curry**, farewell, as he headed off to the USA with his civvy job, (A little far to commute on a Tuesday night, we thought!), **2Lt Penny Johns** replaces him.

TROOP SOCIAL

The first significant event of the new term was the Annual Troop Dinner held in the Officers' Mess at Yeomanry House. This was a pleasant evening attended by our Commanding Officer, **Lt Col Nigel Holland** and his wife, plus several other guests. A quartet from Royal Holloway University provided the entertainment during dinner, which was excellent and much appreciated by all.

WEYMOUTH WEEKEND

The very next Friday, London OTC descended on the unsuspecting seaside town of Weymouth for a weekend of troop training. This was the first opportunity for the new recruits to 'bond' with existing Troop members. 12 Troop practiced using the 351 and 352, erecting masts and map reading. Saturday afternoon gave individuals chance to gain their FMT 600 in preparation for Summer Camp before rounding of the day with a game of football. After a BBQ, it was time to 'hit the town' in true OTC student fashion. Any hang-overs were quickly cured by a 'build-your-own-and-sail-it' raft race the following morning! With the fun and games over for another year, the troops returned to London, having got to know each other slightly better than before they left.

VISIT TO 94 (V) SIG REGT

The first of several evening visits over the summer term was held by 94 (V) Sig Regt, The Berkshire Yeomanry based at Windsor. They gave a presentation on what could be expected as a TA officer. They then demonstrated and talked through their role and equipment in a field environment and later told the Troop something of their long history. As the oldest Yeomanry Regiment, this was a very colourful and distinguished presentation. The visit will definitely not be forgotten, as the Troop was very kindly given a much needed FFR land rover and trailer by the Regiment, this will enable us to improve the quality of our training, for which we are most grateful.

21 SAS WEEKEND

For the second weekend in June, Eastmere 'Urban Operations' village at STANTA was relocated to Bosnia for the benefit of the Sabre Troops of 21 SAS. Members of 12 Troop joined with their HQ Squadron to provide the warring factions and CIVPOP for the Exercise. The setting up of roadblocks, artillery bombardments, attacks on the village, ethnic cleansing, executions and a party with night attack certainly gave the troops something to report back on. Yet despite the civil war supposedly raging, a suspicious amount of fun was had by those involved! The OTC contingent were introduced to the Cougar radio system and given a fascinating first aid lesson from the patrol medics (including a practical demonstration of setting up a IN drip on a live 'patient'!). All in all, the weekend was an immensely enjoyable experience. Many thanks to 21 (SAS) for allowing us to join them.

VISIT TO 31 SIG REGT

The following Tuesday saw the Troop crossing the Thames for a visit to the Headquarters of 31 Sig Regt at Southfields. This TA Regiment is tasked with providing communications for HM government during wartime and along with this rather unique role comes some rather unusual equipment. After a short introductory briefing the Troop was shown around the Lanward vehicle, the ERV radio and the equipment used by a typical radio detachment. The evening was well organised, interesting, informative and rounded off very nicely with a meal in the bar!

LONDON EYE

Sometimes being in central London has its advantages, as this outing proved. The BA London Eye would seem to be more popular than its sister the Millennium Dome, and was certainly a hit with 12 Troop. Despite the day we chose to go being drizzly and overcast, we were still able to appreciate views over a wide area of London and pick out various landmarks. Well worth half an hour of time and a good way of sightseeing without the crowds and traffic.

LOOK AHEAD TO SUMMER

With term at an end for most of the Troop, attention has turned towards Summer Camp, this year to be held at Strensal Camp in Yorkshire. The highlights for the Troop will be a three-day visit to 30 Sig Regt at Bramcote and the visit of our Royal Honorary Colonel, **HRH The Princess Royal**. Following camp, orienteering competitions and adventure training exercises in Wales, Bavaria and America will be the order of the day. A battlefield tour is also being considered for the end of August. It is sure to be a good few months.

ULOTC ORIENTEERING REPORT - by JUO Tom Burke

Following the departure of the last Signals PSI bar one, **WOI RSM Douggie Craig**, orienteering in the Unit has just kept its head above water. However with great enthusiasm for the sport, a number of Officer Cadets have kept it afloat and on his arrival at the Unit, the current Adjutant, **Capt D. Parkinson**, was able to use his own enthusiasm to good effect. So with the two most senior regular personnel (the CO and the Adjt) being keen to see the sport prosper, it was not a surprise when they delivered **WO2 Carl Tucker** to the Signals Troop as PSI. He also is very keen on the sport and although he had rarely picked up a compass in conjunction with an orienteering map, some might say he is a natural.

At Easter, we took part in the Annual JK event, this year in Perthshire, Scotland. With a few novices, and some seasoned orienteerers in the party, the Scottish terrain tested us all to the full. The Troop members on that trip were **WO2 Carl Tucker** (PSI), **2Lt Mike Zazzi, JUO Tom Burke** and **WOCdt Rossiter;** also we must not forget our Adjutant who was also present. Since his arrival, just before Easter, **WO2 Tucker** has really started things moving in the Troop and the Orienteering. However, due to a number of people with university commitments, we were unable to field a full team to go to the Land Command (UK) and TA Inter Unit Championships in Sennybridge (19-20 May). However, three of us were able to go down for the weekend. On Day One **JUO Tom Burke** had a good run on the 'A' course, coming in third in the TA comp and first in the UOTC competition. In the Harris Relay we borrowed another man and **Tom Burke** was able to practice his planning in preparation for the Army Championships in June.

Our latest achievement was in the Army Orienteering Association Championships in Haltern, Germany (1 7-18 June). The Unit fielded two teams, a male quartet in the Minor Units Competition and a ladies team. Both teams were made up of 50% Signals Troop members, these being **WOCdts Liz Rossiter** and **Rebecca Palin** in the ladies and **WO2 Carl Tucker** and **JUO Tom Burke** in the males. After the first day's classic relay, the men's team was the second fastest quartet in the whole championships, and they were also winning the Minor Units Competition. However, by the end of the championships the men's team came away with a second place in the Minor Units and the girls came in third place in the Ladies Team Competition. It was altogether an excellent weekend, with both teams returning with Trophies. We are looking forward to further successes in the forthcoming events.

ARMY CADETS NEWS RELEASE

33 SIGNALS (v) VALUED SUPPORT TO 42(NW) BRIGADE ARMY CADET EXERCISE

42(NW) Brigade are responsible, each year, for the organisation of an Army Cadet 'Ten Tors' type Northwest Exercise Weekend over the Cumbrian Moors. It has a start at Warcop and has Senior and Junior teams of four. It is open to all the Army Cadet and Combined Force contingents in the Northwest. The distance covered, over a very tough terrain, is 40kms for the Seniors and 30kms for the Juniors. The main qualities tested to the full are map, compass knowledge, leadership and the art of survival. Maj David Oak, G3 SO3, stated that the weather had been atrocious for the last three years and twenty of the best teams had entered this year. He also spoke of the outstanding communications support supplied by 33 Sig Regt (V) which made a great contribution to the success and safety of the weekend, a 'Thank you' is expressed to them for their valued support.

Some of the members of 33 Sig Regt(V) who played a vital role with communications (L-R): SSgts Brian Hislop and Simon Hogan, Cpl Tommy Harrison, Sig Leanne Fenelon and Sig Lynette Cockram

SUSSEX ARMY CADET FORCE
County Cadet Commandant
Col R. D. Newton, MBE, FISM, AMIPR

ANNUAL CAMP (2000)
WATHGILL RICHMOND NORTH YORKSHIRE

Sussex Army Cadet Force's highlight of the training year and main event had arrived, we are off to Annual Camp! 350 Cadets male and female the largest number of cadets for many years, plus 30 Officers' and 60 Senior NCOs arrived at Camp. This was the first Annual Camp for many Cadets. As usual our very busy training wing, led by **Maj David Rusbridger** arranged a wide variety of training, using to the full the many benefits of first class military and adventurous training facilities Annual Camp has to offer. The excellent training package included mountain bikes, assault course, 22 shooting, air rifle shooting, surfing, canoeing, climbing, first aid training, abseiling, Dof E training, lots of sport, driver training, cross country running and of course, I must not forget to mention, the very tasty 'happy bags' (haversack rations). The training programme which was designed to bring out newly acquired skills resulted in many cadets returning from camp sporting new star badges.

Our camp notes would not be complete without expressing our thanks for the tremendous efforts on our behalf from, No 8 Cadet Training team 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. **Brig John Holman CBE DL**, our Honorary Colonel - **Sir Brian Bartalott, BL, OBE, DL**, 2 Brigade Commander - **Brig Minter OBE, Col Chris Argent** from 2 Brigade, **Col Chris Blessington OBE JP**, Ex-Cadet Commandant - **Col Colin Parslow, Col William Crump** - Ex-Cadet Commandant. 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 North Yorkshire sunshine. At the end of camp we enjoyed our usual penultimate day's presentation parade, again a sizeable array of silverware and prizes presented by our Commandant, **Col Bob Newton MBE**. 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.

DON'T BE DISAPPOINTED THE CLOSING DATE FOR THE DECEMBER WIRE IS 15 OCTOBER

SPORT

FENCING

ARMY FENCING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2000
AND INTER SERVICES CHAMPIONSHIPS 2000

The Royal Signals Games Club last year recognised Fencing as an official Corps sport and there was a very good turn out from the Royal Signals at this year's Army Championships. It was very good to see the improvement that several of the fencers had made since the last championships. In particular **Sig Brewster** who reached the last eight of the Men's Epee competition and is now starting training for the Modern Pentathlon and **Cpl Hill** of 15 Sig Regt who qualified for the Inter Services Championships. **Cpl Hill** has done much work to try and start a fencing club within 15 Sig Regt and their 3-man team was unfortunately knocked out at the semi-final stage of the team competition by the 21 Eng Regt. The strong Royal Signals presence was also confirmed by entering three out of the ten teams that competed in the Inter Corps 3-Man event. The highest placed team came third – well done! **Capt Anderton-Brown** was just beaten in the final of the Men's Epee and took second place. On the ladies' side, **Sig Perry** did extremely well and achieved first place in each of the three weapons and also took the title of Master Swordswoman – an excellent achievement and proved herself again to be the Army's top female fencer.

Overall a successful week and a special mention to **LCpl Baharat Rai** QGS who learnt fencing while attached to 1 RGR only three months before the competition and came a creditable 24th in the Men's Epee competition. The fencers were helped by money from the Royal Signals Games Club which had been used to buy competition level clothing for use by some of the fencers.

Following on from the Army Championships was the Inter Services Championships which was hosted this year by the Army and held at the Army School of Physical Training in Aldershot. It started off with the Inter Services Triangular match - the annual battle between the services. **Capt Anderton-Brown** captained the nine strong Army Men's team but, unfortunately, a couple of key team members were not available and the team was narrowly defeated by the RAF. The team, however, scored a strong victory over the Royal Navy. The ladies team was again just beaten by the RAF, though they did win the team foil event with **Sig Perry** providing the anchor for the team.

Following the team event was the Individual weapon championships. Only those coming in the last 12 of each Service Championship are eligible to fence at the Inter Services. As a result **Capt Anderton-Brown** and **Cpl Hill** were selected to fence in the Men's competition and **2Lt McLellan** and **Sigs Perry** and **O'Sullivan** in the Ladies' competition. The fencers did well overall with **Capt Anderton-Brown** taking second place in the Epee and third in the foil. **Cpl Hill** also did well and reached nineth place in the Men,s Epee. Unfortunately **Sig Perry** was unable to hold on to her Master Swordsman and Champion at Arms titles that she won last year, but reached the last three in each event.

Anybody interested in starting fencing or wanting more information on the sport within Royal Signals or the Army should contact **Capt Anderton-Brown** on York Mil: 94777 2248.

HOCKEY

ROYAL SIGNALS - LADIES HOCKEY

The Army Inter-Corps Annual Hockey competition was held over 3–5 May 2000, in Aldershot, home of Army Hockey. Pre-tournament training and team selection was also carried out in Aldershot under the careful guidance of **SSgt** 'Bru' **Baker.**

For the Royal Signals Ladies, whose season had been somewhat marred by the number of cancelled fixtures, the task was simple and certainly achievable – to retain the title as Inter-Corps Champions for the third year running. Training began in earnest at the Astroturf in Aldershot on the Bank holiday Monday. **SSgt Baker** put the squad, some 20 strong, through its paces with a series of drills and training games. Tuesday involved yet more preparation, including short corner routines and free hits as well a rather energetic training session for our number one goalkeeper, **Sig** 'Sabi' **Sabiston**, thanks to the REME men.

Unfortunately, due to the sheer number of men's teams, there was to be no hockey for the ladies on Wednesday the 3rd, however, the squad turned out to watch and support the men in their bid for Inter-Corps glory. The usual league system used for the Inter-Corps tournament was sadly changed for a round-robin system, as the APTC, The Royal Artillery and The Intelligence Corps were unable to produce teams for the ladies competition. The effect of this being that the ladies would play two games on each day and the team with the most points would win.

The Royal Signals played the AGC and the REME on Day One. The first game of the day was fast and furious but saw the Royal Signals as victors beating the AGC 5-0. Delighted with their first win, the Royal Signals went on to beat the REME 5-0 in yet another action packed match. On Day Two, a slightly tired and weary side fought hard to beat the AMS 1-0 and hold the RLC to a draw 0-0 to take the competition for the third year running. Player of the competition went to **Cpl Tracey Prowse**, Most Improved player was awarded to **LCpl Lyndsay Smith** and Best Newcomer went to **Sig** 'Sabi' **Sabiston**. **Cpl Sue Neate** captained the side. We wish her all the best with motherhood! We would like to thank **SSgt** 'Bru' **Baker, SSgt** 'Taff' **Davies, SSgt** 'Monty' **Moore** and **Stu Greenwood** for all their support and advice during the season.

The Team is off to Cyprus on tour in October, at last! Any new players interested in joining the squad for the 2000/2001 season should call **Sgt Pam Mitchell** on Aldershot 2202 or contact **Maj Sara Copley** on Corsham 4376.

MOVING OR POSTED
DON'T FORGET TO LET US KNOW
YOUR NEW ADDRESS

ICE SPORTS 2000/2001

Maj Gen A. P. Ridgway CBE

Ice Sports include Bobsleigh, Skeleton and Luge and we provide an outstanding opportunity for Servicemen and women to take part in these challenging sports :each year. The Ice Sport Camp runs in Lillehammer from 13 - 27 October this year and is designed to allow novices to receive tuition in one or more of the Ice disciplines. The camp is organised into two one week courses and we can take about 100 students each week. It is a terrific opportunity for Regiments to get involved in these genuinely adventurous sports and, unlike other Winter Sports, does not involve .substantial financial outlay on the part of the Regiment. The total cost is only £350 per soldier (only £250 if a member of the sports lottery) and this includes flights, accommodation, food, equipment and track fees.

Those who do well at the Ice Camp can go on to represent their Regiments at the Army Novice Championships, to be held this year in Winterberg, Germany. There is the real prospect of talented youngsters going on to represent the Army or even the Nation in international competition at higher level. Army athletes are likely to be representing the UK in all three disciplines at the next Olympics!

It is appreciated how committed the Regiments are to operations and training but surely even the busiest Regiment could provide a couple of young men or women to take part in this really worthwhile sporting activity. Arms and Service Directors and Commanding Officers are always welcome to visit either the Ice Camp or the Novice Championships - there may even be an opportunity to terrify yourself on the Ice Track! If you or your Commanding Officers need further information please contact me or **Capt Peter McClellan** on 94351 613406 or 01874 613406. I look forward to seeing you on the ice!

SHOOTING

REGIMENTAL SHOOTING TEAM MILLENIUM MEETING
CENTSAAM: HM QUEEN'S MEDAL COMPETITION,
NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION SERVICE WEAPONS MEETING AND METHUEN CUP

The 11 Sig Regt Shooting Team arrived at the Pirbright/Bisley Range Complex on 13 June 2000 for a two-week Corps training period before CENTSAAM 2000. The competition started on 27 June 2000. A contingent from 16 Sig Regt, 1 (UK) ADSR, HQ Land, 7 RGR, 7 RHA, 2 Sig Regt, 30 Sig Regt and various individuals from other Regiments joined in. This training period would hopefully provide the necessary practice and prove to be crucial for the selection of the Corps Team for the very prestigious and contentious Inter Corps Methuen Cup Match (Match 40).

The two-week training period proved to be very useful, especially with the conversion from ETR Targetry to the AMS being used for the competition itself. The matches that made up the CENTSAAM Competition were the Roupell Cup, the Henry Whitehead Match, the Whittaker Trophy, the Roberts Cup, and the Graham Trophy and for those that made the final cut for the Army 100, on the last day, the Army 100 Cup. CENTSAAM is the most important and prestigious meeting of the year and as such attracts a very high level of competition including overseas team competitors. Qualification for a place at CENTSAAM is through the respective DIVSAAM meetings and is therefore an achievement just to get to CENTSAAM, as there are only various places ranging from 5 – 14, per DIV. 11 Sig Regt had five individuals that qualified from 3 (UK) DIVSAAM but had another three qualify with Wildcards at the ARA AGM on the 26th June 2000. Overall there were approximately 25 firers from the Royal Corps of Signals, this achieving an all time qualifying record.

The CENTSAAM Competition this year had the highest standard of marksmanship in recent years, with the cut off for the final day being 73%. Of the initial 25 firers from the Corps, 14 remained in the competition for the final day, with three individuals being awarded the Army 100 Badge for the first time. These were **Cpl S. Davies** (16 Sig Regt), **Sig D. Dickson** (11 Sig Regt) and **Sig Lilasing Gurung** (30 Sig Regt). All in all, it was a very productive competition for the Garrison and throughout the Corps.

Following on from the CENTSAAM Competition were the NRA's, a collection of Practices, mainly taken from the Army 100 Cup. This competition included overseas firers and some civilians and was fired over two days culminating in the Queen Mary Match, which is very similar to the Association Cup Match.

The final and possibly most important day for the Corps was 5th July 2000, which saw 31 Army Corps/Regiment Teams compete for the Methuen Cup, which was previously won by the Corps in 1993, Iron Sights against SUSAT. The teams comprise of six firers and two reserves with this year's Royal Corps of Signals Team being: **Capt Krishna Gurung** (Team Capt), **Capt Yam Rana, Capt C. Kell, Sgt J. Saunders, Sig Devprakash Gurung, Sig Lilasing Gurung. Sgt D. Copley** (Team Adjt) and **Sig D. Dickson**. After five very difficult and extremely close fought practices the Royal Corps of Signals ended up in eleventh place overall. This was a great achievement considering the limited practice time compared with other Teams and the inclusion of a couple of relatively inexperienced firers due to individual unit commitments.

The three and a half weeks of arduous practice, training and competition proved to be invaluable experience to the all members of the Corps present and saw a distinct increase in the quality and accuracy of individual marksmanship. All members came away having felt that they had achieved something and with the number of individuals present this year it bodes well for Rifle Marksmanship within the Corps.

Individual presentation (Army 100: Medal & Bar)
to LCpl D. R. Dickson

The Royal Corps of Signals Shooting Team
Back Row (L-R): Sgt Surge, Sgt Priti, Capt Krishna G (Team Capt), Lt Col Hoole, Sgt Saunders, Cpl Fatchett, Sig Clark, Sgt Kennedy, Capt Yam Rana, SSgt Copley
Front Row (L-R): Cpl Dhir, Sig Lilla, Cpl Davies, LCpl Dickson, Sgt Dev, SSgt Nirmal, LCpl Brown

3 (UK) DIVISION (DIVSAAM) 2000 – BULFORD RANGES

11 Sig Regt entered ten individuals into this year's 3 (UK) Div DIVSAAM, with the mission of qualifying as many shootists as possible for the Queen's Medal Competition (QMC). This is a very prestigious event involving shotists from around the world competing for the Queen's Medal and through this the top 100 British Regular Army Shots earn the right to wear the Army 100 Badge. The competition is always steep in all DIVSAAM's as the bulk of the competition is from Infantry Regiments who dominate the British Army shooting scene. In our particular 3(UK) DIV, we were competing against 16 Infantry teams and individuals, as well as other teams/individuals comprising some 160 firers. There were 12 optic sight places and four iron sight places for qualification for the QMC in addition to the normal Trophies/Medals/bars for the Team Matches and individual winners.

11 Sig Regt had previously decided not to enter the event as a team and fire for the Team Match Trophies on top of a qualification place due to the restrictions on training time after CORPSAAM 2000. This would have involved learning and practising an additional four matches, which would have put a bit too much pressure on the members involved within the allotted training time. With hindsight, having looked at all the team scores, if we had done so, then I'm sure it would have been a clean sweep.

The Regimental Shooting Team has had a very successful season so far which culminated in five individuals qualifying for the QMC. This was the highest number of qualifiers from any one team in the Division, taking five of the sixteen places allocated by the Army Rifle Association (ARA) at their respective Divisions/Districts. On top of this achievement, **Sgt D. Copley** won the Champion at Arms Medal with 387 points out of a total of 410, also winning the Roberts Match scoring 49/50 and the Roupell Match scoring 37/40. **Capt B. H. Bryan** won the Best Young Officer Medal scoring 300/410. **Capt Yam Rana** came second place overall with 340/410 and **Sig D. R. Dickson** won Best Young Soldier and also Best B Class coming second in the Roberts Match scoring 45/50. All Individuals achieved qualification along with **Lt Col R. T. Hoole** who came in eleventh place overall.

THE ARMY SERVICE PISTOL CHAMPIONSHIP 2000

Five individuals from 11 Sig Regt were entered into the Army Service Pistol (XXX) Championship held on 3 June 2000 at Nelson Range in Bisley/Pirbright Range complexes. This event is held every year and attracts the best pistols shots in the British Army and International Forces. All shootists were competing for a place in the top thirty to qualify for the second stage in which they compete for the Army Pistol (XXX) Champion Gold Jewel and for selection for the British Army Combat Shooting Team (BACST) held in Arkansas, USA, in October.

Again 11 Sig Regt Shooting Team performed above expectation, with **Sgt D. Copley**, who ended up in tenth place overall, and **Lt Col R. T. Hoole**, who ended up in seventh place overall, both qualifying in the top thirty and eventually qualifying for the British Army Combat Shooting Team (BACST). Unfortunately, **LCpl J. A. Brown** was only a mere three points short of the cut of for the top thirty with 200/300 and ended up 33rd place overall. The above mentioned three firers also came third in the Army Service Pistol Team Match 38 collecting Bronze Medals and Date Bars with a combined score of 705 points out of a possible 900. Above all, every team member performed well and gained valuable experience as well as representing 11 Sig Regt admirably.

WINDSURFING

ARMY SAILING ASSOCIATION REGATTA

This year's ASA regatta was held in mid-September at the newly-opened Weymouth and Portland Sailing Academy in Portland Harbour. After a day of preparation, the squad was fortunate to benefit from the coaching skills of the internationally renowned **Peter Hart**. Although the wind was inconsistent, he provided many valuable coaching points and conducted some useful training on start line techniques.

The Championships themselves were held in fresh to strong wind conditions, which proved extremely demanding for novices, and presented considerable challenges to the experienced competitors, of whom around 60 participated from across the Army. In the Novice Championships, 19 competitors took part, including three from the Royal Signals. **Cpl Mick Rees**-14 Sig Regt, won the event with **SSgt Si Hadley** in joint third place. In the main event, the ASA team competition doubled up as the last event of the Inter-Corps series. With a nominated team of six competitors to count in the team competition, after four races the Royal Signals team was in a creditable fourth place out of a field of twelve teams. The winners REME and second placed team the RE, were in a league of their own, although strong individual performances were recorded by **SSgt Barrie Raine** and **SSgt Norman Finnegan**. In the same races, the first four competitors scored for the Inter-Corps series. The results on the day put the Royal Signals in third place, which gives us an overall series result of second, from a total of five teams. This is a reflection of the consistent commitment and performance of the team throughout the season.

After the Team Championships, the next two days were devoted to the Army Individual Championships. In equally strong winds, an extremely competitive series of races were held, with the pleasing sight of a small school of dolphins in the vicinity of the start line for at least two of the races. After a hard-fought series of races, Royal Signals windsurfers carried away trophies in five categories. In the 6.5 metre class, **LCpl Gaz Pope**-30 Sig Regt, came first for the second year running. In the Lightweight Class, **Maj Peter Bowles** and **Capt Andrew Mould** battled against the finest talent of the REME; **Maj Bowles** nevertheless achieved a creditable fifth place. In the Heavyweight class, **SSgt Norman Finnegan**-14 Sig Regt, went from strength to strength in the strong winds, achieving a clear second place and a trophy, while not far behind, **Maj Dave Gilchrist**-238 Sig Sqn, achieved fourth place in the heavyweight, and first veteran. Finally, in the Super-heavyweight, **SSgt Barry Raine** was pipped into fourth place by one point, nevertheless becoming first senior. The main Royal Signals Results are:

Army Sailing Association Team Championships
Fourth place (12 teams)

Inter-Corps Championsips
Second place (5 teams)

Individual Championships

First Novice	**Cpl M. Rees**
First 6.5mtr Class	**LCpl G. Pope**
First Veteran	**Maj D. I. Gilchrist**
First Senior	**SSgt B. Raine**
Second Heavyweight	**SSgt Norman Finnegan**

On behalf of Royal Signals Windsurfing, thank you to all those competitors who have taken part during the season, and to all those who have allowed them the time off to compete in this high profile competition. Anyone who wishes to know more about the opportunities for windsurfing in the Royal Signals should contact the club secretary, **Capt Andrew Mould**, on Upavon (94344) 5111.

WANTED!

The Royal School of Signals is mounting a pictorial history of

'Royal Signals Young Officer Training'

CAN YOU HELP?

Did you attend one of the following courses at the School of Signals (now the RSS) and do you have a decent photograph of your course with names? (If you can remember it!)

Communications Qualifying Course Numbers:
64 (circa 1967), 65,72 and 80
Communications Qualifying Course Numbers:
7 (circa 1976), 11 and 14
Royal Signals Troop Commanders Course Numbers:
11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,22,23,24,25,26,27,28 & 33

If you can help, the RSS would be very grateful if you could send an original/copy for addition to the display.

Please send photographs to:
YO Course Photos, Command Training Wing, RSS, Blandford Camp, DT11 8AG.

(Originals can be returned to you, once a colour copy has been made. Should you wish this to happen, please state it in a covering letter)

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

President: The Master of Signals

Chairman: Major General A. Yeoman CB

Vice Chairmen: Brig N. F. Wood 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; Lt Col C. N. Lightfoot N Ireland

General Secretary and Treasurer: Col A. R. Carter MBE — **Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col I. J. Hamilton**
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J. Cornick — **Administrative Officer: Mr. P. J. Cuckow (Membership & Records)**

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. Internet: www.royalsignals.army.org.uk/museum/rsa.htm

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.*

A FEW MEMORIES OF MY EXPERIENCES AND THE PEOPLE I MET DURING MY ARMY SERVICE IN THE TA AND IN WORLD WAR II

(2568888 Ex-Sergeant F. S. Griffiths, Royal Signals.)

In 1934 I joined the Territorial Army, 43rd (Wessex) Division Signals. Peacetime soldiering was brought to an abrupt end on 1 September 1939 when we joined the Regular Army. At first we were spread out all over Wiltshire with our Headquarters in Mere. After a lot of ups and downs and several Commanding Officers we were placed in our various Sections and spent four years training all over the south of England but mostly in Kent. We finally ended up in the little village of Woodchurch near Ashford. During this period rumours were rife as to where we would finally be sent to take our part in the war. One rumour was the Everglades in Florida to continue training for the war in Burma. Another rumour said our destination would be North Africa. While at Woodchurch the order came that we should waterproof all our vehicles. We then knew that we were destined for Europe either on or after the D-Day invasion. By this time I was Section Sergeant of the Cable Section together with **Sgt Norman West** (who incidentally was the 'brains' of the section, being an ex-Post Office Engineer) and **Sgt Ron Jollife**. We had several Junior NCOs who were all ex-Post Office Linesmen and the whole Section was under the command of **Capt Jim Dark**. There is an old saying that an army marches on its stomach. That department was well taken care of by **Sam Bartlett** our butcher come cook, who kept us well fed during the whole of the campaign. We were a happy Section.

On D-Day+12 we were ordered to move to West Ham Stadium and from there to embark on a Liberty ship moored at the East India Dock. From there the ship sailed to join a convoy that was forming up at Southend-on-Sea. Whilst there I received the sad news that **Capt Dark** had been injured in a traffic accident. This was our first mishap and it left me in the dual roles of Section Officer and Section Sergeant. The crossing to Normandy was quiet but then we spent three days tossing about in the bay. Finally we had a dry landing at Port-en-Bessin and were directed to a nice green field where we expected to have a rest, not so. I was called on to do a reconnaissance (recce) as the Division was going into battle the next day. This 'recce' took us over the ground where the previous day's action had taken place and we saw some pretty gruesome sights. We soon got hardened to this aspect of war but it did affect my driver, so much so that he had to go back to Rear Division and I never saw him again. However, personally I was glad that I was not in the infantry. Three weeks went by and a **Capt Beaumont** joined us. His arrival as the new OC took a load off my shoulders but not for long. Our bad luck persisted. The Captain decided that he would go out in his Jeep without his driver. The Germans captured him. Back to square one. Next to appear to command the Section was a 2nd Lieutenant direct from OCTU but he didn't last long. Just as we were beginning to think that the Section had a jinx on it as far as officers were concerned, a **Capt Jones** arrived. He stayed with us until we crossed over the border into Germany then he to fell prey to the jinx. He was run over by a Yank driven Jeep and severely injured and was discharged from the Army.

Throughout the campaign we were laying D8 cable from the standard 2-mile drums to all and sundry. We started with 98 miles of cable but even so it was not enough and we had to have our stock replenished several times from 7th Command. After Operation Market Garden, the ill-fated airborne offensive to secure all the bridges through Holland to Arnhem on the Rhine, we went into winter quarters at Brunnsum in Holland. There we were re-united with our old OC, **Capt Dark**. The Division was then called upon to help cover the Ardennes so we lost our billets to the 52nd Division. From the Ardennes the Division went forward over the Rhine to Bremen and I believe that this was where the 43rd fought its last battle. Not long after a cease-fire was implemented and my Section and I were very glad to realise that it was nearly all over. Out final destination turned out to be Celle where, after a few parties, demobilisation began. I was in Group 17 in the 'demob' process and one of the first to go. I was sorry to leave such good pals but I left with all their good wishes; a Certificate from the Commander-in-Chief of 21st Army Group, **Field Marshal B. L. Montgomery**; a suitcase full of loot and a ticket home. My war was over.

The Committee and all Branch Members of the RSA Southampton and District Branch extend their sincerest congratulations to **2568888 Ex-Sergeant F. S. 'Fred' Griffiths** who celebrated his 90th birthday on 11 September 2000. In 1934, 'Fred' joined the 43rd Division Signals (TA), and then transferred with the Division into the Regular Army on 1 September 1939, at the outbreak of World War II. He was then to serve for the next five years until demobilisation in 1945. He landed in Normandy just after D-Day and fought through Europe until the end of the war. He received a Certificate for Outstanding Service during the campaign in Northwest Europe from the Commander in Chief, 21st Army Group, **Field Marshal B. L. Montgomery**. 'Fred' has been a member of the RSA Southampton Branch for many years and during that time has served as a Committee Member and as Vice-President.

NEWS FROM THE AO's DESK

Branch News: Maj G. W. Duncan has succeeded **Michael Hope** as Chairman of 602 Sig Tp Association of Friends. Those interested in joining this AoF should contact **Maj Duncan** at 108 Canopus Way, Northwood, Middx HA6 3JW. Holders of the 'RSA Branch Secretaries List' should make the following amendments to the document:- **Howard Loates** - Hon Secretary of the West London Branch has moved to; 7 The Fernery, Staines, Middx TW18 3JJ. Tel: 01784-490 780: **Margaret Dadson** - Hon Secretary of the Middlesbrough Branch, has an E-Mail address:- 'colin@adadson.freeserve.co.uk'. The 219 Sig Sqn Assn should now be referred to as the 'Malta/Libya Command Assn'. The 260 Sig Sqn Assn should be correctly referred to as '260 (SAM) Sig Sqn Assn. **Brian Overland's** (Peterborough Branch) post-code should read PE6 0ET. The home tel No of **Bill Winder** (Chester Branch) is incorrect, it should read 01244-372 649. **Kevin Lugg** has started the Royal Signals Band Reunion Assn and welcomes enquiries from any former members of the Band. **Kevin** can be contacted at; 13 Medbourne Close, Blandford, Dorset DT11 7UA.

Reunion 2000: This year's Reunion was widely regarded as a tremendous success. The Princess Royal Day Parade by members of 11 Sig Regt proved as popular as ever and numerous compliments have been received at their standard of drill. The Regimental Restaurant did us proud by laying a choice of 11 menus for the Saturday 'All Ranks

Lunch', with more than enough for everyone. The Corps Band, the Corps TA Band, the Corps Pipes and Drums and the White Helmets put on their usual high quality performance in the afternoon's arena display. **Len Melling,** who works in the Camp service bay, arranged and commentated on a drive past of vintage military vehicles, from motor cycles to armour. The Corps RSM, **WO1 (RSM) Geoff Hodgson** came into his own when moulding the Branch Standard Bearers into a fine body of men - you could almost see their chests bursting with pride when **Geoff** gave them the orders of command. They were a credit to the Association, not only during the arena display, but on parade at the Sunday church service and March Past.

Part of the March Past on Sunday

The standard bearers' competition was won by **John Mumford** of the Reading Branch, who now hold the silver cup until next year. **Barry Moody** of the Scarborough Branch was only just behind as runner up and, like **John** was presented with a silver salver by the **Master of Signals** to mark the occasion.

The Master of Signals presents John Mumford (Reading Branch) with the Standard Bearers' Competition Trophy

My personal thanks go to **Geoff,** who took everything regarding the bearers off my hands at the weekend, which allowed me a little more time to enjoy the weekend. During the arena display the **Master of Signals** presented the East London Branch (standard bearer **Rob Dyball**) with their 75 years pennant and the Reading Branch with their pennant for 50 years existence.

Rob Dyball recieves the 75 Year Pennant,
on behalf of the East London Branch, from the Master of Signals.
The Corps RSM, WO1 Geoff Hodgson, is in attendance

The Sergeants' Mess was the focus for the evenings entertainment when many an acquaintance was renewed. I had the pleasure of the company of the Manchester, Liverpool and Glasgow Branches on the Friday night in the Mess, when poor old **Sid Soqo** the barman was still busy pouring drinks when I left at midnight. Thanks **Trevor** for the tinnies I found on my desk in the morning. It was a genuine pleasure to meet and greet all the members at Reception - many old friends and some faces to fit those members with whom I have become friends over the telephone over the past year or so. My thanks go to **Bill Barnes** and **Ellie** of the Catterick Branch for selling the Association's Millennium badge at Reception - to date over 2300 badges have been sold and it is still not too late to purchase yours from this office (£1 each). **Roy Painter** had organised a small get together of Korean veterans, who formed their own group for the March Past on Sunday. **Maj Gen A. C. Birtwistle** laid a wreath at the Corps Memorial in memory of those members of the Corps who died whilst on service in the conflict. Marching off last, the Korean veterans were greeted by a spontaneous and emotional round of applause by the other members who had waited for them at the edge of the square. Amongst the lost property handed in after the Reunion was a camera - claimants call this office. Finally, on the Reunion - thank you to all the Branches and individual members who took the trouble to write in with compliments and thanks, it really means a lot to us and we appreciate your kind words.

Reunion 2001: The RSA annual Reunion for 2001 will be held over the weekend 23/24 June. Please let this office know if you would like your name to be put on the mailing list for full details when they are published (hopefully in March). It is highly recommended that any accommodation requirement is booked now. Assn HQ has the list of local B & B and hotels.

Corps Carol Service: The Corps Carol Service will be held on Thursday 21 December 2000 at St Stephen with St John, Rochester Row, Westminster, starting at 1800 hours. All serving and former members of the Corps, plus their families are cordially invited to attend the service and join us in the church hall afterwards for mince pies and sherry. Secretaries of those Branches in and around London are asked to encourage their members to attend.

Field of Remembrance: This year's Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey will open at approximately 1125hrs on Thursday 9 November, when a short service will be held, to which all members are invited - please be in position by 1100hrs. It is understood that **Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother** intends to open the Field, which will then remain open until 1600hrs on Thursday 16 November. The Corps plot, situated near the West Gate, will bear a poppy cross on behalf of each of the RSA's branches. Families are welcome to add crosses in memory of their loved ones. The wearing of medals at the opening is optional.

Welfare: The following is an extract from a letter sent to **Jan Cornick,** our Welfare Secretary: 'Dear Mrs Cornick, I am writing to thank you and the RSA from the bottom of my heart. I also must thank you for saving my life as I had decided to call it a day and end this misery I'm going through, thank you again. I'm crippled with arthritis and quite helpless and trying to live from Income Support and it's impossible to live and pay bills off that I also need special oily foods which I need to help my disability, (and I just can't afford them) I cried with relief when Mr ..... phoned and told me you were helping me and I can assure you I slept soundly for the first time for weeks. I can't thank you enough for saving the day for me (all my bills are getting paid today). If God ever made me win some money I certainly know who I would send a big cheque to first. Yours sincerely,'

New Life Members: Those who have been enrolled as Life members since the last issue of *The WIRE* are shown below. We wish the best of luck to those who have just left the Army to start a second career, and trust that they will not sever completely their ties with our Corps. Perhaps when they have a little more time to spare they might make contact with their nearest branch of the Association.

Name	Branch	Served
SSgt Paul Weston	RHQ	1983-00
Cpl Mark Dyer	RHQ	1951-63
Maj Des Fuller	RHQ	1946-72
Cpl Silas Nowell	RHQ	1987-00
Sgt Andy Spink	RHQ	1987-00
LCpl Jim Wakenshaw	RHQ	1972-77
Cpl Nicholas Mowbray	RHQ	1984-99
Sig Harry Beadle	Darlington	1959-61
WO2 Ron Faairhurst	Darlington	1957-85
LCpl Fred Bridges	Aldershot	1954-57
Cpl Mark Horne	RHQ	1985-00
SSgt Chris Andrews	RHQ	1977-00
Maj Robin Cuthbert	RHQ	1972-00
Maj Peter Holliday	RHQ	1981-00
WO2 Ty Sanderson	RHQ	1982-00
Cpl Richard Worlock	RHQ	1976-87
Sgt Dave Bracey	Catterick	1967-81
Cpl Jason Scrase	RHQ	1986-00
WO2 Gary Currie	RHQ	1984-00
Cpl Denny Denton	RHQ	1976-00
Cpl Paul Firth	RHQ	1958-59
SSgt Terry Gigg	RHQ	1978-00
LCpl Dave Aitken	RHQ	1986-00
LCpl Charles Young	East Kent	1939-41

Cpl Wayne Smith	RHQ	1991-00
Sgt Garry Beardall	RHQ	1986-00
LCpl Karen Nicholls	East London	1984-99
SSgt Dave Wilson	York	1975-98
Cpl Shaun Whittaker	York	1984-95
SSgt Tony Simpson	RHQ	1978-00
Cpl Carl Payne	RHQ	1990-00
Sig Gavin Robinson	RHQ	1995-00
Cpl Ian Burt	RHQ	1976-00
Cpl Steven Dunsmuir	RHQ	1990-00
LCpl Darren Merry	RHQ	1995-00
Sig Ruth Kennedy	RHQ	1995-00
WO2 Dave Inman	Glasgow	1981-date
Sig Gerald Coles	Bath	1952-54
Sig Roy Lawson	Tayside & Fife	1949-57
Sgt Mike Tasker	Tayside & Fife	1965-82
LCpl Frank Nairn	Newcastle	1948-53
LCpl Terence Cowdell	RHQ	1950-53
Sgt Rob Cameron	RHQ	1988-00
Cpl Rowan Smith	RHQ	1990-99
SSgt Simon Lambert	RHQ	1983-00
SSgt Stephen Ridout	RHQ	1986-00
Sgt Chris Smith	RHQ	1988-00
Sig Andrew Stylis	RHQ	1990-92
LCpl Jim Stewart	Eastbourne	1940-46
WO2 Tim Ainsworth	RHQ	1977-00
Sig Linden Clarke	RHQ	1995-00

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

A number of our members attended the Annual Reunion, **Fred Bridges** paraded our Standard and gave a creditable performance in the Standard Bearers' Competition. It was a very enjoyable weekend, for which we owe thanks to the host Regiment and congratulate them on their fine turnout for the Princess Royal Day Parade.

For a summer when the weather was, to say the least, unpredictable we were very fortunate in having a balmy evening when, in July, a party of members and guests gathered to picnic in the grounds of Kneller Hall and enjoy a superb concert given by massed Military Bands. The event was very ably organised by **Carole Thomas.**

Our visit to RMA Sandhurst, to watch the final rehearsal of the Sovreign's Parade, was well attended. Visitors from other Branches and their guests were also present. We had wonderful weather and the entire party retired to the Pavillion to enjoy a picnic, for which everybody appeared to have come adequately victualled. Again, we owe our gratitude to **Col Verdon** for the hospitality of the Academy and his industry and expertise in organising such an event for us. We look forward to our Autumn Luncheon in the Aldershot Golf Club and hope to see many of our friends for this occasion.

BRIGHTON BRANCH

Dear Reader,

After a shaky start to the New Year your humble scribe had a bout in hospital and thanks to the specialists and our family doctor I'm now much better. The NHS have done a splendid job, and what splendid support from the RSA in Blandford, for which I send many thanks. At a local level I cannot thank our Branch President, **Brig Colin Brown** enough for his splendid letter of encouragement. I must also thank **Dee Barber** and all the Branch Members for their kindness.

However, turning to Branch affairs, The Wine and Cheese party was not well attended. Perhaps it has been held too often in its present format that may need changing. Nevertheless, we must thank **Gordon Holloway** for all his efforts. **Janet Tupper** won the prize for correctly guessing nearly all the cheeses. At our April meeting your humble scribe gave a talk on the Army Pigeon Service, in general, and the Dieppe raid in particular.

Joe's talk

The meeting was well attended - many thanks to **Dave Tupper** for arranging the display.

Dave Tupper displays a photo

The Annual Quiz in May was well attended. Our history expert, **Barry Foreman,** came along in June to explain to us how the Romans sent and received messages. He mentioned that his classmate is now a professor in history and some of us feel that he would have made a splendid professor as well!

What does the future hold? Well our Summer Lunch is on the near horizon. A certain winner as we have 31 members attending, at the Ashley Preston Park Hotel, This is about capacity. I must close down now dear readers. What somebody has read as far as here! I don't believe it!

Your Humble Scribe.....**Joe Morrison**

CORNWALL BRANCH

DEDICATION OF STANDARD

Dave Gwinnell Standard Bearer

Almost the first suggestion arising from the inauguration of the Branch was the provision of a Standard, as other Branches will know, this is an expensive project in this day and age. The matter was placed in abeyance until sufficient funding had been arranged. By a stroke of great good fortune HQ were able to obtain a redundant Standard and their kind offer was accepted with alacrity. The Standard was duly re-christened with the title Cornwall Branch thus leaving a problem how to arrange a suitable

occasion for the dedication of the new acquisition. The solution came from one of the founder members of the Branch, **Ron Moyse. Ron** just happens to be the Secretary of the Cornwall Branch of the Normandy Veterans Association and every year the NVA stage a parade in Bodmin followed by a church service to commemorate the events of 6 June 1944 and the ensuing bitter battles that took place in Normandy. It was suggested that the Branch take advantage of this splendid event to have the Standard dedicated. In a short space of time **Maj David Preece** the County Chairman of the Cornwall NVA extended a generous invitation to join them on their parade and to incorporate the dedication within the church service. Needless to say this invitation was accepted and after a couple of meetings the plan was finalised. We were delighted when **Maj Gen Alan Yeoman** and **Barbara** accepted our invitation to attend the parade.

We were fortunate that the weather was very kind to us on 11 June, the parade duly formed up at the Shire Hall in Bodmin, we were well supported by a contingent from the Torbay Branch who paraded with their Standard, strong support also came from the Royal Air Force, United States Navy and the local Cadet forces, the British Legion were there in force with no less than 49 Standards on parade, a truly impressive display. Following a short wreath laying ceremony at the Town War Memorial the parade marched past with the excellent St Blazey Silver Band in the vanguard. The salute was taken by the High Sheriff of Cornwall - **Lady Frances Banham** accompanied on the saluting base by **Lord St Levan D.S.C. D.L.** in his capacity as the County Patron of the NVA, other dignitaries included **Vice Admiral Sir James Jungis D.L.** as President of the Royal British Legion Cornwall and of course **Maj Gen Alan Yeoman C.B.** our Chairman.

Despite advancing years all parade members made it to the Parish Church of St Petroc for the commemorative service which included the dedication of the Standard. The address delivered by the Rector was based on a letter by a French grandfather to his grandson on the true meaning of the 6th June 1944. At the conclusion of the service the Branch Standard, now dedicated and unfurled was ' Trooped' through the other Standards as it left the Church. This was a truly impressive sight and provided a fitting end to a really moving occasion. The formal events now concluded all participants repaired to the Shire Hall where a superb tea was laid on and of course a bar for those who wished for more substantial refreshment. The whole occasion was a truly splendid and memorable event which gave the recently constituted Cornwall Branch a great boost to their already high morale. Again our thanks to **Maj David Preece** and the members of The Cornwall NVA for affording us the privilege of utilising their special day for our dedication.

EAST KENT BRANCH

Nineteen members disported themselves at Port Lympne Wild Life Park, of these 15 were adults in the upper age bracket the rest were children or grandchildren. We were blessed with very pleasant weather as we settled down to our picnic. Twice in succession has **Roger Stone**, who is a DIYer in these matters has taken the biscuit - for the best production yet he afterwards trudged the whole four mile circuit falling and climbing back the 450 feet involved. The more sanguine members tottered for a bit until they discovered that there was a tractor and trailer free ride right round the whole park from which all the animals in their spacious paddocks can be seen. The Gorillas at Lympne and even more so at Howletts are a must, particularly as these elegant animals seem to take as much interest in their spectators as we do in them. The RSA Reunion at Blandford was deemed by most members as one of the best there has been even though it took much the same form. The transfer of the Officers Lunch to Sunday made a big difference to the attendance at both the All Ranks Lunch and the afternoon display. The Parade by 11 Sig Regt was faultless. It is unusual for the audience to break into spontaneous applause during the parade but the intricate manoeuvres and steadiness was deserving of every pair of hands being put together. Sadly **Brian Calladine**, appearing for the first time in the Standard Bearers' Competition did not make the first six but he was amongst some very strong competition from the longer serving members. Over thirty members of the Branch attended, some with dual allegiance, and the voluntary at the end of the Sunday Church service attended by several hundred was the Branch March composed by **Charles Skingle**.

Our Annual Cricket Match was held at the Duke of Yorks School, Dover on Sunday 16 July. Other Branches had not taken up the challenge, (they must have heard something) but East Kent Branch members, family and friends managed to get two teams. The 'A' Team captained by our Chairman, **Donald Crisp** and the 'B' Team captained by our Vice-Chairman, **John Ballantyne**. The timing was perfect, the 'B' Team batted first and completed all their overs before lunch and the 'A' Team after lunch. As you can imagine there was some hilarious play. Two of the fielders both anxious to take a catch collided with one another which stopped play for ten minutes, after first aid (unfortunately neither caught the ball) play continued. The Chairman's team won the day (it was their turn). The Chairman was heard to say 'I'm only here for the beer'!

PAY YOUR SUBSCRIPTION BY DIRECT DEBIT. TO FIND OUT MORE RING: 01258 482087

NEWS OF MEMBERS

We are delighted that **John Raymond** and **John Wilkinson** decided to remain Members. **John Raymond** had moved house to Bournemouth to be near his daughter. Following a serious operation, he was as bright as a button at the Blandford Reunion and has joined the Bournemouth Branch. He is actively engaged in the R. Signals Amateur Radio Society in Blandford Camp. It was very good to see **Mike** and **Sydney Enright** (who have remained members) at Blandford having come up from their distant home in Cornwall. The more work they do in their garden the more there seems to need to be done but they are into village life and enjoying themselves. Previously we had mentioned **Karen Bennett, Tom Bewsey's** granddaughter, who asked the Branch to sponsor her for the London Marathon - and several members did so. **Tom** has told us that despite a knee injury reappearing at the 22mile point, she was bandaged up by St John's Ambulance and ran the last four miles accompanied by her uncle, much to his surprise. She lost fifteen minutes in processing at the start but achieved her target of completing the course in less than five hours and has raised over £3,000 for the Cancer Research Campaign. Her father is having cancer treatment that was her motivation and is responding well.

NEW MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome **Mr Reg** and **Mrs Jean Rider** of Meopham. **Reg** served as a National Serviceman from 1950-52 with 4 Air Formation Sig Regt at RAF Kasfareet in the Canal Zone. Afterwards he served four years with the AER/SR at Blacon Camp, Chester. Welcome to **Mr Peter** and **Mrs Margaret Hillier** of Dover. **Peter** served as a Regular from 1950 to 1974 (WO2(FofS) and served at RMA Sandhurst, 1 Corps Signals, 1 RHA(GE) Royal School of Signals, Life Guards (Malaya), 28 Commonwealth Bde, 1 Sig Regt and HQ AFCENT. He heard about the Branch at the RSA Reunion and joined immediately. We also welcome **Mr Charles Young** of Margate. **Charles** was in the TA from 1939 to 1941 as a Lance Corporal and served with 48 Div Sigs in UK, 61 Div Sigs in UK and then with 63 Med Regt RA in France and Belgium coming back through Dunkirk. We welcome all three members and hope they enjoy their time with us.

VALE

It is with great sadness we report the death of **Bert Stone** on 20 June, after a prolonged fight against cancer through which **Ann** nursed him at home until the end. **Bert** who joined us in the early days was unique amongst the membership in that he was actually REME but when serving with East African Signals the (FofS) was posted and he was appointed to take on the task which he did until he was demobbed in 1946. Thus he was a Signaller at heart especially as he was a dedicated member of the R Signals Amateur Radio Society, and so became our Honorary Member. Our sympathy goes to **Ann** and her family.

GLASGOW BRANCH

We're back, all present and accounted for. It was a great weekend and we, who travelled to Blandford, had a thoroughly enjoyable stay. Many thanks to the Regiment for all their help and to **Peter Cuckow** and our Secretary, **Ivana**, for making the arrangements for our visit. The Princess Royal Day Parade, as the Master of Signals said, equalled or even bettered the Guards. The Glasgow Branch congratulates the troops and the DIs. It matched the standard expected of us, who had our pass-out parade, pre-war at Catterick. More so after a day spent on technical training, having to rehearse the drill later in the evening. It was an excellent display. The White Helmets seemed to be of greater strength. Sitting in the stand I noticed a lot of the female spectators covering their eyes when the crossovers were going on at top speed, some only missing collisions by inches, a great display. We could feel the heat from the fire in the stand, so it must have been red-hot going through the fired hoop.

When visiting the museum I was looking for some Christmas cards, with the Corps badge on the front and the Corps ribbon at the side, unfortunately none were available. some of my friends have kept them from previous years as souvenirs. Have they become too expensive? I did purchase a couple of packs of the ones on show. We didn't get a discount for Old Soldiers, yet. The meals were very good. A few of us, who

normally don't take cooked breakfasts or lunches, did partake. It must have been the change of air, or the energy expended climbing the hill from the Sergeants' Mess to the mess-hall. It also saved us cooking and doing the washing-up, we thank the caterers.

Several of us watched the football matches, I am not a Scot but have been up here since 1947, when I married a bonny Ayrshire lasssie. I have endured the jibes made about the English football team and the speeches occasionlly produced at the Speakers' Club, to which I belong, but it is really only the Scots having their fun. One survives the 'Auld Enemy' jokes, especially after soldiering with them. My first meeting with the Scots was in our recruit squad, all three were from different parts of Scotland and all of them with different accents. I soon learnt to understand them and we got on famously.

I have to put the record straight with our comrades in the East Kent Branch of the Association. In the June issue of *The WIRE*, they stated that they had received a request from the Glasgow Branch, for donations to equip the Drum and Pipe Band of the Glasgow Branch. Their scribe got it wrong. The Glasgow Branch also received a request, as did other Branches. The Glasgow Branch donated £200 to the fund, as noted in the February issue of *The WIRE*. Our members applaud the East Kent Branch for all their efforts, but the request for donations did not come from this Branch, it came from **WO2 Band Sergeant Major Douglas Smith** of 32 (Scottish) Signal Regiment (V), whose HQ is in Glasgow. The Corps Pipes and Drums required the donation to purchase bagpipes. They performed with the Corps Band at the Blandford Reunion. Both gave an excellent performance and **WO2** 'Dougie'**Smith**, the instigator of the request for funds, was the one giving the big drum, big licks, in the Corps Pipes and Drums section. As far as East Kent's sketch goes, the Scot does not wear half-trews, and there were no old pipes to dispose of. 'Dougie' did not have enough pipes for all the Pipers who wished to join to learn to play. Good try your artist.

Our train journey was not so smooth. The guard had to be called at Glasgow, to remove people who refused to listen when they were told that they were in our booked seats. The same thing happened at the change of trains in London, to go to Salisbury. On the return from Salisbury there was no coach 'D' booked for us, and again in London our booked seats were double booked and occupied by 40 Post Office staff. as resourceful as ever, we did get seats. One's Forces' Training makes us survivors, whatever the circumstances.

Once again our Branch Standard Bearer, **Bill MacNamara,** made it to the final six in the competition at Blandford, he did not win, but the Branch members compliment him on a very fine performance.

Bill Taylor receives his Life Membership plaque from Eric McWaters, our Branch Treasurer, who acted on behalf of the Branch President, Maj Gen A. A. F. Anderson CB

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

As the Branch had no meeting in either June or July, due to the stand down of 40 (U) Sig Regt (V), in whose TAVR Centre we meet, it is particularly hard to find enough material for this article. Anyway here goes, as we are determined not to miss our usual spot in *The WIRE*.

Only six members, probably the smallest number yet, crossed over to attend the Blandford Reunion. This was due to 40 (U) Sig Regt (V) being at Annual Camp. Normally a number of serving Branch members attend each year but this time the location of Annual Camp precluded this Five of the travellers sailed via Liverpool ferry in two cars, one driven by **John Loveday**, the other by **Andy Leishman**. It is quite a long drive and the Branch is grateful to the two members for providing the transport and driving safely there and back. Branch Chairman, **John Brown**, decided to fly across and joined the party later. It is good that our cross-Channel members, **Mark Barrass** and **Bill** and **Pam Ogden** were once again able to join with the Northern Ireland party. As the Branch Standard Bearer was unable to attend, this duty was very ably carried out by **Andy Leishman**, who paraded our standard during the Blandford march past on the Sunday. Well done **Andy**. It is important that our standard is flown at every reunion. Once again thanks are due to all at RHQ for all their work in organising the weekend which, once again, was a great success. The thanks of the Branch also goes to **Edgar McCall** for his work in planning and organisingthe travel etc. for the party. Vice-Chairman, **Jim Reilly** already has the monthly savings scheme open for next year's reunion. Once again, join us any third Thursday of the month in Clonaver TAVR Centre Belfast.

SCARBOROUGH BRANCH

Mr Peter Bateman who is a member of the Royal Signals Association, Scarborough, and has recently celebrated his 50th Wedding Anniversary. **Peter** and **Celia Bateman** were married in St Paul's Church, Woodhouse Eaves, Leicestershire on 1 July 1950. **Peter**, 74, originally from Windsor, Berkshire, and **Celia** 70, originally from Loughborough, Leicestershire, moved to Scarborough in 1974.

WEST LONDON BRANCH

Those of our members who attended the Annual Reunion enjoyed a very pleasant weekend. **Harry Ruff** paraded our Standard and a good time was had by all.

Our July meeting at Hounslow Barracks was by courtesy of The Devon &Dorsets, who moved there only a few months ago. The meeting, as usual, was well attended and the Ladies' Section did a great job of swelling the Branch coffers with a 'Bring and Buy' book sale. They ensuring that the Branch remains literate.

We look forward to our annual visit to the Tower of London and to our visit, in September, to the Royal Hospital Chelsea to attend Morning Service, on which day we are joined by friends from the Sheffield Branch.

THE MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY ASSOCIATION

This year's Cavalry Memorial Parade took place, as usual, in Hyde Park on 14 May. Unfortunately the serving squadron were away on exercise and were unable to suport us, but thirty members marched and as the video shows were very smart indeed. This year saw the regimental standards and guidons march on with the massed bands from Hyde Park

Barracks. It was a proud moment for the many ex-servicemen and women attending the parade. Our banner, this year, was carried by **Nicholas Bartlett**, our Association was led by **Col Ted Scarlett**.

On 1 July was the 55th and last reunion of 22 Armd Bde HQ and the Middlesex (Y) Sig Sqn. It was held at the Victory Services Club, London. This Association was probably one of the first veterans associations to be formed at the end of WW2. The first meeting was held on 10 September 1945 at the 'Yeomanry Arms' Kellinghusen, Scheswig-Holstein and the Chairman was **Maj W. Q. Pat Fitzgerald**. Later meetings were held at 'Nerones Bar' Trafalger Square, 'The Griffin' Villiers Street and 'The Connaught Rooms' Great Queen Street. Since those early days reunions have been held in many hostelries around London. I am sure that in the future, The Middlesex Yeomanry Annual Dinner will be used for the get together. This year the Annual Dinner will be held in the Central Mess at the Duke of York's Headquarters on 20 October. Remember that the front of the Duke of York's has been sold to developers, the entrance is now via Turk's Row.

The last official reunion
HQ & Middlesex Yeomanry Signal Squadron

31 SIGNAL REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

April saw fifty members and guests of the Association attend the Annual Dinner at the Duke of York's HQ. The guests were **Lt Col Linda Harrison**, CO of the Regiment and **WO1 (RSM) John Gibson**, both of whom have given a great deal of support to the Association during their time of 'driving ' the Regiment. The Dinner was organised by our Secretary **Henry Holman**, ably assisted by his wife 'Reggie'. **Pat Miller** ran the raffle with great gusto, not being 'shackled' by 'Dusty' who was skulking somewhere in Europe. It was also a proud evening for our Chairman, **Col Donald Crawford**, who was presenteed with his RSA 50 Year Badge by the CO, **Lt Col Linda Harrison**. All retired to the anteroom for post-dinner drinks and 'lamp swinging'. Make note in your diary now, next year's dinner is on 14 April 2001.

What can we say about this year's European trip? It was one of the best yet, well organised by **Ron** 'Dusty' **Miller** and was enjoyed by everyone, Brussels will never be the same again. This time we did get to the La Capoule rocket site and, as usual, emptied the Calais warehouse of booze on the way home. (Is this not what we were trained for?) Next year's venue has yet to be decided but it should be near the end of May 2001, so start saving your pennies now.

Our visit to the Tattoo 2000 was also a success, again organised by 'Dusty'. Keep in touch with the Association and let 'Chrissy' **Mills** know if you change your address.

3rd DIVISION SIGNALS REUNION CLUB

Each year in June HQ 3rd (UK)Division organises Exercise 'Iron Tribute' which is a visit to the Normandy area where the Division landed on 'D' Day 6 June 1944. Each year the Divisional Signal Regiment is tasked to provide a detachment of officers and soldiers to represent the Division at the commemoration services held by the local population at various cemeteries and memorials in the vicinity. This year the Regiment invited a party of ten Club members to accompany them on this pilgrimage. Priority was given to Normandy veterans. Some of those who accepted the invitation to go were **Peter Clifford, Stan O'Dell, Ernest Packham** and, though not a Normandy veteran, **Derek Roberts**. The following is an amalgam of their thoughts and impressions of this expedition.

The overnight trip across the Channel and the approach to the French coast in the dawn of a summer day brought memories of a very different approach 46 years earlier. No noise, no chatter of machineguns, no bodies floating in the water or lying on the beach and instead of wading ashore, scared witless, it was to walk quietly ashore onto a quay and into a nice comfy minibus. It may seem to some that there is a bit of 'lamp-swinging' here but the people who were asked to give their impressions were asked to be frank and avoid mock modesty. There is a tendency to think of 'D'Day as a bit of a jolly, but for the young men involved it was a pretty hairy experience. When you look at these same men today it is hard to understand the drama of what they did and how they came home. Those who came home? They got on with their lives without counseling for post-traumatic stress or whatever. Which leads into the impressions the oldies got of the young soldiers they were sharing this experience with. It would seem that there is a much better rapport between them and the senior ranks than the veterans remember from their days. Perhaps it was the absence of the unnecessary 'bull'. However, the respect between the junior and senior ranks was very apparent, maybe this is because the seniors are not just foul mouthed martinets, as a lot of the old time NCOs were, but now are pretty highly qualified tradesmen and women.

Though most of the veterans had attended quite a few Regimental Weekends at Bulford they had not had much opportunity to meet and speak with the junior ranks. This state of affairs upset the anti-segregationist feelings of **Capts Odling** and **Crane** who, with the enthusiastic help of **SSM Archer**, ruthlessly split up the veterans and parceled them out to grinning groups of young soldiers who proceeded to mark their cards. This turned out to be a two way street and the generation gap seemed to disappear as opinions and ideas were exchanged. When we came to France in 1944 our aims were pretty simple, beat the Germans. Now these young men get sent hither and thither on all sorts of missions and sometimes it must be hard for them to know just what is the reason for their presence in where they happen to be. Still they get on with the tasks they are given and leave the politics to the politicians. At least they do not have to put up with the weirdies who used to lecture us on 'The British Way and Purpose'.

The local inhabitants of Normandy must be admired. They have accepted that the bombing, shelling and the destruction caused in 1944 was necessary and have rebuilt their homes and their lives, they have also built Memorials to our dead comrades and museums to remind people of what went on in those dark times. They have initiated these ceremonies to honour our dead and intend to keep them on in the years to come. We joined the soldiers on parade at services at La Breche, Hermanville and Caen. We managed to march when required, in spite of bypassed hearts, replaced hips and knees, arthritis and general old age mainly due to the whipping in skills of **SSM Archer** and **SSgt** 'Spike' **Patterson** who kept a kindly eye on us. All the ceremonies were very moving but the one at the 3rd Division Memorial was the one closest to our feelings. A Bugler and a Piper, from Divisional HQ, sounded Last Post and Reveille. The Divisional DCOS laid a wreath from the Divisional HQ and **Ernest Packham** laid one on behalf of the Club. In between and after the official occasions we were able to fraternise with the local people and found ourselves being thanked by mature ladies for liberating them in 1944 and by youngsters asking for our autographs. We also met a man whom we christened 'Wermacht Willi'. He had been a German infantryman serving at Luc-sur-Mer just along the coast from Gold Beach on 'D'Day. His wife had been killed during the bombing of Germany but in 1988 realising that he had no hate left had started to visit the area and had been accepted by the locals. We too accepted him as a man who had done his duty as had we.

It seemed that we had no sooner arrived back to England and dispersed to our homes than we were back in Bulford for the Regimental Weekend that ran from 30 June to 2 July. What can I say about these visits to the Regiment that I have not said before? We were warmly welcomed, entertained royally and generally cosseted and pampered. Our President, **Brig Ronnie Stonham** presented The 'Ernie Bayley Award' for 2000 to **Cpl** (now Sgt) **Oulton**. The citation was at pains to include **Mrs Oulton** for the assistance she has given to her husband, and the Regiment, in the works that led to the award. She was presented with a large bouquet Once again we must thank the CO, **Lt Col Neil Couch**, and all in the Regiment for a very enjoyable weekend.

Cpl (now Sgt) Oulton, GBrig Ronnie Stonham and Mrs Oulton in the background Capt Terry Crane, manabout town!

ARE YOU RECEIVING YOUR COPY OF THE WIRE?
DO WE HAVE YOUR CORRECT ADDRESS?

REUNIONS

From: **Maj Gen (Retd) E. W. H. Huntley**
58 Langton Road
London, Ontario
CANADA
Tel: (519) 455 9303
Fax: (519) 455 9868
E-Mail: ernie@skynet.ca

Dear Sir,

I thought you might be interested in the following:

On the 4 June 1944, certain members of W Troop (Advanced Wireless lst Corps Signals) either as Detachment Commanders or Crews, boarded different landing-crafts allotted according to the order and time of landing and the unit(s) for which they were to supply communications on D Day and beyond. Except for a very short spell at Iserlohn in Germany (for a reorganisation) they rarely met and there, found themselves again posted as detachments performing special duties. The last time most met was in June 1946, when some were sent back to England and others to the Far East.

With the help of **Mr Peter Cuckow**, I was able to make contact with two of the original group and a small reunion was arranged for 14 June 2000 at the Union Jack Club to coincide with my arrival from Canada for the RSA Reunion. The attached is a photo taken at that event. Those attending were, rear row (left) **Ken Hands**, **Ernest** 'Jacko' **Jack, John Bright** and **Austin** 'Hash' **Harkin**. Front row seated, **Doug Smith, Ernie Huntley** and **John Walsh**. It had taken 54 years for these fellows to meet up with each other. It was an excellent get-together and full of reminiscing.

As I said, it was through the efforts of **Peter,** through keeping and trying to increase the number of names of past R. Signals members, which made this possible. To those who wonder about their old buddies, take heart, there is always a chance. Perhaps there are still some other members of W Troop around, if so could they contact me at my home Unfortunately time is taking it's toll so one should not waste any time. Who knows, **Peter** might be able to help others regain contact also.

Sincerely and Forever Aye.....

DID YOU SERVE IN
2 SQUADRON, 7 SIGNAL REGIMENT
BAOR
BETWEEN 1967 AND 1974?

I am organising a reunion in the Spring of 2001, the exact date and location are yet to be decided. Among those who have already responded are, **Jimmy Smart, Bob Hill, Mick Mosely** and **Mick Skitt.**
If you wish to add your name to the list contact me:
John Moody
The Castle, Castle Street, Castleton, Hope Valley,
DERBYSHIRE, S33 8WG
Tel: 01433 620578
E-Mail: J.S.MOODY@tinyworld.co.uk
George Beardesley, Nick Hamilton Peters, Ian Fletcher, Fred Lucas Dave Higgins, Greg Robertson
and anybody else interested get in touch now!!

ADEN VETERANS ASSOCIATION

F. J. W. T. Hotston Esq has started an Association for those that were in Aden during the crisis. The membership, of the Association is open to all ex-servicemen/women, civilian personnel and the children who went to school there at the time. If any ex-signalmen/women wish to join the Association they can contact him by e-mail at:
adenveterans@cs.com
or on 0515 525 4331. The Association was founded on 25 March 2000 and the first grand reunion and general meeting will be held on 30 June 2001.

LOST COMMS

ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS 1945-1948

Were you at these locations:- Whitby (3 OTB) and Bourlon Lines, Catterick 1945/6; :Corsham, Figsbury and Wilton Camps Salisbury; CNW Cheltenham; The Firs, Chester; :Dalton airfield; Lubeck BAOR 22.....if so give **Ron Hughes** a call on 0161 344 1454 or e-mail him on:
united @ strayduck.com

Mrs P. A. Peisley (neé Forster) is trying to locate an old friend who once lived at Dehra Dun in India. His name is **Alastair Gordon** and he had a brother **John**. She has located quite a few friends who lived in Dehra during the late 40s and early 50s, and **Alastair** and his brother are the only ones she has lost contact with. She believes that **Alastair** was in the Royal Signals at Catterick around the late 50s. Also she thinks that he was an officer but is unsure of his rank. If anybody has any information please contact her at any of the following:
6 Icknield Close, Didcot, OXON OX11 7AU
Tel/Fax: 01235 812873
E-mail: pam@peisley.freeserve.co.uk

BRIAN SUTHERLAND

I am a local historian and am trying to trace the friends and service colleagues of **Mr Brian Sutherland**. He joined the Corps of the Royal Signals circa early 1927 and was the son of **Capt J. G. Sutherland** RNR. he was born around 1906 or 1907. Did you served with the Royal Signals in the 1920s and 1930s? Did you know **Brian Sutherland**? I would love to hear from any readers who have information about this man.

Please rest assured that I am a serious and responsible researcher. Obviously, I am eager to receive any information on **Brian Sutherland** and would treat all correspondence in the strictest confidence. Any assistance you could offer me would be gratefully received.

CORRESPONDENCE

From: **Mr K. Purnell**
31 Skelton Road
Langthorpe
Boroughbridge
North Yorkshire.
YO51 9GD
Tel: 01423 323407
Fax: 01423 324142

Dear Sir,

In February 1950 I first met my old friend **Ken Bunston.** It was 0730hrs on a cold morning in February standing on the square of Gallowgate Camp in PT kit freezing to death, when this guy with a Welsh accent said to me, 'What the hell are we supposed to be doing here?', or words to that effect. It was the start of a friendship that lasted for 50 years. After our square bashing at Gallowgate and Beverley Camps with 18 Troop, 1 Independent Selection Squadron, Royal Signals we both went on to OWL (Operator Wireless & Line) for the not so old, Trade Training. After Trade Training I went to Malta and **Ken** went AWOL, 'It was the Welsh air, you see, that I missed,' he used to tell me.

I next meet **Ken** walking down the Kingsway in Malta in 1951 when I said, 'What are you doing here?' 'On leave from Tripoli,' says he. Much liquid flowed before we said our goodbyes. The next time that I met **Ken** was in 1953, I had been posted to Tripoli, the camp was 90kms out in the

desert, along the coastline. I was attached to the 47th Royal Dragoon Guards. A friend and I went to go for a swim which was a walk of about 2.3kms over the sand to the sea. Just as we were about to go into the sea for our dip, who should be walking out of the water, but **Ken,** 'What are you doing here?' says he. The strangest thing about this story is that you could look either way up and down the coastline for miles and miles and not a soul would be in sight. Yet we met there at that time and on that day miles from anywhere, **Ken** at the time was posted 70 miles away at a place called Horns.

Ken and I met again in Germany in 1964 at 22 Sig Regt. He was now a Staff Sergeant. I next met **Ken** on a wet morning at about 0330hrs in a wood somewhere in Germany. I was pulling into this wood with a Radio Village packet and this chap was standing right in the middle of the path, that I wanted to take. He was directing vehicles, so I yelled at him and said, 'Are you going or staying, mate?' He turned round to me and said 'What are you doing here?' with a big grin on his face, he had now been promoted to RSM of 1 Div HQ & Sig Regt.

I did not see **Ken** again until one of the Catterick Reunion's in the late 1970s. **Ken** told me that he had left the Corps with the rank of Captain QM which was a marvellous achievement for someone who went AWOL at the tender age of seventeen and a half. **Ken** attended more Corps and Regimental reunions than anyone that I have ever known. His one big project was for a reunion in the year 2000 of all of the guys that we had met in training all those many years ago. **Ken** stayed with me for a few days in the summer of 1999 when we visited a few of the old and bold of yesteryear who we trained with in 1950. One of our old mates had not been doing so good, **Ken** working with SSAFA got him into a nice retirement home. That is what **Ken** was like, always willing to help old friends from the Corps.

I am trying to take up where **Ken** left off, not an easy task to do. I am getting together as many of the ex-members of 18 Troop, 1 Independent Selection Squadron and any other ex Corps members who did their basic training at Gallowgate Camp, Richmond. **Ken** named the organisation 'The Gallowgate Followers'. I have renamed it in his honour and called it 'Bunston's Gallowgate Followers'. Having made contact now with several of the old 18 Troop I would love to hear from anyone else out there who would like to contact their our old mates from that era. My last contact to be made was, a telephone call from Australia, which came out of the blue (excuse the pun) from **Dave Evans** (ex 18 Troop) who I had not seen or spoken to for fifty years. **Dave** has written a book with a whole chapter devoted to our training days, it's great reading and with lots of photographs of the old faces who we trained with.

The reason that I am writing this letter is to try and finish the job that **Ken** started all those years ago and to say what a great bloke and friend **Ken Bunston** was to me over the last fifty years, plus all those who had the privilege to know him. His one thought was to get old comrades together and to strengthen contact through the Royal Signals Association (see **Brian Overland** letter in *The WIRE* magazine dated April 2000). We have made contact with eleven of the old gang **Billy Leach, Harry Wilde, Nobby Clarke, Dave Evans, Bruce Apperby** and myself to name but a few. I am still looking for **Dixie Dixon, Bill Gardner, Willie Watson, Dave Shed, Nick Carter, Reg Collis, Fred Davies, Len King, Forder** and **Young** and any others which time and age have made me forget their names, for which I apologise. The following are sadly no longer with us, **Titch Bates, Norman Waremouth, Ken Bunston**. I know because due to time, illness, distance and dare I say it, old age, that a reunion does not seem possible but in **Ken's** words, 'Time is running out and we should contact our old comrades of yesteryear, so let's get off our butts and do it!'

We can still arrange to meet individually at the RSA Reunion at Blandford, write letters, send e-mail for those who are past the steam radio and thumpty-through set era, there are so many ways of keeping contact and of enjoying a chat and laugh about the old days. You can contact me, **Ken Purnell** Tel: 01423 323407, Fax: 01423 324142
E-mail: ken.purnell@btclick.com

From: **B. MacDonald** (ex OKC)
2 Denbigh Drive, Shaw
OLDHAM OL2 7EQ

Dear Sir,

The other day whilst sorting through some old letters which I had sent to my late wife whilst I was doing my bit, I came across this answer to her question, 'What do you do in the Signals?'

A CATTERICK QUESTION

That bloke there, What's he do?
He's a Signaller, like me and you.
Yes, you're a tele mech, I'm a driver,
But that blue flash he's wearing says he's neither.
No my friend, best not to ask,
For he has quite a different task.
His Signals trade is OKC,
Cypher Op. to you and me.
If you ask him how he earns his pay,
Sending messages is all he'll say.
Hospital files; officers' wiles,
Sometimes bring secret smiles,
But, I earns my pay, is all he'll ever say.

Doggerel I know, but it might fill a corner in *The Wire.*
Yours Faithfully……..

From: **Maj (Retd) R. A. Webb**
3 Hillcrest
Scotton
Catterick Garrison
NORTH YORKSHIRE
DL9 3NJ
Tel: 01748-823809

Dear Sir,

Further to the lamp-swinging by my namesake **Cliffe** and **Jim Esson** in the last two copies of *The WIRE* for the record I joined the Corps in F Coy' in July 1939 and continued serving with it as an RO until April 1988, that was 49 years 298 days.

I don't know whether this is in excess of **Jim's** service but if it is 'Good old 'F' as the cry used to be! Or does anybody claim longer?
Also I think I was the youngest when awarded the Association '50 Year' badge - a mere youngster of 64 and three months - can any one better that?
Yours faithfully…..

From: **Jim Preston**
'Lisnamore'
16 Priors Way
Coggeshall
ESSEX
CO6 1TW
Tel: 01376 563985

Dear Sir,

May I, through the media of *The WIRE*, ask: Why are we selective over who should receive the 50 Year Association Badge?

My own personal feeling is - that it would make more sense that evryone who has been a member of the Association for 50 years plus, should automatically qualify for this award.

I agree that those who put more into the Association than others do - should receive recognition for their services. I suggest that this could be achieved by colour coding the awards, say 'Bronze' for 50 years, 'Silver' for active brancg members and 'Gold' for stalwarts of the Association (ie: those currently enjoying that accolade).

I have often come across ex-Corps members proudly displaying their Corps tie or lapel/blazer badge, but who are unaware of their local Branches or even the existence of the Association ingeneral. Perhaps this could be a way of raising the Corps profile and might even enhance Branch membership, not to mention icreased sales of *The WIRE* and Corps memorabilia!
Yours Sincerely....

DONATIONS

RSA Sheffield	£ 27.50
RSA East London	£ 150.00
RSA Leeds	£ 47.87
56 (London) Div OCA Display Team	£ 50.00
Mr. E. Head	£ 5.00
Mr A. R. Ayres in appreciation of the Reunion	£ 10.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£ 10.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of Cpl H. F. Timms	£ 10.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of Cpl J. L. Cocks	£ 10.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of Capt T. C. Maynard	£ 10.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of Sig T. A. Pakeman	£ 10.00
3 Div Sigs Reunion Club in memory of Col G. H. T. Shrimpton	£ 10.00
Lt Col (Retd) P. McNaughton in memory of WO D. R. Daniels	£ 25.00
Collection taken at the funeral of Marcus Heathcote Wenman	£ 214.19
J. Chapman in memory of Brig F. J. Allen OBE	£ 10.00

LAST POST

Annis - Sgt M. D. Annis	Served 1956/78	Died 20/08/00
Bovey - Lt Co; B. C. Bovey	Served 1939/74	Died 08/08/00
Cocks - Cpl J. L. Cocks	Served 1930/46	Died 31/07/00
Dodd -		
Lt Col The Rev P. Dodd CF, MBE		Died 20/08/00
Drummond - Sgt A. M. Drummond	Served 1939/46	Died 1999
Eager - W. Eager	Served 1939/46	Died June '00
Good - Lt Col R. J. Good	Served	Died 11/08/00
Inglefield - A. W. Inglefield	Served	Died 07/08/00
Joy - Cpl A. A. S. Joy	Served 1991/00	Died 01/08/00
Marshall - Cpl G. V. C. Marshall	Served 1957/74	Died 28/05/00
Maynard - Capt T. C. Maynard	Served 1940/46	Died 02/05/00
Metcalfe - Sig J. W. G. Metcalfe	Served	Died Aug '00
Pakeman - Sig T. A. Pakeman	Served WW2	Died 01/08/00
Paul - D. Paul	Served	Died 02/02/00
Ping - Maj R. Ping	Served	Died 13/06/00
Shoesmith - Pte A. Shoesmith	Served 1941/45	Died 05/07/00
Slack - Sig E. D. Slack	Served 1955/58	Died 01/08/00
Stewart - Maj R. H. Stewart	Served 1932/72	Died 14/07/00
Thorpe - Sig D. A. Thorpe	Served 1963/72	Died 04/11/97
Timms - Cpl H. F. Timms	Served 1939/46	Died 13/08/00
Walter - J. F. Walter	Served	Died 22/08/00
Wenman - WO2 M. H. Wenman	Served 1939/61	Died 26/07/00
Wilkins - Sgt H. Wilkins	Served 1939/46	Died 17/08/00

Joy - Cpl Al Joy 24 March 1973 – 01 August 2000, Cpl Al Joy died on 1 August following a year long struggle against leukaemia. He was born on 24 March 1973 and enlisted into the AGC on 17 September 1991 where he became a Lance Corporal. He served as a clerk with the 1st Battalion of The Parachute Regiment obtaining his military parachute wings. In June 1995 he transferred to the Royal Signals and qualified as a Telecommunications Operator Telegraph. Following his trade training he was posted to 1(UK) Armoured Division Headquarters & Signal Regiment where he served for two years qualifying as a PTI. He was posted to 216 Parachute Signal Squadron on promotion to Corporal. **Al** greatly enjoyed his time with the Parachute Signals, especially the physical training aspects of his job. He co-ordinated the Squadron boxing team and qualified as a boxing judge. He served in Aldershot for 18 months before moving to 16 Air Assault Brigade and the new 216 Signal Squadron.
Al first became ill at the OCA Caythorpe Weekend last year. He faced his illness with enormous courage and dignity; he was entirely positive about the future and was desperately keen to return both to the Corps and to 216 Signal Squadron. However, he was also realistic; and spoke calmly and selflessly about the possibility that his treatment might not be successful. The Corps has lost a courageous and highly motivated soldier, with a bright future in the Army. He was a man of great character and an example to all. He will be much missed by all who knew him and we extend our deepest sympathy to his wife **Liz**, and all his family.

Marshall - Cpl Gordon V. C. 'Bob' **Marshall**. We are sorry to have to report the death of 'Bob' **Marshall** on 28 May 2000, aged 70 years. 'Bob' had a long association with Her Majesty's Forces and was well known to his colleagues, who felt privileged to know him, as a keen and willing soldier ready to take on any task that was given to him.
Having completed National Service in 1944/45, he joined the Royal Navy on 13 August 1947 and served on HMS *Drake*, HMS *Vanguard*, HMS *Perseus* (Protector), HMS *Consort*, HMS *Ocean* and HMS *Orion*, with the rank of Able Seaman. He was awarded the Korean Medal and the UN Medal. He finally left the Royal Navy in October 1954.
In December 1957 he enlisted in the Royal Signals TA and served in Bristol until his final termination of service in 1974, having reached the rank of Corporal and been awarded the TAVR Efficiency Medal. 'Bob' was very proud of the people he served with during both wartime and peacetime. He was proud to have served his country.

Crich - ex-Capt (QM) Jack Crich 11 Signal Regiment, ex RSM of 2 Div HQ & Signal Regiment. He suffered a stroke and after three months illness passed away on 13 March Aged 73. **Jack** enlisted in 1940 (despite being part of a protected profession - Eriksson telecom) and retired in 1970. Three weeks after **Jack's** death, his second wife **Betty** suffered a stroke and passed away on 16 July. Sadly missed by his son **John** and daughter-in-law **Eleanor**

Dodd - Lt Col The Rev Peter Dodd CF, MBE died on 20 August after a long and bravely borne struggle with cancer. **Peter** had an extensive association with the Royal Corps of Signals through postings in Catterick, Verden, Dhekelia, York and Northern Ireland. Many of the Corps personnel will have grateful cause to remember his advice, support and the irreverent good humour which were always to the fore in times of crisis. His support of the ordinary soldier was unwavering, and his selfless courage in pursuing their interests was justly recognised by the award of the MBE for his services in Northern Ireland. After retirement his energies were devoted to local government matters in York, where he finally settled, and would undoubltedly have been elected Mayor but for his final illness. Our sincere sympathies are extended to his widow **Brenda** and his daughters **Sarah** and **Ruth**.

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

263 (HARROGATE) SIGNAL SQUADRON
ARMY APPRENTICES COLLEGE

Sqn Comd **Maj Steven France**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Adam Yafai**

RAWSON TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt George Alexander**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Helen Jasper** REME

EXERCISE JANNERS JOY - *by AT Moughton*

As with the three previous exercises this one would test each and every one of us in different ways. This exercise put into practice all that we have learnt. The deployment out was just like any other, apart from the fact that the administration prior to departure was done by us. This was the first time that we had been allowed to command sections. We were responsible for distributing equipment, disseminating orders and navigating. The first day of the exercise consisted of rehearsals of all the skills and drills that we would need for the rest of the exercise. The exercise then progressed onto a series of OPs and recce patrols led by us. Things went well until **AT** 'Shaky' **Wrega's** patrol went slightly astray. **Cpl Harmer** made an error, he let the ATs out of his sight for more than 30 seconds. With only 300m to go to the target he let the ATs go on and he would meet them there. It was simple, in theory. The ATs had seen the farm and just had to move around in dead ground until they got to the agreed location. Eight hours later **Cpl Harmer** and **Capt Alexander** found the 'rouge' section on their way back from their OP. By accident the Troop permanent staff found a building matching the description given by **AT Wrega** approximately 2km away from the building that **Wrega's** Section should have been watching. Good skills **Wrega**! The next day consisted of section level patrols in a round robin. The circuit was made up of a first aid stand, a number of section attacks, a command task and the entertaining NBC stand. The section attacks were particularly difficult given the shortage of ammunition. By the evening we were preparing for the final attack. Following orders we had to secure the assembly area. At about 0300hrs (!) we moved, under direction of a guide, to the forming up point. Scott Tp, under direction of a guide, went for a tour of the training area and only just made it back to the forming up point with seconds to spare. We were the third assault troop and had to wait for some time before we were let loose on Baden Down Farm. The assault was hectic and I'm sure that no one really had a clue what was going on. Despite this the exercise was, without doubt, the best yet. We can't wait for the Live Firing Exercise at the end of term even though some of the permanent staff are muttering about, people getting shot left right and centre.

PENNEY TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt** 'Shakey' **Shakespeare**
Tp Sgt **Sgt** 'Digger' **Gardiner RGBW**

EXERCISE DRAGON'S TEETH - *By AT Dawes*

Day 1: Ex Dragon's Teeth, a hard, testing exercise departed from Arborfield Apprentices College at a relaxing 1255hrs. As we arrived at EXCON the exercise weather that they had obviously booked for us kicked in. The rain came down like a monsoon and drenched us all in a matter of seconds. We then started to patrol to our harbour area with the Troop Commander at the front followed by the Section Commanders then our Troop Sergeant at the rear making sure we lost no one. We carried out all the drills of snap ambush and then moved into the harbour area. All comms cards and bashers were set up before we had some scoff. That night my Section Commander, Cpl Tregunna took us out and taught us ERV drills. I actually found it quite exciting as it was dark and we were all running around with the adrenalin rush kicking in.

Day 2: Up at 0545hrs with a long day to look forward to. Today would be the test day for all the skills we had learnt in the first ten weeks. Fail this exercise and it would be back to square one. The tests involved target indication, observation, judging distance and camouflage and concealment. I enjoyed the last test the most; the thrill of knowing that you can see the enemy and they cannot see you set your mind racing. Back to the harbour to practice the ERV drills again. Something about the time spent on the subject set my mind wondering! Tension increased on Day 3 as the testing of our behaviour and attitude started. We did our final practical test (fire and movement), which is your chance to show aggression, which I think 90% of the Troop enjoys.

Day 3: The last day we had our final test and after we had packed our kit away we were attacked, the ERV drills now seemed useful! We had only run about 500m with our bergans to the ERV and we were already knackered! Then it hit us we had to TAB back to EXCON! We were all practically running for the three miles to keep up with the Troop Commander. (Note from **Lt Shakespeare:** it was actually 2.6km!) As we got back to EXCON everyone was exhausted and so we collapsed and started to clean our rifles, waiting for the coach to take us back. Personally I found the exercise very challenging. I was 2IC of the section for 24hrs and that was a shock and education. The TAB was hard but my section did well and no one dropped their bergans and the girls finished in the top third, which was a good achievement. Unfortunately the Troop will have to go forward to Senior Term without **Lt Shakespeare** and **Cpl**

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

Sawyer who are off to teach Junior Term again. We will also lose **Cpl Wheeler** who is going for a holiday in the Middle East teaching and to **Cpl Smith** who has seen the light and has decided to leave for the bright lights of Blandford to re-badge to the Royal Corps.

31st (CITY OF LONDON) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col L. F. Harrison TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Gibson**

2 (NC) SIGNAL BRIGADE TRADE TRAINING COURSE

31 Sig Regt (V) conducted a trade training course at Bramley Training Area (BTA) over the period 14–23 July 2000. This course although run predominantly for 31 Sig Regt (V) was opened up for the remainder of the units within 2 (NC) Sig Bde. The course commenced with a smooth handover of the training facilities, which should have let the DS know that it could not remain in this state of tranquillity forever.

Sure enough, members of the Cadet Force reported that they had found a Signaller lost in the woods, claiming to have bogged in his vehicle. After an unsuccessful hour searching **WO2 (YofS) Andy** 'Yoda' **Smith** and **Cpl Andy** 'Silk Negligee' **Harding** returned to the HQ building, thinking that these blokes from the Cadets must be barking! Shortly afterward the Cadets returned to say that they had managed to find the said 'vehicle' in the woods. So once again, the rescuers deployed in search of the lost vehicle. Hidden deep in the woods was **Sig** 'Pathfinder' **Harris** and **Sig** 'Doesn't take notes' **Stevens** safely tucked up in their sleeping bags, with the FFR well and truly parked up for the night. When asked, why they had gone deep into uncharted territory to find the HQ building, they were heard to say, 'We didn't think to look in the HQ building it looked far too comfortable.' Well-done lads! This gave the chance for the course to have its first lesson of 'How to recover a vehicle from a tricky position'. Although many of the students on arrival at Bramley had never officially operated a radio before, both the Rad Sys Op (HF) 'A' and 'B' courses managed to conduct a JOCOMMEX just four days into the course. Syndicate 'A' attaining a very creditable 75% communications with 3 UK Div Sig Regt, HMS *Berkerly* and HMS *Cromer.*

The students held a smoker on Thursday 20 July 2000, during which they conducted skits of the instructors. It has to be said that Syndicate 'A' led by **LCpl Paul** 'The Joker' **Hawes** managing to keep the audience amused for a substantial period, with their efforts to impersonate the instructors. The course culminated in a field exercise over the weekend 21-23 July 2000, with the students manning three nets; JOCOMMEX (80% primary communications maintained), local HF net and an Exercise Longhaul (HF link to America using ALE equipment). The Exercise proved to be an outstanding success, a credit to all the students on the course. The course dispersed on Sunday the 23 July 2000 with all those attending having partially completed or (for the lucky ones) fully completed their trade training. Well Done! The Regiment would like to take this opportunity to thank all students especially those non-members of 31 Sig Regt (V) who attended the course for the effort and work they put in to producing a very successful nine days. Thank you to the instructors for the time and effort they put into the course.

VISIT TO THE 1108th, 1110th and 1111th SIGNAL BATTALIONS MAY 2000 - *By WO2 (FofS) Jamie 'Dannyboy' Harper*

Gosh where to start. When I was told I was going across on a liaison visit to the States I said, 'Great, I'll just go pack my shorts and suntan oil.' 'It's not going to be that type of visit,' says the Training Major. 'But bring your shorts .... Just in case!'

When the day arrived the intrepid quartet, comprising of **Maj Tim** 'Sega Master' **Cooper, WO1 (RSM) John** 'Midnight Cowboy' **Gibson** (who was also being used in a duel role as the FofS interpreter), **WO2 (YofS) Andy** 'Yoda' **Smith** and myself set off for the airport. We were full of the joys of spring and excitement. Half hour later we arrived at the airport extremely traumatised but at least in one piece. We thanked **LCpl Dave** 'Colin McCrae' **Wynne** for an interesting ride to the airport and told him that if he hurries the police probably won't catch him! The plane ride to the States went without incident, almost. The YofS had some operator finger problems with the concept of plastic cups and had to be excused while he cleaned himself up, only to be expected. We were expecting a rather boring seven-hour flight, however, an entertainment unit per person and a free bar across made the journey slightly more bearable. The Training Major and the RSM thought all their Christmases had come at once! We were taken from the airport (Dullas Washington) to our hotel in Gettysburg by **Maj Steve** 'Hooters' **Davis** of the 1111th Sig Bn based at Fort Detrick Maryland, in preparation for an informal dinner with **Col Titus**, the Commanding officer of the 1108th also based at Fort Detrick. A most entertaining night was had, with Anglo-American relations between the two units going to new heights. However, never one to back down from a discussion, I now may be off their Xmas card list!

First day at the Fort was taken in with an overview of the station and a visit to the 1110th Satellite base station which controls three Satellite Ground Terminals (SGT's) in the vicinity. The control room of the base station would have sent even the most hardened 'Trekkie' gibbering.... It was like being on the bridge of the Starship Enterprise! (I jest you not!) We were also taken for a tour around one of the SGT's and introduced to all the workers there in. That afternoon we were taken to the local shopping park for some 'Retail Therapy'. The YofS was last seen running into a Raulph Lauren shop screaming 'Shop 'til ya drop, Shop 'til ya drop!' Meanwhile the RSM had acquired a cowboy hat and was loitering with intent in the main plaza. That night the lads from the 1111th ensured that we were looked after and didn't get bored. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the 'Boys Choir' of the 82nd Airborne Engineers for their help in entertaining us that evening, The RSM was so enthralled that he joined them for one last stint. Ever seen a fish out of water its like an RSM doing Rap! The next day it was back to work. We were taken to 'Site R'. Access is restricted, blindfolds and cavity searches mandatory. No wonder all the Americans there had smiles on their faces, very unsettling. To say that Site R is awesome would be a gross understatement. I would love to tell you all about it but then I'd have to shred you all. Americans it is said (and they do say it!) do it bigger and better, I can vouch for this, imagine a bunker the size of the London underground and you may start to have an idea of what I'm talking about. We were taken for a tour around the machinery that created the life support for the place; words cannot even begin to let you comprehend how immense the site is.

We were introduced to **Col Bryant** ('The Grand Master Mole'), Commanding Officer of the 1111th, and his Ops team to discuss equipment compatibility and procedures between our two units. There was also a visit to their Comms Facility and introductions to the personnel manning it. That afternoon the 1111th laid on a special battlefield tour of Gettysburg with professional military historians. It is a truly beautiful, solemn place with monuments to the past scattered about the battlefield. As the historians spun their tales of blood and guts you could almost imagine what it could have been like to be there then. It was an impressive afternoon. Strangely enough refreshments were provided at the local inn where we repaid the historians in a fashion that they would appreciate. It was our last night; we had a sit down meal with **Col Bryant** and his dignitaries and exchanged pleasantries and presents. The honour of becoming members of the 'Loyal Order of Moles' was conveyed on us, normally you have to do a full tour underground at Site R to get this! As the RSM will soon be leaving to pick up a post in Civ Div (Post Master!), he elected to present his Pace Stick to the CSM (Command Sergeant Major) of the 1111th. The CSM was so overcome with the present, he visited our hotel in the morning and brought MORE presents with him! Afterwards to bring the night to a fitting end, we decided to do a CTR on a known establishment, which I hasten to add came highly recommended (by the bar staff). Again much was done to cement Anglo-American relations much to the profit of the establishment. The RSM was so overcome with the place that we had to help him back to his room, jetlag and old age he said were to blame. The 1111th excelled themselves as hosts both in the work environment and the social side. This unit will ensure that the reciprocal visit in September is of the same standard..... if not better.

Visit to the Gettysburg Battlefield
(L-R): Maj Steve Davis US Army, WO1 (RSM) Gibson, WO2 (YofS) Andy 'Yoda' Smith, WO2 (FofS) Jamie Harper, Tour Guide - Maj Tim Cooper
Nice hats Cowboy

41 (PLK) SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Lankester**
SSM **WO2 Watson**

OFFICERS' MESS SUMMER BALL

This year's Officers' Mess Summer Ball was organised by **Lt Beth Pollard** from 41 Sqn and **Capt Paul Samways** of HQ Sqn. The evening was held at Southfields TAC on Saturday 8 July. Mess members and their guests were greeted by **Maj Julian Carmichael** the PMC, and offered a drink in a reception marquee. A super meal was served in the drill hall, followed by coffee, port and cigars, during which the 'Premier Brass' band played for entertainment. Mr Vice, **2Lt Lee McEvoy** newly commissioned out of Sandhurst, gave the toasts to the Queen and Princess Royal, and then the evening really began... **Lt Beth Pollard** had organised a casino, in which all members and guests demonstrated their gambling skills. Some more successfully than others! A band played in the main hall, followed by a disco and many of the Regiment's officers were seen dancing until dawn! Transport was laid on throughout the night for those wanting to retire, whilst others were still up to see the sunrise over Southfields. As a member of 31 (City of London) Sig Regt Officers' Mess, I would like to say a big thank you to **Beth** and **Paul** who organised a superb evening.

COULSDON MILLENNIUM PARADE

Coulsdon has been having its own Millennium celebrations (albeit belatedly), and 41 Sqn took part in the Millennium Carnival procession to the local secondary school. The carnival procession started at the TAC, where the various floats gathered, and from there processed along Marlpit lane and out towards Old Coulsdon to the school. At the school, there were various stands and displays (of which we were one), a beer tent, stage, BBQ and fairground, and the evening finished with a huge firework display. We had a lot of interest in our display stand, consisting of Lanward, an FFR detachment, and a recruiting stand, although most of the school children were a bit too young to join. The Squadron's participation in the event was organised by **Sgt** 'Uncle Nick' **Tuck. Capt John Symonds, Lt Debs Speakman, Sgt Ian Mackay, Cpls Julia** and **Simon May, Cpl Andy** 'REME' **Ellis, Sig Phil** 'PLK' **Davy** and **Pete Lovett** all gave up their Saturday evening to take part in the carnival and promote the Squadron.

EXERCISE GREAT ESCAPE – 14-16 JULY 2000

Ex Great Escape was a Squadron mil skills weekend, organised by **Capt John** 'Col Bozic' **Symonds**. The Squadron deployed as part of 'WOTFOR' (Western Operations Treaty Force) to Cinque Ports in Kent to take part in a peacekeeping exercise. The Squadron were deployed to keep the peace between the KLO (Kent Liberation Organisation) and the BUM (Britannic Unionist movement), and were given a series of scenarios to deal with. The platoon, led by **Lt Debs** 'Cow Pat' **Speakman** and **Sgt Brian** 'No Clutch' **Traynor**, had to initially clear an area, and send out recce patrols. Ops were sent out at first light, and reported back to Pl HQ on what they saw. I think we all learnt just how important it is to get the facts right before acting on any information! On Saturday afternoon, we were given lessons on the 349 and 351 Clansman radios by **SSgt Dave** 'BT' **Holman. Sig Phil** 'PLK' **Davy** and **LCpl Rob** 'GMPG' **Bromwich**, both recently returned from Bosnia, gave a lesson on mine clearance. **Cpl Kevin** 'Egg Banjo' **Bedwell** gave a lesson on trip flares, and we all fired the GMPG (SF). Early evening saw us patrolling to secure an HLS (just who *was* that farmer?), practising our section attack drills, and evacuating casualties from a minefield. We were obviously having far too much fun on exercise, when the KLO DS said they could hear laughter coming from our bunker as we ate breakfast on Sunday morning. We still haven't learnt that we're not supposed to have fun on exercise! Our platoon attack however proved a rude awakening to all. Attacking enemy depth positions uphill is incredibly hard work, but somehow **Sgt Brian** 'No Clutch' **Traynor** managed to lead a section around the back of the enemy, and attack with the element of surprise. Well done that man!

LCpl liz Bray firing the GPMG

TADWORTH CHILDREN'S TRUST FUN DAY

The Squadron sent a display stand to The Children's Trust Fun Day at Tadworth on Saturday 22 July. The stand, run by **LCpl Paul** 'Starbar' **Starbrook** consisted of an FRR, and recruiting display. **LCpl Starbrook** was helped on the day by **Sig Phil** 'PLK' **Davy**, and **Sig Guy** 'mountain bike' **Scott-Douglas**, who took various bits of kit for the children to try on, and cam cream so that children could paint their faces like soldiers. The stand proved very interesting to those who'd gone to the Fun Day, and we also helped to raise money for the Children's Trust. The Children's Trust raised a total of £19,000 on the day.

Welcome back to the Squadron to **Sig Phil** 'PLK' **Davy**, who has recently returned from Bosnia. We hope that the Squadron will benefit from his experiences there - he has already started to pass on some of what he learnt to the Squadron. We don't want to make his head swell too big, but welcome back, mate!

The Squadron would like to congratulate **Sgt Trother** and his wife **Louise** on the birth of their first child. Baby, **Kathy**, and mum are both doing well.

56th SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Streete**
SSM **WO2 Godden**

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The main emphasis for the Squadron remains preparation for Annual Camp 2000. The detail of which is starting to emerge. It promises to be an excellent opportunity for the Squadron to show what it can really do. Although the summer months are traditionally quieter, Squadron personnel have been active and have been involved in a great deal, including: Ex Cockney Mackenzie, a canoeing expedition to Canada, Trade Training, a Military Skills Exercise and a Troop Commanders Adventurous Training weekend. The TA Centre was also the venue for the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess Summer Ball.

PERSONNEL

Maj Sarah Streete, unable to attend Annual Camp because of work commitments appears to have gone against the grain somewhat, apparently ignoring the usual options of an attachment or career course. She is currently serving in Kosovo covering a Staff post for six weeks. Rumour has it that she has yet to make an appearance at the Staff Office but is widely travelled and enjoying the experience.

REGIMENTAL TRADE COURSE 14-23 JULY 2000

Bramley in Hampshire was the venue for this season's trade course. The Squadron was well represented with **SSgt (PSI)** 'Willie' **Loch** and **Cpl Andy Harding** putting in the hours and the knowledge as instructors and **LCpls Reader, Hawes, Hewitt** and **Sigs Godwin** and **Jennings** striving to attain their trade qualifications. The hours were long and the training intense but not even an impromptu visit from half of the Officers of the Regiment distracted either student or instructor from their goal. Congratulations to the above mentioned on the standard of pass they achieved. **LCpls** 'Eric and Ernie' **Hawes** & **Hewitt** are also to be awarded a BAFTA for their unique interpretation of life as an Instructor!! All recently qualified operators will get the chance to put their newly acquired skills to good use on Annual Camp.

EXERCISE PIPPINGFORD WALK 14-16 JULY 2000

With Summer Camp approaching fast this was our last chance to brush up on our Military Skills. **SSgt Chris Maginnis** and **SSgt Martin Cooper** take the majority of the credit for a well-conceived and executed exercise. 'Old Sweats', **LCpl Eric** 'The Warrior' **Gardyne** and **LCpl Paul** 'Let me at 'em' **Renaud,** as usual lead from the front throughout. **OCdt Rob** 'Woody' **Wood** used the occasion to prepare himself for his forthcoming commissioning course but (Platoon Sgt for a day) **Cpl Jason Light** is still claiming 'Woody' would have a better chance if he went with him to Sandhurst. Even Sqn 2IC **Capt Tony Potter** and **WO2 (SSM)** 'Roly' **Godden** playing the bad guys (entirely out of character) were powerless to prevent a successful final assault, much to the delight of all the participants. Overall the exercise was a resounding success and provided an excellent opportunity to cement relations with the contingent of ACF based at Eastbourne.

EXERCISE EASTBOURNE ADVENTURE 4-6 AUGUST 2000

The name is a bit of a misnomer – it was an adventure but it was certainly not Eastbourne. 36 members of the Squadron embarked on an experience with a difference as conceived by **Capt Tony Potter** and the **SSgt** 'Willie' **Loch** PSI. Friday night saw an exhausting seven hour journey to Haverfordwest in SW Wales (Where??) to the home of 14 Sig Regt (EW). From there, the eager participants dispersed to take in a range of activities. A number of soldiers tried their hand at deep sea fishing – **Sgt Gary Windham** landed the smallest catch of the morning – a sand eel smaller than his hook; **Capt Tony Potter** landed the largest – a passable Pollack. Waterskiing saw the SSM impersonate a human torpedo and develop a close relationship with the boom in his 'topper' yacht later

on in the day. Saturday evening was witness to a cut throat squadron-wide ten pin bowling competition won by **LCpl Hewitt** (ex PWRR) and closely followed by **SSgt Martin Cooper**. Staff Cooper then produced a 'home made' pizza for the winner to share with his 'mates' **WO2 (SSM) Kevin Godden** and **Sgt Dickie Bonner** preserved the integrity of the Senior Ranks by defeating **Capt Tony Potter** and **Capt Anthony Lamb** in the new annual ten-pin bowling competition. Sunday saw the squadron retire to the go cart race track where a gruelling 90 minute team challenge saw a ten lap victory go to the old and bold team captained by **Sgt Dickie Bonner** with **LCpl Jo Reader's** team in hot pursuit. This was a memorable weekend, well attended by new recruits and the old sweats alike and a very successful team building activity

The Team on Ex Eastbourne Adventure

WARRANT OFFICERS AND SGTS' SUMMER BALL

The Warrant Officers and Sgts' Mess held their annual Summer Ball on 8 July 2000 at Eastborne. The theme for the evening was a 'Caribbean Beach Party' which included a live reggae band, limbo dancers and fire-eaters and a real Caribbean BBQ. The PMC **WO2 (SSM) Kevin Godden** and his hard working SNCO's at 56 Signal Squadron spent two days converting the main garages into a Caribbean beach which included the delivery of palm trees, a cocktail bar, a lorry load of sand, the construction of a stage and a large goat for the BBQ!. Many thanks to **SSgt Martin Cooper** who used his contacts in the building industry for the sand and scaffolding. The evening started with a 'punch' concocted by Master Chef, **WO2 Fred Bramble**, which got everybody into the mood straight away. Although from this point on, it was difficult to remember the evening in detail. All the SSM's competed in the limbo dancing competition, although their was no real winner, the Medical Officer has said that given another three weeks rest they should all be back at work! The live reggae band provided an authentic sound of the Caribbean and played throughout the night only stopping for the BBQ. The BBQ was prepared by, **WO2 Fred Bramble, Sgt Steve Howell** and **Sgt Bob Shevels**, which included goat, shark and swordfish and was a complete success, lucky no one mentioned the goat until afterwards. Following the BBQ, the Mess were entertained by two limbo dancers. The evening finished off with a disco and an impromptu game of volleyball and in overall terms was a complete success.

83 (LONDON) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn.Comd **Maj Julian Carmichael**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Stevenson**

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 'EASTWOOD-BELLS'

The wedding of two members of 83 Sig Sqn took place on 24 June near Nottingham. **Cpl Mark Bell** and **LCpl Jay Eastwood** interrupted the training programme and tied the knot in her home village. There was a mass exodus from London as many members of the squadron hit the M1 with perfect convoy drills. The bride did not wear green but chose a more traditional outfit! She was not easily recognised by her 83 colleagues who commented how different she looked from her usual weekend exercises. The groom was well supported by **Sgt Matt Cahill** who took off his Sgt's beret to put on a Top Hat as Best Man, he apparently was showing more signs of nerves than the groom! A Guard of Honour greeted the grinning couple as they exited the church - **Cpl Steve Taylor** (PSI Tech), **Cpl Ian Byrne, LCpl Colin Anderson and Sig Jardine** looked outstanding in No. 1 Dress. The father of the bride, in his speech, acknowledged the Guard of honour as the male challenge to the bevy of beauty provided by the three bridesmaids! A surprise honeymoon of Barbados and Antigua followed but we know they would have preferred two weeks in Catterick.

The Happy Couple
Cpl Mark Bell and LCpl Jay Bell nee Eastwood

THE ONE THAT GOT LEFT BEHIND...

LCpl Stuart Farquharson-Roberts, a Det Comd in the Squadron, found himself left behind in British Columbia following Ex Cockney Mackenzie, the Regiment's canoe trip to British Columbia. He suffered a collapsed lung on day three of the Exercise, but did not get off the river for another three days. This led to eleven days of discomfort in hospital in a backwater logging town of Quesnel. **SSgt Graham Browning** remained behind in Canada to ensure his safe return to UK although it soon became clear that he would not need to remain for the three to four weeks dictated by doctors who were fearful of recurrence. **LCpl F-R** had a chain of relatives who could take him in thus relieving **SSgt Browning** who nevertheless ensured that his charge got to Connecticut in the US. **LCpl F-Rs** brother, a Pte in 3 Para on leave, flew out to join him for a tour of New York, Washington DC and Boston. On his return to the UK a month after endex he said, 'Despite the lung, I've had a fantastic holiday. I'm going to collapse it every time I'm abroad now!' We are not sure if his employer will be quite so pleased with that idea, but he did admit to being glad to be back in the Squadron bar.

280 (UNITED KINGDOM) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. A. Harris**
RSM **W O1 (RSM) C. Kearney**

The Squadron is now being re-equipped with a new NATO communications system, the Deployable Communications Module, and the first of this equipment to arrive came during June. Each Troop is now equipped with '85 Buy' radio relay. There are three detachments, each consisting of a radio vehicle and a mast vehicle - the masts are about 25m high. Because of this they take about two hours to set up. After nearly a year with no equipment the Troop embarked upon two weeks of intensive training. There was some appalling weather but a huge amount of effort was put in by all, and the detachments were working like well oiled machines by the time they demonstrated for the Master of Signal's visit. Then the Master retired to the WOs and Sgts' Mess to present LS&GC medals to members of the Squadron. Congratulations to **Sgt Michelle Ironside**, **Sgt John Taylor** and **Cpl Brian Woolley**.

The Master with the OC, the RSM and the LS&GC recipients, and their families

The Master enjoys a joke with Cpl Cook

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt B. Y. T. Higgs**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Roberts**

Alpha Tp would like to welcome **LCpls Donaldson, Hubble, Kirkwood** and **Lester**, and **Sigs James** and **Fewster**, all straight from Blandford and preparing for a mixture of excitement and confusion that is the NATO Experience. After the flood of arrivals, over the past few months, we must bid farewell to some long serving members of the Troop: **Cpls Ronnie Radford** and **Neil** 'Naked' **Hatcher** to Northern Ireland (continuing an eerie Troop tradition); **LCpls Gordy Carle,** 'Nobby' **Styles** and **Sig Steve** 'Aviator' **Wildridge**. All of them are leaving the Corps for greater things. We wish them all the best of luck.

ITD Camp

The ITD Camp that was run during July was the first opportunity that the Squadron has had to do some green training since the return from Kosovo, as April and May were lost to Post-Tour leave, and June saw the Squadron AT Camp. 70 personnel from the Squadron relocated to Haltern-Lavesum for a camp where the emphasis was on training rather than testing. As well as the ITD that we all know and love particular attention was placed on weapon training, culminating in a CQB range. The Camp finished with a march and shoot, based on the CFT followed by an inter-fire team falling-plate competition. The DS team honourable retired in the quarter-finals (after having made their point). The eventual winners were **Cpl** 'Brass-Converter' **Slaughter's** fire team from Alpha Tp, thanks mainly to the eye of **Sig** 'Les' **Ryall** (using Cpl Slaughter's ammunition). The camp was enjoyed by all, and will prepare everyone for the battlecamp in October. Thanks must go to the Ops Officer **Capt Rich Craig**, and to the Training SNCO, **SSgt** 'H' **Baker**, for doing the shouting.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp comd **Lt L. J. Calderhead**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Weavers**

Due to a mass Squadron reorganisation i.e. the formation of two Troops from three Troops, we now have a combination of old Bravo Tp members, old but new to Bravo Tp and real new Bravo Tp members. 'Real welcomes' must go to **Sig** 'Harry Ramsden' **Rolfe, LCpl Clarke, Sig Pollock, LCpl** 'Gym Queen' **Jones** and **LCpl** 'Monty' **Montgomery**. Sadly we must say goodbye to **Sig Watts** who is shortly to be travelling around Aus. Also goodbye and good luck to **LCpl** 'Hilly' **Hillson** who is also venturing out into civvy street - well as much as you can call working for Spacelink in Kosovo civvy street!

EXERCISE QUEBEC BACKSTOP 2000

The Squadron adventure training camp this year took place in the Mosel Valley Area of Germany during the period 22 June-4 July 2000. The exercise involved activities such as hill-walking, canoeing, windsurfing and the well known sport of 'granny biking'. 45 soldiers in 9x9 tents seemed to blend into the rather quaint civilian campsite in Nehren, near Cochem with remarkable ease. However, our German campsite neighbours did appear somewhat confused by our assembly on the volleyball court during **SSgt** 'More pudding' **Maw's** initial fire practice! The first phase saw some fairly unspectacular weather, however, due to the wet nature of the majority of the activities this went unnoticed by most.

The canoeing activity run by **Sgt** 'Maddy' **Mason** took place on the River Mosel and for most involved a significant amount of paddling round and round in circles. However, **LCpl** 'Does your mother know you are here' **Harrison** insisted on inspecting the wall of a rather large barge at close range before actually deciding to paddle in any direction! Then there was the hill-walking day where heads were cleared and blisters made during a 25km trek led by **Lt** 'Not another bridge' **Calderhead** through woodland and over some fairly steep valley sides. Thankfully **LCpl** 'Timmy' **Mallet** cunningly and seemingly quite accidentally discovered a coffee shop when it was his turn to navigate. It was at this location that **LCpl** 'Daz' **Pearce** discovered a tick embedded rather high up on his inner thigh. This did not cause too much panic in the soon to be gym queen as he frantically attempted to drown the little creature in the delightful spicy German Goulash soup! At the end of the day aching feet were soothed for some by a dip in the river. An activity that was particularly necessary for **LCpl** 'I'll walk back' **Booth** who managed to walk an extra 18km before he even started the days activity due to a severe taxi shortage in Cochem early that morning! The windsurfing was not exactly the easiest activity to grasp in a day although **Cpl Baber** managed to get far enough out on the lake that yet another rescue mission by **SSgt Maw** was required! Then there was the 'granny biking' activity. Congratulations must go to **Sgt Michelle Ironside** who discovered at the end of the day that the reason she was always being left behind was that she actually had the brake on!

Fortunately, during such an adrenalin packed week, there was chance to relax during the R&R activity or so we thought until **Lt Bernie Higgs** pointed us in the direction of a near vertical hill in order to visit Cochem Castle. However, there was plenty of opportunity to swap the day's war stories over a civilised glass of wine during the evening wine festivals in the local area. We also managed to build the longest Anglo-German conga during the boat trip up the River Mosel. Overall it was a thoroughly enjoyable week and thanks must go to all the staff that enabled this event to go ahead.

ATTACHMENT TO 280 (UNITED KINGDOM) SQUADRON

by 2Lt Justine Ridley & OCdt Aileen Grant

On Monday the 10 July **2Lt Justine Ridley**, from Oxford UOTC, and **OCdt Aileen Grant**, from Glasgow and Strathclyde UOTC, arrived in Germany for a three week attachment with 280 (UK) Sig Sqn, their aim being to experience everyday life at a regular signals unit. Having just completed their degrees, both are due to start Sandhurst in the not so distant future, so were keen to see what a Commission into the Royal Signals involved.

The first two weeks were taken up with learning about the structure of a Signals Squadron and training on NATO radio relays. This involved working with the soldiers as well as observing the everyday jobs of the Troop Commanders, such as interviews, CRs and paperwork. Working with the soldiers was particularly useful since we got to know how the kit worked and had a brief insight into the goings on of the soldiers in the Squadron. They were keen to explain the working of the Signals kit and tell us about their operational experiences. From training with the soldiers on the radio relay detachments we realised the importance of getting to the soldiers personalities and what their future ambitions are since a major element of a Troop Commanders job is managing your soldier's careers.

The third week gave both of us the chance to have up to date training on ITD's. The first day encompassed BFAT training during which **2Lt Ridley** found out that she had passed her nursing degree. The details of what degree she had done was not mentioned to the instructor until a later date for fear of failing the test. Neither of us had entered a gas chamber before so NBC skills were quickly improved especially when confronted with a face full of CS gas. PT was commenced ritually every morning and we discovered the PTI's love of hills, mud, and early starts. The ranges caused much amusement since it was the first time for us both to shoot with a respirator on and therefore caused us to shoot more than one APWT! The last day was dedicated to the CFT, for us an operation in blister maintenance.

We were both introduced to the German nightlife along with a small amount of alcohol! Various trips were made into Krefeld and Dusseldorf once we eventually understood the train system. One of our nights out involved testing to see if the Jay walking law really exists…it does! On our last weekend the Summer Ball was held (for a whole 12 of us). Around 3am the munchies hit and we discovered one of the subalterns has a soft spot for tuna fish. On the whole, we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves over the three weeks. Our thanks go out especially to **Lt Lindsey** 'Tunafish' **Calderhead, Lt Bernie Higgs** and **Capt Richard Craig** for making us feel so welcome and introducing us to yet more acronyms, this time NATO ones!

UN MILITARY OBSERVERS AND STAFF COURSE (UNMOSOC) IRELAND

by Capt Richard Craig

Whilst serving in Kosovo at a loose end, looking through the DCI's I came across a trawl for nominations for the UN Military Observers and staff course in Ireland. On a whim I decided to put my name forward expected that nothing more would come of it. I was therefore surprised when two months later joining instructions arrived on my desk. After completing all the necessary admin left for the course. The course was held at the Curragh Camp, County Kildare, Ireland. This is the main Irish

Defence Force camp and is situated thirty minutes West of Dublin. The course was attended by thirty-three officers ranging from Captains to Lieutenant Colonels who came from a total of 23 countries. The average age was 32 with the youngest 26 and the oldest 51.

There was a mixture of lectures and practical lessons on all aspects of UN Peace keeping and UN Monitoring Officer operations. Most of the lecturers had extensive UN experience, and incorporated their personal experiences into the lessons. There were a number of guest speakers who added variety and additional interest to the course material. There was also a number of exercises that involved Irish Defence Troops from all over Ireland and considerable resources including armour and air support. Having served in 280 (UK) Sig Sqn and deployed to Kosovo and Bosnia I already had experience of serving with many officers from different NATO nations although I had no UN experience. The chance to meet and serve alongside officers from nations from all over the world was fascinating. The professionalism of the Irish Defence Forces was particularly impressive

The out of hours programme was comprehensive and good value. Activities were organised for both weekends and most nights of the course. These included a couple of Irish music nights, orienteering competitions and trips to Kilkenny, Dublin and Glendalough. These trips were not only interesting, but helped the integration process between the different nationalities. We were also lucky to be invited to the Queens Birthday reception in the British Ambassadors residence in Dublin with the opportunity to see the band of the Irish Guards play for the first time in Ireland since 1922. The warmth and friendliness of the Irish people is renowned around the world and after going there I can personally confirm that it's all true. In summary the UNMOSOC course was an interesting and worthwhile experience both professionally and socially.

A CORPS HISTORY

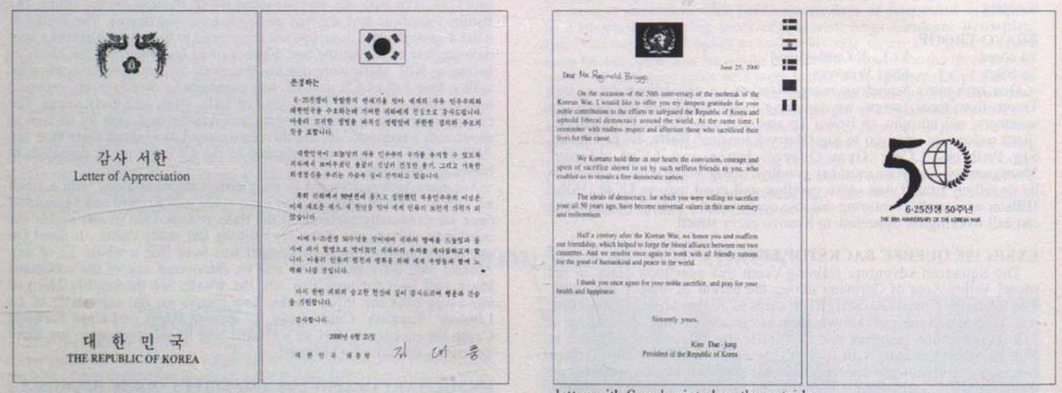
Dr Graham Watson, Historian of the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia), and Cliff Lord, Historian of the Royal New Zealand Corps of Signals, have teamed up to compile a lineage history of the Royal Corps of Signals. The authors are writing a book, which will provide an historical guide for just about every signal regiment, squadron and troop in existence since 1920. Not only will it include all present-day units but those now no longer in existence. For each unit there will be a list of all changes of title, a narrative of its history, an explanation of its role, information on unit badges and ceremonial links. Appendices will be included and it is hoped awards and senior appointments in the corps will be included as well as equipment lists. At present some units have their own internally produced histories but there has been no Corps-wide attempt to provide a guide since publication of **Maj Gen Nalder's** history in 1958 and then The Vital Link. This project has the active assistance of the Royal Signals Museum.

The authors have been able to gather a great deal of material but have now reached the stage where the remaining gaps in their information can be filled only with the assistance of past and present members of the Corps. While all, and any, extra information would be appreciated, the authors are anxious to hear from anyone with information of the following units.

5th Division HQ & Signal Regiment 1968-71
10th Armoured Division Signal Regiment, Libya 1955-57
22nd Signal Rgiment 1959-1992
Malaya Signal Regiment 1952-54
2nd Training Regiment 1948-59
202 Signal Squadron 1970-76
214 Signal Squadron
217 Signal Squadron
225 Signal Squadron
226 Signal Squadron
245 Signal Squadron
258 Signal Squadron
Signals in Gibraltar, Tripolitania, Cyreaica, Canal Zone, Aden pre 1964, FRA Signal Squadron, Sudan, Ethiopia, East Africa Signals, West Africa Signals, and Persian Gulf from 1948. The later may include any Royal Signals involvement in TOS, Bahrain, UAE, Oman and other Arab Signal Units
Signal Troops attached to Artillery units in BAOR and elsewhere
Units of the Army Emergency Reserve 1953-67
Anti-Aircraft Command 1939-55
Signal training Centres'1939-45
University Signals

If you have any history or information that has been missed before, please send it to the authors for inclusion. This may include details on non-standard dress embellishments and photographs, lists of equipment and awards to Signal personnel, which should be sent to Dr Graham Watson, 34 St Clears Close, Caerphilly, Wales CF83 1DU or email . Contributions will be acknowledged.

KOREA



From: **Reg Briggs**
157 Chaucer Road,
PETERBOROUGH, PE1 3LS

Dear Sir,

May I thank *The WIRE* on behalf of the many Korean Veterans for the articles published this last year.

It is fifty years since the outbreak of that conflict and most of the Veterans are now in their late sixties or older. You can imagine my surprise when the mail arrived, the other morning, and there was a large letter with Seoul printed on the outside.

How very nice to receive this and one has to ask has the British government ever, in the history of the military, sent out a 'Thank You' to its armed servicemen and women.

On a recent visit to Australia my wife **Margaret** and I stopped over in Korea for a week. We were made very welcome everywhere we went

To the President and to the people of the Republic of Korea, Thank You.

Reg Briggs, NAN Troop, attached 28th Field Regiment, Royal engineers, 1951 to 1953.

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

7 Signal Regiment - SSM Karl Weaver
No snack too small!

The Royal Signals Reunion Weekend
The Corps Pipes and Drums on parade

THE Wire

December 2000

The Royal Corps of Signals

WORLD of OPPORTUNITIES

Technician Group

Repair and maintenance of sophisticated communications equipment

Fibre Optics

Progression to degree level - Bachelor of Science

Fast track promotion

Equipment management

Electronic Warfare Group

Language specialist

Use of state of the art equipment

Covert monitoring of other Armed Forces

Intelligence gathering

Daily use of Top Secret Information/Equipment

Operator Group

IT Skills

Computer Literacy

Expert operators in all types of communications

Sending/Receiving vital information for Battle Commander

Progression to Communications management

We can offer You....

Good rates of pay

Opportunities for fast track promotion

Mental and Physical challenge

Personal Development in key life skills

Recognized qualifications throughout the communications industry

Job satisfaction and security

Opportunities to work with Special Forces

Extensive travel

Driving skills

Your next step....

Visit your local Armed Forces Careers Information Office (look in the phone book under 'Army') for more information or visit the Army website: http://www.army.mod.uk/careers/

ARMY

BE THE BEST

The Royal Signals Magazine

December 2000 Vol. 54 No: 6

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 Blandford Mil 2087 STD 01258 482087

Subscription rates 2001 (Bi-monthly) (Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, and Dec). Individual: Yearly **£12.00**; Bi-monthly **£2.00**.

Remittances should be made payable to Royal Signals Benevolent Fund

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

CONTENTS

	Page
Editors Notes	517
Movements	527
News from Headquarters	527
News of Training	528
News from Northern Ireland	531
News from the Regiments	533
News from the Squadrons	584
News from the Troops, UOTCs & Cadets	594
Sport	598
The Royal Signals Yacht Club	600
The Royal Signals Association and News from the AO's Desk	602
Reunions	606
Lost Comms	607
Correspondence	608
Donations	608
The Last Post	608
Late News	510

FRONT COVER

Sig 'Scottie' Steele, 21 Sig Regt, (a member of the Mobile Air Operations Team) using a PRC 346 (Tactical Ground to Air), talking to a Chinook pilot near Goole in Yorkshire on Saturday 11/11/00.
(Photo by Media Ops Land to be found on the RAF website)

BACK COVER

The Pipes and Drums of the Royal Corps of Signals, Military Tatoo 2000 courtesy of 32 Signal Regiment (V)

The closing date for copy to REACH this office, in order to go in the February issue is 10 December 2000

FROM THE EDITOR

The Corps Committee has agreed to an increase in the cost of each *WIRE* from £1.50 to £2.00 ie: from £9.00 to £12.00 for a year's subscription in 2001, (see August's *WIRE* page 321). *The WIRE* is subsidised from Corps' funds and this necessary increase is aimed at controlling the level of that subsidy. Those of you who have a Direct Debit will be billed at £12.00 for the 2001 period. Individuals who pay by Bank Standing Orders are asked to inform their bank accordingly. We hope that subscribers will appreciate that this is the first increase for five years.

This issue has been a nightmare to produce with 44.7% of entries arriving after the cut-off date. Our increased use of dtp, which will produce a cost saving in due course is negated if we have to restructure and delay printing to accommodate late entries. Unit *WIRE* reps will soon have sight of my missive to COs/OCs on the subject. You have been warned. MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Authors alone are responsible for the content of their articles. The opinions expressed in the articles of this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise, of the Royal Signals or the Ministry of Defence. This publication should be treated with discretion by the recipient.

© Crown Copyright

Disclaimer: No responsibility for the quality of goods or services advertised in this magazine can be accepted by the Publishers or their Agents. Advertisements are included 'in good faith'.

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE SOinC(A)

All of us know that the Army is based upon teams, whether they be Detachments, Regiments, Divisions or the Corps. Teams are made up of individuals, each with his or her own needs and aspirations, but working within an accepted framework. Our team have, yet again, had an outstanding year on Operations, Training and on the sports field.

Individuals need to feel valued, they need to feel a part of a respected organisation. Sometimes it is difficult to feel valued if living and working conditions are less than they should be, or deployments come thick and fast, but there is no doubt in the minds of our senior commanders that each and every member of the Corps is an essential and valued part of the Army and the Nation's Defence Forces.

I have been fortunate to visit many units this year on Operations, Training and in the barracks. I continue to be enormously impressed and encouraged by the professionalism, enthusiasm, maturity and innovation demonstrated wherever I go. With these qualities in abundance, success for all our teams is assured. At the turn of the year we should all consider the other team which stands behind everyone of us, our family. Be it large or small, with us or apart, it plays a fundamental part in our lives.

LAURETTE AND I WISH YOU ALL
A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS
AND A SUCCESSFUL NEW YEAR.

THE MASTER'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

As we approach the end of this first year in the new Millennium, I cannot help but get the feeling that the manic intensities which seemed to characterise the last year of the old one, are on the ebb. I am sure that many of you will think, not before time.

Nonetheless, our Corps, probably more than any other British Service organisation, continues to bear much of the brunt as the Army seeks to come to terms with the two challenges dominating its thinking about the future. The first is how it needs to change to best meet the demands of 'expeditionary warfare'. Here the skills, the culture and the exceptional quality of our soldiers have set the Corps out on its own among our Allies in one particular ability, highly prized by commanders: providing the rapid command and control necessary to achieve order out of early chaos. The second challenge, by no means unique to the Services let alone the Corps, is the 'information revolution'. For many this is a problem. For the Corps this is a once in a lifetime opportunity.

In the year 2000 the SOinC and his Staff have made real progress in grasping these challenges. The percentage of the Corps now on operations is down to half what it was a year ago and plans to 'ride the revolution' are well laid. Despite the pressures the Millennium year has been a great one for the wider Corps 'Family'. It continues to grow in strength and influence and to have a lot of fun in the process. Two singular occasions were the Millennial Week at Blandford, re-creating, amongst other things, the past glories of the Morrison Cup,and the hugely successful Corps Weekend that put together the spectacular Princess Royal Day Parade and the Association's Reunion.

So the Corps, including some families hard pressed by frequent separation, has earned a good Christmas and can look forward to the New Year with enthusiasm and confidence and some prospect of greater stability.

FROM ANNIE AND ME
HAVE A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS
AND A GREAT NEW YEAR.

ROYAL SIGNALS INSTITUTION

ANNUAL BCS/RSI LECTURE
Thursday 15 March 2001
at the IBM Research Labs
'Scholarly Sky-writing' - Prof Stevan Harnad Hursley

ANNUAL SEMINAR
Thursday 3 May 2001
Princess Mary Hall, Blandford Camp,
'THE VITAL LINK

Further information from Col (Retd) Bill Kennedy at RHQ on 01258 482647 or E-mail: rhq-rsignals@army.mod.uk

'A SIGNAL HONOUR'

BY ROBIN PAINTER

The Chindits and the 14th Army
Christmas Reading at its best

Obtainable from the Museum Shop
Telephone: 01258 482248

Cost £19.95

SPECIAL FORCES COMMUNICATORS

TA TERRITORIAL ARMY BE THE BEST

LEAVING THE ARMY?

Interested in a challenging and useful part time career for which you get paid? Want to put your existing military and communications skills to further use?

Our requirement:- between 18 and 32 years old, physically fit, well motivated, keen to learn, discreet, honest, good interpersonal skills.

TA commitment:- 27 days including 15 days annual camp. In addition we require a further 10 days in order to develop multiple communications skills and become proficient in a wide range of military skills, to work in a highly demanding environment.

The opportunities:- personal development, travel, adventurous pursuits, annual financial bonus.

For further information apply to the address below quoting the Wire Magazine as the advertisement source:

PSI
R (SY) Troop (V)
Stirling Lines
Hereford
HR4 7DD

The Territorial Army is an equal opportunities employer

ATTENTION HARROGATE APPRENTICES

WANTED

HARROGATE APPRENTICE MAGAZINES

I have nearly completed writing the history of the College but I have a few gaps. I have most copies of the magazine but would appreciate a copy of the following, which I will return if required:

Volume 1 No7	Feb 52 (?)
Volume 1 No8	July 52
Volume 1 No 10	July 53
Volume 1 No 11	Feb 54

The complete set of magazines will be donated to the Museum. Please send any copies you may have to:

Col (Retd) Cliff Walters,
Royal Signals Museum, Blandford Camp

Leaving the Forces Shortly?

real com

Your Future In Communications

We specialise in placing ex-service personnel within the Telecommunication and Broadcast industry. We are interested in all trades with experience of Satellite and Trunk Systems maintenance & operations.

The company is directed by ex-Royal Signals staff currently working within the industry. We provide permanent positions with telecommunications companies in the UK or abroad.

Interested?

Please contact Ed Massey or Brian O'Connor.

Tel: 01962 841 838

Fax: 01962 841 839

PO Box 288

Winchester

S022 4WW

Email: enquiries *@* realcom-recruitment.co.uk

Battlefield Tours

for

Regimental Associations, TA's & Serving Units

Regimental Battle Honour Tours 4 days **£149**
Ypres, Somme, Arras, Cambrai 3 days **£99**
Normandy & Arnhem 4 days **£149**
Tailor-made & Self Drive Itineraries

Galina International Battlefield Tours
40 Bridge Street Row Chester CH1 1NN
Tel: 01244 340777

Official Tour Operators to the Normandy Veterans Association

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2001

The Royal Signals Association's AGM for 2001 will again be combined with the Branch Representatives' Meeting and be held, by kind permission of the OC 238 Sig Sqn, in Chelsea Barracks, Chelsea Bridge Road, London, SW1 8RF, on Saturday 2 April, starting at 1030 hours. All Life Members of the RSA are eligible and welcome to attend. Points for the Agenda must be received by Association Headquarters by 1 March, 2001. All those planning to attend are asked to inform Association Headquarters in order to assist with catering and seating requirements.

LONDON BRIDGE IS FALLING DOWN AND IT LOOKS AS THOUGH 'MERCURY BRIDGE' AT RICHMOND IS ABOUT TO GO THE SAME WAY. RECENT STORMS IN THE NORTH TOOK OUT THE CENTRAL PILLAR

A CHRONICLE OF THE SIGNALS (CARY) THEATRE 1945 TO 1973

As many people already know, Nigel Ribchester is compiling a chronicle for the Culture Section of the Museum. It currently contains information on some 169 productions that were performed in the Theatre. This is supported by items in three albums already in the Museum Archives that have been photo copied where necessary. Also by original or photo-copies of programmes; original scripts; original music scores; tape recordings of pantomime music; photographs; posters; magazine articles; news cuttings; and similar memorabilia. These have kindly been donated from their treasures by people who were proud to belong to the Theatre Club, founded by **RTO Cary** in 1945, or had been one of thousands of patrons in the audience. Information has been received from as far away as New Zealand from those who served in Royal Signals, Royal Army Education Corps, The 1st Queens Dragoon Guards and civilians living in the Catterick area. The Chronicle currently comprises five thick volumes and is on Apple Mac back up Zip discs. There is a mass of information about the early years but surprisingly, it tends to tail off in the later years.

As the picture is far from complete **Nigel Ribchester** wishes to make a final appeal to all whom served in Catterick during the years 1945 to 1973 to sift through their memorabilia. He is particularly anxious to fill in missing dates, which were not shown on the programmes of productions known to have taken place in 1950, 51, 52, 53, 54 and 1959. In addition he has no information whatsoever about productions or performances that might have taken place in 1965, 66, 67, 70 and 1971. Apparently the last show was a revue produced by 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards from 25-27 October 1972.

If you have any original items which you would prefer to keep, please consider making photo copies, or be prepared to send the originals for **Nigel** to copy and return. In any event he would like to speak to anyone who has a story to tell about the Theatre Club, whether it be as an actor, stage crew, front of house, box office or management. Please phone 023 9225 9772 for a chat about your experience, you will be most welcome.

Visit the Beverley Boys Archive Web Site

http://members.aol.com/beverleyboys/

WHO WAS 'JIMMY'

By Col (Retd) Cliff Walters

Or perhaps, more accurately, who was the Greek mythological god HERMES, who we all know as the capbadge of the Corps. You may well be aware that he was a messenger but you may be surprised to find that he was also a thief, lier, cook, musician, arsonist, astronomer and womaniser. Read on.

HERMES was born of ZEUS, the senior god, but whilst still in his cot he decided to run away. He left the cave and came across a tortoise which he promptly killed. He stretched the intestines of lamb across the shell and made the first lyre. He then played it and sang.

He soon grew hungry so he stole five cows from his brother APOLLO. To cover his crime he deceitfully made the cows walk backwards so that APOLLO could not make sense of their tracks. He then invented fire and cooked 2 of the cows and after having eaten his fill he returned to his cave where he categorically denied his crime. ZEUS saw through this but reconciled the brothers. HERMES gave his lyre to APOLLO and in return he received a gold staff or caduceus which became his symbol of office as messenger of ZEUS.

HERMES was the first to observe the stars and understand the seasons. This is why his Latin name was given to the planet MERCURY. But his main capacity was that of messenger. With wings on his sandles and hat he ran faster than the winds and he could also enter the Underworld and converse with the dead. To pass all these messages he was eloquent and very persuasive.

Finally, HERMES was capable of being overcome by irresistable physical passion in pursuit of maidens and nymphs who ran into the caves to hide from him. His list of conquests is extensive and his prodigy include kings, servants, heralds and warriors including those who fought with Jason on the Argo.

Now, who would have thought all that of our beloved JIMMY!!!!!

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY
RACE THE SUN 2001
is planned for

10 MAY 2001

HOW TO COOK A CHRISTMAS TURKEY

1 - Go buy a turkey
2 - Take a drink of whisky (scotch)
3 - Put turkey in the oven
4 - Take another two drinks of whisky
5 - Set the degree at 375 ovens
6 - Take three more whiskys of drink
7 - Turn oven on
8 - Take four whisks of drinky
9 - Turk the bastey
10 - Whisky another bottle of get
11 - Stick a turkey in the thermoneter
12 - Glass yourself a pour of whisky
13 - Bake the whisky for four hours
14 - Oven the take out of the turkey
15 - Take the oven out of the turkey
16 - Floor the turkey up the off pick
17 - Turk the carvey
18 - Get yourself another scottle of botch
19 - Tet the sable and pour yourself a glass of turley
20 - Bless the saying, pass and eat out

(R-L): Stella McIntyre, Annette Barnes, Sig S. S. Fenton, Ericka Hunt

THE ROYAL SIGNALS HERITAGE MILLENNIUM LOTTERY DRAW

The Draw for the Museum's Millennium Lottery Draw was made on 15 September 2000 in the presence of the Regimental Colonel, **Col R. M. Crombie**. The winning ticket was picked by **Sig S. S. Fenton** of Iron Troop, 2 Sqn, 11 Signal Regiment. **Sig Fenton** was enjoying one of the Museum Café's bacon butties when he was approached by **Col Crombie** to pick the winning ticket - how could he refuse? The winners are as follows:

1st Prize	- **WO2 K. Tunstall**, 8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn
2nd Prize	- **Mr R. C. Charlesworth**
3rd Prize	- **Mr M. Bell**
2 x 4th Prizes	- **Mr R. Hunter** and **D. P. Howshall**
4 x 5th Prizes	- **Mrs L. R. Jackson, W. R. Deller, Mrs D. Wildy** and **Mr R. Spencer**
6 x 6th Prizes	- **B. T. Lord, Capt J. Harrington** (currently on his CISM Cse at Blandford), **D. H. Manders, Mr N. Troughton, Mr A. Alexander** and **Mr I. Wotherspoon**

Also witnessing the Draw were **Miss Stella McIntyre** (Museum Curator) and **Mrs Ericka Hunt**.

Many Congratulations to all the winners. We would like to thank everyone who took part in the Draw and made donations to the Museum, which made over £5,000 for the Museum Education project.

Dad's Army.
Mum's Army.
Kid's Army.

We help everyone connected with the Army.

The Army is like an extended family. When necessary, everyone rallies round. However, when the need becomes more specialised and more substantial resources are required, people turn to us.

The Army Benevolent Fund provides support for soldiers, ex-soldiers and their families when they are in need. But to continue our support, we need yours.

By making a donation or leaving a legacy you'll be providing the 'reinforcements' our soldiers rely on.

Please give generously.

ARMY BENEVOLENT FUND

I wish to donate the following amount to the ABF £_____ ☐

I enclose a cheque/PO made payable to the Army Benevolent Fund ☐

OR please debit my ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ CAF Card

A/C No. ___/___/___/___ Expiry Date __/__

Name .....
(your name as it appears on the card)

Signature..... Date__/__/__
(This donation is invalid if this form is not signed)

Please send to: Army Benevolent Fund, 41 Queen's Gate, London SW7 5HR. Please enclose your name, address and post code when donating. For information on making or changing a will, Gift Aid donations, payroll giving and supporting fund-raising activities **call 020 7591 2000.**

(Registered Charity No. 211645) WIRE 12/00 PR1259

THE ROYAL SIGNALS BENEVOLENT FUND

(Registereed Charity No 284923)
and
THE ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM TRUST

(Registered Charity No 1070420)

Since 6 April 2000, Deeds of Covenant have been replaced by Gift Aid as a means of giving to Charity.

* If you are a UK Taxpayer, you can make a Gift Aid Declaration when you make a donation to Charity. By using such a declaration, the receiving Charity can reclaim any tax you have paid on your donation. This will give the Benevolent Fund or the Museum trust an extra 28p for every £1 donated.

* Gift Aid Declarations may be written or given orally over the telephone.

* If your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income at least equal in amount to the tax that the Charity reclaims, you should cancel your declaration.

* You can cancel the declaration at any time simply by notifying us that you wish to do so. If an oral declaration is cancelled within 30 days from the date on which written confirmation is sent, it will be as if the oral declaration has never been made.

* If you are a higher rate taxpayer, you can claim further tax relief in your Self Assessment Tax Return.

* The Gift Aid Scheme is explained by the Inland revenue leaflet 1R 113 Gift Aid which may be obtained from your local tax office.

* If you are unsure whether or not your donation qualifies for Gift Aid tax relief please contact the Regimental Headquarters on 01258 482087.

WANTED!

The Best Radio Sys Ops in the Corps

If you:

Rate yourself as a good operator,
Are adaptable and versatile,
Able to work on your own or in a small team,
Enjoy a challenge and
Enjoy foreign travel (often outside Europe),

Then Special Communications may be for you.

The next Spec Comms Assessment Course will be held in February 2001.
Those candidates assessed as suitable will be invited back for Special Communications Course 1/01, from April to July 2001.

Apply now, using the form in SOinC PD 206, available through your Sqn Office or YofS.

For additional information, contact the
1 (RBY) Sig Sqn (SC) Training Wing on
(9)4240 8518 / 01908 638518
or the Sqn YofS on
(9)4240 8516 / 01908 638516

WANTED

A STATUETTE OF 'JIMMY' SUITABLE FOR GARDEN USE.
HEIGHT APPROXIMATELY 3ft

Please contact **Mrs Edna Pritchard** (widow of **Ronald T. Pritchard**) on Coventry 024 76412273)

CAYTHORPE 2000

Maj I. Hooper and SSgt (YofS) Wilson

On 2-3 September Airborne Signals past and present made their annual pilgrimage to Caythorpe in Lincolnshire. The links between Caythorpe village and Royal Signals started late in 1943 when 1st Airborne Division Signals returned from Africa and were billeted in Caythorpe village and in Caythorpe Court prior to Op Market Garden. Close links were forged with the village, and Arnhem Sunday has been celebrated at Caythorpe by the Old Comrades Association (OCA) ever since, and since 1984 by 216 Sig Sqn. This year's event was also significant as the first Caythorpe weekend to be hosted by 16 Air Asslt Bde Sig Sqn (216), a year to the day that the Brigade was launched.

Sadly even the best efforts of **Rev Brian Lucas** failed to produce parachuting weather; the strong winds and elements kept up their bid to remove the tents from the village green all day but failed to dampen the enthusiasm of the Squadron or the locals for the village fete. The parachute insertion was not the only part of the plan to go awry. The Squadron football team went down 2-4 to Caythorpe Village and rumours abound that the entire squadron team is on a 12-Month Warning Order with a show again in September 2001.

The Falkland Stone

The main event of the morning was the re-dedication of the Falkland Stone by **Brig Peter Wall**, Commander 16 Air Asslt Bde. The granite obelisk was brought from the Falklands to commemorate the deaths in 1982 of **Maj Forge** and **SSgt John Baker**, killed when their Scout helicopter was shot down en route to re-supply a Squadron rebroadcast station. Until last year the stone stood outside 216 Sig Sqn HQ at Arnhem Barracks, Aldershot, and after a brief rest in Colchester it was placed by the Squadron at Caythorpe Church late in August this year.

Brig Peter Wall re-dedicates the Falkland Stone with Piper LCpl Narendra-Gurung

Saturday night saw some 120 members of the OCA, the Squadron and their families gather for the annual dinner. After the dinner the OC Squadron, **Maj Ivan Hooper**, spoke about the continued importance of the OCA and the Caythorpe weekend to a Brigade Signal Squadron that is 'forward looking but proud of its links with its forebearers'. **Maj Lewis Golden** then spoke movingly about the pilgrimage to Arnhem last year, the 55th Anniversary of Op Market Garden, paying particular tribute to the OCA President, **Maj Gen Dean-Drummond**, and also spoke of the gratitude of the OCA for the support from the Squadron.

The SOinC and the OCA President, Maj Gen Dean-Drummond

Toasts were drunk to '16 Air Assault Brigade' and 'Airborne Signals past and present'. Pipers, **LCpl Narendra-Gurung** and **Sig Bharatmani-Limbu** from 250 Sqn, 30th Sig Regt added great atmosphere to the occasion (and were also on hand to rouse the sleeping forms of airborne signallers past and present with reveille on Sunday morning). As the dinner concluded many decamped to the village and to the Waggon and Horses where the activities was continued until the early hours. Many friendships were renewed, and new ones forged as the serving members of the Squadron listened in awe to the exploits of those airborne signallers who had fought in Italy, North Africa, Sicily, Arnhem and Norway. It was tremendous to see past members of 216 Sig Sqn spanning several generations; names which are part of the fabric of the Squadron's histrory, including: **Bill Creswick, Lewis Golden, Dick Appleton, Mike Ham, Johnny Firkins, Dougie Alder, John Aspinall, Ralph Porter, Steve Marshall and Willy Granitza.**

Airborne Signals Past and Present

Sunday morning saw the traditional march past through Caythorpe village by the Squadron and the OCA. The OCA President and the Signal Officer in Chief took the salute. During the church service the names were read of those members of the Royal Signals who died at Arnhem, and wreaths were laid by the OC Squadron and **Mr Dick Appleton**. The exact format of next year's Caythorpe weekend has yet to be decided. The OCA had intended this to be the final dinner, but such was the enthusiasm for the event that this decision will be reviewed by the OCA in February. What is certain is that 16 Air Asst Bde Sig Sqn (216) will return to Caythorpe village next year to meet old friends and to pay our respects to our forebearers; a remarkable group of airborne signallers.

The OCA March Past

GENESIS CONSULTANCY
Providing Recruitment Solutions

TECHNICIANS, OPERATORS AND TELEMECHS REQUIRED

Genesis Consultancy specialise in placing ex-Corps members of all ranks and trades with the telecomms industry nationwide.

A wide variety of opportunities currently exist for Class 2 and Class 1 Techs, Operators and Telemechs as well as Foreman of Signals and Yeoman of Signals of all ranks who have decided to leave the Corps.

In addition to immediate requirements, we have medium and long-term requirements from our clients and can assist in all matters concerning these opportunities throughout the period running up to the date of discharge.

If you have decided to leave the Corps call us today or forward a detailed C.V.

Genesis Consultancy Ltd.
12-50 Kingsgate Road, Kingston, Surrey KT2 5AA
Tel: 020 8547 4141 Fax: 020 8547 4181
e-mail: admin@genesisconsultancy.co.uk
www.genesisconsultancy.co.uk

CONGRATULATIONS

Capt R. J. 'Beanie' **Lloyd** married **Capt D. R.** 'Pierre' **Farrimond** on Saturday 12 August, 2000, at the church of St Peter and St Paul, Weobley, Herefordshire. The couple were married by **Padre Lee Gandiyay** from 7 Sig Regt. **Capt D. R. Farrimond** has taken up a post as OC Penny Troop ATFC Arborfield and **Capt R. J. Farrimond** is looking forward to taking up a post as Instructor at RMAS on completion of JCSC in December.

Capt D. R. Farrimond (L) and Capt R. J. Lloyd (R)
7 Signal Regiment 2 Signal Regiment

The registered Domain Name for the Beverley Boys' Archive

beverleyboysarchive.co.uk

THE ROYAL SIGNALS BAND

During the last ten months, since the arrival of the new Director of Music, **Capt Paul Murrell**, the Band have been rehearsing, not only for engagements this year, but for a busy programme next year. This has meant a more intense rehearsal schedule and a more varied approach to the way we perform.

Our first programme this year was at the Poole Arts Centre with the Dorset Youth Wind Orchestra. The Band was enhanced by seventy 14-18 year olds for an evening which was also graced by our own Pipes and Drums. The proceeds were donated to the Joseph Weld Hospice and the Museum Educational Trust. Shortly after this we travelled to Cornwall to appear on the Bandstand at the Royal Cornwall Show, Wadebridge. This entailed three long hot days of concerts and arena marching displays – flying the Royal Signals flag – and avoiding the cowpats. We also managed to fit in open days at 3 UK Div and 14 Sig Regt and an evening marching display/retreat at Warminster for the Kent Cadet Force who were on summer camp.

If you missed Songs of Praise on 13th of August, then you will have also missed us. A whole Sunday was spent on the 9th of July recording this event along with **Alan Titchmarsh**. The previous day had been spent entertaining the public at Hamble Village and at Warsash as part of Solent Celebration 2000. This culminated in the Band being put onto a pontoon in the middle of the river and playing the evening to a close, without life jackets. The second trip to the area was made to front the Lord Mayor's Procession through the city of Portsmouth starting at the Guild Hall and ending on Southsea Common. This annual event is watched by thousands who line the route and consists of hundreds of floats and other marching organisations. On a more military line the Band have played at Pass Off Parades at both ATR Bassingborn and Lichfield, taken part in the massed band's spectacular at Tidworth, the Korean Veteran's Parade on the sea front at Weymouth and numerous mess nights around the Corps.

This year has also seen the arrival of the Big Band who have now performed on several occasions. The first of these was in the Crown Hotel, Blandford to a packed house raising money for local charities. Subsequent appearances have been at an Army Benevolent Concert at Canford School, Wimborne and the Concert Halle, Bad Salzuflen during our UKSC (G) tour in September. It is hoped to feature the Big Band in our new CD recording which will begin early next year.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank 7 and 16 Sig Regt and 1 (UK) Div for hosting us whilst in Germany this year, these tours seem to pass so quickly these days compared to years gone by. We would also like to wish a happy retirement to **Lt Col (Retd)** 'Guss' **Gurr** HQ 1 Sig Bde who has looked after us during many of these tours. We understand the house in France can accommodate quite a few – see you soon!! A fond farewell also has to be said to **Col R. M. Crombie**, Regimental Colonel and Band President.

The Director of Music (R) presents Col Crombie (L) with a framed copy of the Fanfare in the Band Bar 'Jimmy' by Musn Dave Byrne

On his departure from Blandford he was presented with a framed copy of his very own Fanfare, written by the Bandmaster **WO1 Bill Booth** and played to him on his final visit to the Band Block by the Fanfare Team, dressed slightly less formally than usual.

The Royal Signals Fanfare Team – Alternative Dress play Col Crombie's Fanfare

As a final note it is worth mentioning that this year the Corps Band celebrate their 80th Anniversary. This occasion will be formally celebrated at a dinner, in Blandford, at the end of the year, and attended by all the current serving members of the Band and the new Band President, **Col R. N. Donaldson** and his wife.

LIFE AS THE CORPS' BAND ADMIN OFFICER

When I was asked to write an article about my job as the Corps Band Admin Officer I thought long and hard about the way in which I should approach it. After much deliberation and note making I decided it was not a good idea to go into too much detail as someone out there reading this article may think I'm having too much fun and transfer me to a proper job! So leaving out all the parties and naked midnight swims in Cyprus (names and numbers supplied) here is my brief account of my first six years in the post.

Alison Yetman - Band Admin Officer
'The answer is no. Now what's the question?'

When it was suggested to me by my Civil Admin Officer at RM Poole that my post may not exist after the Defence Housing Executive took over Married Quarters control in 1994 my first reaction was, 'B****r, I should have applied for the advertised post with the Band at Bovington.' Enquiries were made to find if there was still a vacancy and there was but with the Band at Blandford. Phone calls were made and an interview arranged with the then Director of Music, **Maj D. F. Wall** and it was on a grey day in December 1994 that I got my first visit to Blandford Garrison and the Band Block. I must say that first impressions were encouraging, plenty of room to park, beautiful green rolling countryside and a pleasant drive in from Poole. It wasn't to last. When I came back in January of the following year to take up my post, work had begun to dig up the old Stanley Square to build the new cookhouse and surrounding single accommodation blocks. For the next two years we lived in the middle of a building site and more often than not came to work in wellies.

I had a preconception that working with a military band would be interesting but nothing prepared me for what I was to experience. Until that day, I, like many other people had seen Trooping the Colour, the Cenotaph, the Royal Tournament, Changing the Guard at Buckingham Palace and the playing of Happy Birthday to The Queen Mother as an annual National event you take for granted. I was now working directly with the musicians who took part in these and working behind the scenes in support. Since 1995 the Corps Band have been to Northern Ireland, Germany, Cyprus, Canada, America, Sweden, France, Bosnia, Gibraltar, Public Duties and Duty Band at Sandhurst. They don't always remember to send me a postcard but when the hosting units thank you letters, PR photos and press cuttings start arriving post tour it is very gratifying to read how much people enjoyed hearing and seeing the Band.

Enquiries come in on a daily basis from outside agencies and Signals Units world wide, wishing to employ the Band and I have made many friends over the years. When employed by charities and other organisations I often receive invitations to attend their functions. This is not always possible due to the nature of my job but I always enjoy seeing the outcome of weeks of preparation. The Band do not always understand why I bother but I find it satisfying to see an audience enjoy a concert, marching display or retreat and know I've helped to organise it.

There are currently 32 Regular Army Bands, 17 of them have AO's working with them either full or part time and I have at some time or other met or spoken to all of them. One or two are ex-band members who have taken up the civilian posts at the end of their Army careers the others are clerks or music librarians who have come from admin backgrounds. Many find it amazing at the amount of involvement I have with the band on both a work and social level. If I had to sit down and design my perfect job I would never have come up with this. OK it's not all good – when we have bad days they are bad, but the job is made by the people I work with and they aren't all that bad !!

The White Helmets

OC RSMDT **Lt Col Jack Amberton**
Team Capt **Capt Kyra McAnulty**
Team SNCO **SSgt Paul Boughey**

TEAM OVERVIEW – *by Capt K. H. McAnulty*

Since potential 'luvvy' **Capt** 'Gordy Babes' **Newell's** departure the Team has been orchestrated by the very capable team Staff Sergeant, **SSgt Paul Boughey,** through what has been a very busy if somewhat accident prone show season. The teams' outstanding performance was in no small part due to the soldiers' fine personal attributes and the dedication of each team member.

I have finally arrived and will be taking over the reins as Team Captain, an appointment I am thrilled to be taking up. Unusually, for the team I am actually a motorcyclist and I hold a road license - so it is over to the team to teach me how to really ride. Any preconceived ideas that I would be arriving in the quieter post show season period have been dispelled. We are now starting to prepare for 2001. This entails setting up a Team recruiting campaign spreading the length and breadth of England, Wales and Germany, in search of volunteers to come along and join the team. It also involves planning for and running the selection course (in which I will also be a participant); and then training the new Team in preparation for the opening show (20th April 2001). It seems easy if you say it quickly but with all the other operational pressures on in the Corps it is not! We remain optimistic though.....

In addition to the departure of **Capt Newell**, we are saying farewell to **Cpls** 'Wayne Sleep' **Malin, Bob** 'Funky Monk' **Sizeland, John** 'Mad Dog' **Strachan** and **LCpl** 'Rat Boy Scouse' **O'Leary** after three years with the team. Congratulations to **Sgt Chris** 'Smithers' **Hunt** on his promotion, **LCpl Ed** 'Rooster' **Lewis** on passing his Class 1 and on scoring Top Student. Also congratulations go to **LCpl Mal** 'Bambi' **Hildreth** on his marriage to **Claire, LCpl Tony** 'Eye Wash' **Annetts** on his marriage to **Donna** and **LCpl** 'Franky Le Beouf' **Fitzpatrick** on his imminent wedding to **Lisa**. Finally, congratulations to **LCpl Gary** 'Little Man' **Fisher** and his partner **Lisa** on the birth of their daughter **Talitha Skye.**

MILLENNIUM SHOW SEASON - *by the first year riders!*

After successful completion of the February Selection Course I made my way with the Team to RAF Sealand for four weeks of pre-show training. This was to allow all the first year riders to get to grips with the most basic tricks of the display, mission accomplished with some brilliant fun and a few bruises thrown in. With the foundations of the display laid at Sealand the Team then returned to the 'Unique Georgian Town' of Blandford to add the finishing touches to the tricks prior to the opening show. Everything was going to plan until 1 week before the show. During 'Charlie's Diamond' we had a smash leaving four bikes and their riders namely **Cpl Bob Sizeland**, **LCpl** 'Fozzy' **Forster, LCpl Tony Annetts** and **LCpl** 'Mal' **Hildreth**, scattered over the arena. **LCpl** 'Tonka' **Richardson, LCpl** 'Fozzy' **Forster, LCpl** 'Mal' **Hildreth** and **LCpl Fullerton** were obviously chuffed - not! They had the task of getting the bikes up and running again.

After a lot of cursing and scraped knuckles the hardworking mechanics had the bikes ready for the opening show. Unfortunately whilst collapsing the six bike fan a few weeks before the opening show **Cpl** (now Sgt) **Hunt** landed badly and damaged his foot quite badly. As a very capable rider he had been planned into a number of tricks, including the car jump, so a lot had to be changed and replacements found ASAP, step up **LCpl** 'Fitz' **Fitzpatrick**. The opening show saw **SSgt Paul Boughey** at the helm, and everything went brilliantly. The first year riders were presented with their well earned White Helmets and **Cpl Chris Hunt** was awarded

the highly coveted Lucas Trophy for the Best New Comer.

On to our first civilian orientated public performance, the Leicester Show, and then the ball was rolling. The highlight of the show season for me this year was in Belfast at the Royal Balmoral Show. Due to the political situation it was obvious that we were initially nervous but our minds were put at rest by the escort from the 7 Royal Irish boys who followed us everywhere we went. Chatham saw the first visit of the season to Kent for Chatham Navy Days. The stray wadding from a field gun demonstration prematurely set off the fire frame and sent team members on the bus sprinting to put it out. One of the best show-grounds of the season was the Suffolk Show in Ipswich. The bright sunshine was a far cry from the downpour on the last show at Chatham. Even the food was exemplary which makes a fine change. To top it off **LCpl** 'Duncy Monkey' **Marsh** found his future wife in new love **Janey**! In June we travelled north of the border to the Bathgate Festival in West Lothian. We arrived to find the show-ground practically deserted apart from the food stands and traders. Eventually to the sound of bagpipes, like children following the Pied Piper, the crowds came. 3 Div Beating the Retreat at Tidworth was another fabulous show of a very important military nature which entailed entertaining some of the highest ranks in the Army and local dignitaries.

On the recruiting side of life, a trip to Catterick and the Army Schools Exhibition saw us perform six shows over three days. Many youngsters were interested in the Team and in the Royal Signals itself. At one of the shows **LCpl** 'Scouse (I can jump the world)' (just!) **O' Leary** spectacularly jumped over a Military Police car, an Arctic Tracked Vehicle and finally the team car and without leaving tyre marks on the roof. The annual RSA weekend took place on 24 June and meant another performance on our home arena at Blandford. The weekend was a great reunion for all ex-service men and especially ex-White Helmets to tell a few stories to the present team members, a lot of lamps were swung! Monster Trucks were the order of the day as the team rocked up to Bath Truckfest. We shared the show with many famous stars including **Tracy Shaw** from Coronation Street and **Ricky Tomlinson** from The Royle Family. During the last display **Sig Paul** 'Stan the Man' **Bowes** caught a flame slap to the face from the fire jump which resulted in a rather rouge (burnt) face, (Aaawww). At Northampton Town Show we were exceptionally well looked after. On the first night we were entertained by Republica live in a open air concert which resulted in many members of the team camping at the show-ground. Some team members including **LCpl Tony** 'Jawbone' **Annetts, LCpl Ed** 'Have you seen my new Tatoo' **Lewis** and **Sig Paul** 'The Ears' **Bowes** got to ride around the arena on some Lambretta scooters. The second night's entertainment came in the form of Spandau Ballet minus the Kemps. After a couple of pints of 'sui-cider' many people including **LCpl** 'Scotty (Roman Nose)' **Eccott, Sig Matt** 'Iv'e got a Lizard' **Scott** and **LCpl Keith** 'Stretch' **Hodgson** not only woke up with a hangover but also had a petrol head from a hot night in the boudoir?

August took the Team to Bolton and brought an unexpected twist in the accommodation. Instead of staying in a camp we found ourselves in heaven enjoying the treatment of the Park Hall Hotel at the Camelot Theme Park. On the way to the first show tempers frayed slightly when an out of control enraged car driver cut up the coach as we were about to enter the show-ground. The driver of the car and his passenger were insensed by the incident but soon backed down by the sight of 30 team members peering down on them from the coach. Fortunately for them **Cpl Bob** ' I'm green and keen again' **Sizeland** calmed them down with his smooth talking. One of the last and favourite shows for the team is the South West Motorcycle Expo held on Blandford Camp airfield in September. Other stars included The Tigers - a children's Motorcycle Display Team, Jimmy Fireblade, Jumping Jake Semtex and last but not least World Record Breaker Gary Rothwell. The team finished the season on a high on a wonderfully hot day to their home crowd, only made hotter when **LCpl** 'My foots on fire' **Annetts** decided to set fire to his foot whilst lighting the fire sticks for the jump.

THE MAN FROM MANNING AND CAREER MANAGEMENT DIVISION

Maj S. G. Hutchinson MBE

After a very quiet summer the pace of life here in Glasgow has started to quicken. With everybody back from leave our attentions have now turned towards some key policy issues such as, the introduction of the RCMO concept, changes to the Officers CR system and the requirement to confirm Residual Service for promotion. We have also entered the promotion board season that inevitably leads to frantic activity at desk level. Looking ahead the remainder of the year will see the Division embarking on a series of road-shows which gives us the opportunity of highlighting key policy changes and issues that affect us all. It will, however, also give you the opportunity to raise issues with us whether they are personal or wide-ranging. **Capt Shane Knight** arrived from DISI during the summer and is now firmly in the C Wing 'hot seat'. On a sad note our Staff Assistant, **WO2 (SQMS) Myles,** will leave the Army in November to be replaced by **WO2 (SQMS) Scott**.

(We have had a different focus for each edition and this time, scraping the barrel, we turn to Officer Wing.)

FOCUS ON OFFICER WING

SO1 Officers - **Lt Col Steve Richardson** is responsible for the posting and career management of all Regular Majors and Lieutenant Colonels. Lucky enough to have his own office alongside the Col MCM Div, **Lt Col Richardson** also fondly imagines that he is the focal point for all R SIGNALS Officer policy issues. Having his own office has distinct advantages, one of the principle ones being that he can spread his Daily Telegraph across the desk without getting in anybody else's way. He believes, quite wrongly, that he is the most important person in the Officer Wing.

AO SO1 Officers - George Walker is the SO1's right hand man and a key member of the Officers' Team. Responsible for providing support to the SO1, **George** is renowned for his love of Guinness and has been known to travel the length and breadth of Britain to find that 'perfect pint'. He doesn't care who the most important person in the Officer Wing is, as long as they're buying the next round.

SO1 LE Officers - Lt Col Dave Lumb is responsible for all Late Entry Officers and is instrumental in co-ordinating and implementing commissioning policy. A keen golfer, **Lt Col Lumb** has built up a considerable understanding of the fairways and greens in the Glasgow environs. His personal crusade is to remind Mainstream Officers several times a day what they have forgotten to do for him. He is quite sure that he is the most important person in the Officer Wing.

AO SO1 LE Officers- Linda McNeil is the quietly efficient one who beavers away behind the scenes in the Late Entry Section. The resident 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire' expert, **Linda** is a dab hand at quizzes and general knowledge, that's when you can get her off the Internet. She is also a massive sci-fi fan who loves the 'dark side' that comes in useful when dealing with most Quartermasters. She agrees that **Lt Col Lumb** considers himself the most important person in the Officer Wing but her opinion diverges sharply after that.

SO2 Officers - Maj Steve Turnbull is responsible for the postings and career management of Captains and Lieutenants. An ex Royal Marine **Maj Turnbull** is very much at the forefront of 'Young Officer' business even if he does spend the majority of his lunch breaks pampering himself in the local health spa. He knows that he is the most important person in the Officer Wing but doesn't want to upset the SO1s by saying so.

AO SO2 Officers - Liz 'Biggles' **Robinson** is the SO2 Officers' partner in crime. Ex-RAF, **Liz** has brought a new dimension to flying a desk and although being the new girl on the block has yet to confuse a Pilot Officer with a Second Lieutenant. **Liz** is fairly sure that there isn't anyone important in the Officer Wing.

CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

Following on from the summer edition of *The WIRE* we agreed to give you some helpful tips with respect to Confidential Report writing. Whilst the forms for both Officers and Soldiers Confidential Reports are different the principles for their completion and submission remain the same. Here are some tips that you may find useful:

The Military Secretary's Guide to both Soldiers and Officers Confidential Reports is the bible with respect to Confidential Report writing. Indeed it is essential to read the respective guide prior to completing and submitting a Confidential Report.

Personal details on the front covers must be correct as time is needlessly wasted returning Confidential Reports.

The assessment of characteristics must match the pen picture as all too often the boxes are marked excellent yet the pen picture is distinctly mediocre.

The pen picture must be factually correct although subjective comment is allowed as the Reporting Officer is merely stating his opinion.

Be honest in your assessment of an individual and make sure that a Mid-Term Appraisal is conducted and recorded, regardless of rank or seniority.

You must ensure that Confidential Reports, of whatever nature, are submitted on time. The impact of a report failing to reach us in time could prevent that soldier or Officer from appearing before a Promotion Board, the net result being that his/her career could be severely affected. The golden rule is 'GET THEM IN ON TIME'.

If unsure please do not be afraid to seek advice.

NEXT EDITION

In our submission to *The WIRE* we will have a look at the hub of the Division, Central Support, featuring yours truly, together with a brief insight into the Redress Procedure.

HELP !!!!!!! HELP !!!!!!!! HELP !!!!!!!

Are you sitting there reading this and thinking that you would like to do something a bit different, perhaps something out of the ordinary involving challenges, travel and communication. Have you ever considered being a Special Recruiter or member of the R SIGNALS Mobile Presentation Team. If you have, but have not known how to go about it then contact your Admin Office or speak to your 'boss', there are opportunities out there!

MOVEMENTS

OFFICERS
OCTOBER 2000

Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Col R. M. Crombie	Cadet Training Centre
Col M. J. Dent MBE	BMATT (Freetown) Sierre Leone
Col J. K. Ewbank	Royal School of Signals
Lt Col N. D. Crouch	D Army Plans
Lt Col P. H. Eaton	UKSC(G)
Lt Col D. A. H. Jones	BOWMAN IPT
Lt Col M. P. Llewellyn	15 Signal Regiment
Lt Col R. J. Steed MBE	Royal School of Signals
Maj A. D. E. Cameron	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj A. Charlton	RMAS
Maj M. S. Dooley	RMCS Shrivenham
Maj I. G. Favager	Royal School of Signals
Maj G. R. Grant	Recruiting Marketing HQ RG
Maj I. L. Parry	21 Signal Regiment (Air Support)
Maj M. E. Pawlak	Royal School of Signals (within)
Maj A. L. Pearce	Comd Info Sys Sector - Malvern
Maj R. J. B. Spencer	RMCS Shrivenham
A/Maj G. E. Blythe	RSSST
A/Maj R. B. Wyllie	HQ 2 (NC) Signal Brigade
Capt R. J. Anderton-Brown	HQ 12 Mech Bde
Capt D. A. Brisco	ES 31 CIS/SP DGES (A)
Capt A. D. Clixby	HQ 19 Mech Bde & Sig Sqn (209)
Capt J. D. Gorse	LSRC Project Team
Capt K. A. Jeeves	30 Signal Regiment
Capt S. J. Morgan	249 Signal Squadron (AMF(L))
Capt M. J. Morton	3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Capt R. J. Parkinson	RHQ AFNORTH CIS Sp Gp
Capt I. L. Parry	21 Signal Regiment (Air Support)
Capt R. Patrickson	Royal School of Signals
Capt D. T. Wilson	JFACTSU GL SECT
Capt C. M. Wood	CDL (DES) Implementation Team

OFFICERS
NOVEMBER 2000

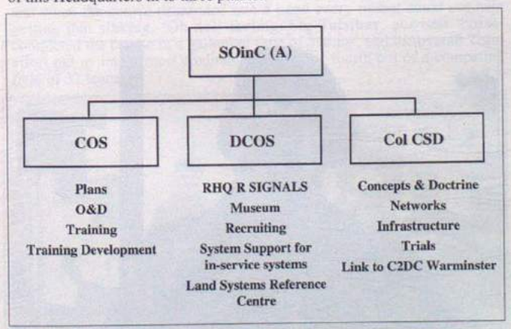
Name and Rank	*Unit to which posted*
Lt Col M. P. Llewellyn	15 Signal Regiment
Maj W. R. Kirkwood	600 Signal Troop
Maj M. J. Rayner	Army Apprentices' College
Maj C. D. G. Storey	238 Signal Squadron
Capt D. J. O'Brien	264 Signal Squadron (SAS)
Capt S. Palfreyman	JSSU Digby
Lt C. N. Biddulph	ATR Bassingbourn
2Lt D. R. Atkinson	16 Air Asslt Bde & Sig Sqn (216)

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

HEADQUARTERS SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF (ARMY)

NEWS FROM THE HEADQUARTERS
SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF (ARMY)
THE COMMAND SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

The change in title of this Headquarters will have been noted straight away by those of you reading this article. It stems from one of the two parallel initiatives that are now beginning to bear fruit. The first of these is the General Staff Review, which formally recognised SOinC(A)'s position as the proponent for the delivery of all mobile and deployable information services. The establishment of a Command Development Centre (CDC) in support of Digitization, is the second major initiative. This has led to the regrouping of a variety of assets already within Blandford, including HQ and RHQ R SIGNALS, ACISSG, BDMT and the imminent reorganisation of this Headquarters in to three pillars:



THE ROLE OF THE COMMAND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE IS:

'to provide a focus for developing C2 and Command Support capability for Land Component operations in the context of Joint and Multinational forces'

The CDC consists of two elements, the first of which is the Command and Control Development Centre, which is to be based at Warminster alongside the Combined Arms Training Centre. This will identify C2 needs and develop appropriate principles, procedures and requirements. It is supported by a staff designed to form a skeleton representation of battlegroup and brigade staffs so that these new tactics, techniques and procedures can be developed and trialled at capacity, using the CATC OPFOR battlegroup as they approach maturity.

The second element is the Command Support Development (CSD) Centre, based in Blandford and is the third pillar of SOinC(A)'s organisation shown above. Its role is to develop coherent Command Support solutions to underpin the C2 process, ensuring that the operational benefits of digitization are fully realised. In essence, in addition to the trials function, the tasks of the CSDC will be divided into three:

Concepts and Doctrine - responsible for ensuring that future systems meet the requirements of current and emerging doctrine, ie that they are designed to be capable of supporting the needs of future commanders.

Networks - responsible for the Communications backbone - 'the pipes'.

Infrastructure - responsible for systems architecture which facilitates the flow of data - 'the projectiles'.

Applications - To complete the picture, there will be a close working relationship with DCIS(A)'s collocated Applications Staff, who are responsible for applications coherence and extracting the information from the data - 'the payload'.

Trials - In support of the Equipment Programme, the CSDC will also participate in the evaluation of technologies, the trial of concepts and the assessment of industry solutions.

There will be a series of vital working relationships with other organisations, some of which have already been referred to, including:

DGD&D - for conceptual and doctrinal Command Support issues.

DEC (CCII)'s Integrated Project Teams - notably BOWMAN and FALCON.

DCIS(A) - for applications coherence issues.

C2DC Warminster.

The process will be 'owned' by ACGS in his role as the Army's Chief Information Officer and overseen by the Future Army Command and Control Steering Group. A limited CDC capability already exists in both Warminster and Blandford, although the formal Initial Operating Capability is due to come on line in December. The physical reorganisation of the existing staffs will have taken place in early December, and we will issue a revised contact list in the next issue of *'The WIRE'*.

FRAMEWORK FOR C4I ENDURANCE ON EXPEDITIONARY OPERATIONS

The Army Digitisation Steering Group has recently endorsed a paper on a Framework for C4I Endurance on Expeditionary Operations, to ensure that, in future, the required resources are identified at the earliest stages of planning. Also that overall cost estimates are informed, and clearly identified staffing solutions are established to enable CIS to sustain simultaneous operations without causing over stretch. The paper discussed:

–The commercial options available to replace military CIS to suit a variety of circumstances. Commercialisation is the replacement of mobile military infrastructure with its commercial counterpart but maintained and managed by military personnel. Contractorisation for the provision of CIS services requires no military manning to operate or maintain services but will have some management overheads. Variations include military ownership of commercially leased solutions or the use of Sponsored Reserves; where the supply of

equipment is linked to the provision of contracted personnel willing to serve on operations.

– The significant demands expeditionary operations place on mobile military CIS infrastructure. Within the Land component in particular this includes significant amounts of skilled manpower and equipment. The current Defence Planning Assumptions require CIS capability to support a number of concurrent options. Operations over the last 20 years often left a substantial C4I commitment in place long after the peak intensity of operations. It is therefore imperative that our ability to regenerate the CIS force is as efficient as possible and that the replacement for the deployable and mobile military CIS infrastructure is an appropriate alternative to produce an enduring solution with minimum manpower implications.

– The requirement for planning to support the regeneration of the mobile CIS force to be conducted from the outset of any operation. Furthermore, the extent to which existing in-theatre infrastructure may be required throughout the operation must also be a key factor in establishing targeting policy and plans. Such planning requires wide involvement including Director Military Operations, Permanent Joint HQ and Defence Communications Services Agency. The replacement of mobile military infrastructure by commercial or contractor-based solutions depends upon the clear articulation of the requirement and its translation into the key features of a technical solution. This will require appropriately trained specialist personnel to deploy early. Establishing the funding for the provision of alternatives to mobile military infrastructure has always proved problematic. The operational estimate should establish the extent to which the replacement of military mobile infrastructure is to be replaced to meet both operational sustainability criteria and force regeneration aims. The unique nature of the provision of commercialised infrastructure to replace mobile military infrastructure should be recognised through adaptation of procurement procedures to enable the inclusion of training and long term support costs.

Further work at the joint level will use this endorsed approach to improve the planning process in conjunction with Director Military Operations, the Permanent Joint HQ and the Defence Communications Services Agency; establish a CIS intelligence focus; deliver a specialist team capability; establish sources of funding; identify modifications to procurement process to better support CIS; and examine the use of Sponsored Reserves.

ROYAL SIGNALS ON ASCENSION ISLAND
by Lt Col W. E. Brewin

Whilst taking part in a recent JFHQ Exercise in the South Atlantic, I took the opportunity to visit the 16 Sig Regt and 81 Sig Sqn (V) detachments who are currently carrying out a line project at the RAF Station on Ascension Island. The 16 Sig Regt personnel are on 4-month Roulement Tours and the 81 Sig Sqn boys were on a 2-week attachment.

Sgt Ali Watkins and LCpl Pete Frazer (16 Sig Regt)
Sgt Malc 'Idon't get seasick' Penn, LCpl Dave Pye and
Sig Haydon Hasch (81 Sig Sqn)
Lt Col Willy Brewin is in the middle pretending not to be on a Swan
and Sig 'Luton' O'Connor is behind the camera

NEWS OF TRAINING

11 SIGNAL REGIMENT

FAREWELL TO THE COMMANDER

On Friday 6 October the Commander of the Royal School of Signals, **Col Ken Hadfield** conducted his farewell visit to 11 Signal Regiment. The RSS and 11 Sig Regt are, by the very nature of the organization at Blandford very closely linked and this relationship has become ever stronger during **Col Hadfield's** tenure as Commander. The visit followed the usual format of 'round the houses', as the Commmander visited the various Squadrons and Departments. He was particularly keen to speak to the JNCO's in each of the Troops and enjoyed the usual banter when he found himself in Rhino Tp with the incorrigible **Cpl Gilman**!

Then came the surprise. The Commander was taken to the Blandford Camp Clay Ground where the Cadre of 11 Sig Regt met him. He was then invited to form a team of eight shooters from the Cadre who would shoot against a side made up of Phase 2 Trainees.

Col Hadfield presenting a medal to Sig Fitzpatrick,
one of the winning Trainee Team

The CO, Lt Col R. G. Nicholson
'Which end do I hold this?'

The shoot was conducted over two stands as individuals, followed by groups of four guns all firing at the same time at a flush of 40 driven clays. In-spite of the Commander's best efforts (he shot 14/20 on the individual stands and 8/10 on his part of the flush stand) he was let down – for the first time in his tour – by the 11 Sig Regt Cadre as the trainees won by two clays. The fact that they had spent the previous day practicing might have helped! The shoot was followed by lunch in the field as the GCWO, **WO1 Thorn**, treated everyone there to curry, followed by cheese and biscuits. The CO, **Lt Col R. G. Nicholson**, had one or two more surprises up his sleeve.

As the Commander began to take his leave there was the roar of motorbikes. As a former OC of the White Helmets, he would be driven off on the back of one of the team's new Triumphs. Not only that but a former member of the team during his time **Ex-Sgt Dave Burgess** was to ride him away. Now serving as a member of the MPGS at HQ Land, **Sgt Burgess** jumped at the chance to get on a Triumph again. With an outrider either side he made a rather bumpy and wobbly exit. The Commander leaves for service in Brussels with HQ NATO and is wished good luck and farewell by all members of 11 Sig Regt.

Col Hadfield departing 11 Sig Regt for the last time
with ex-Sgt Dave Burgess one of his old team members

2000 HORSELESS EVENT - *by Signaller Grieves 3 Sqn*

On Sunday, 1 October, a team of soldiers from the Royal Signals participated in the year 2000 Horseless Team event. This consisted of a mass start of some 200 people racing, on foot, over two laps of the 4.5-mile cross-country course. The course, itself, consisted of numerous obstacles such as knee high log jumps, stacked hay bales, steep slopes and when the course descended into a pond every runner could not help getting that sinking, 'Oh no!' feeling. **Sig Tulsibar**, our best 'horse' completed the course in a galloping time of 59mins, and the overall Team effort put us into a most creditable position of fourth out of a competing field of 32 teams.

The Team with Simon Weston

After the event the 3 Squadron Team had a chance to relax and gain some refreshments. The Team also met **Simon Weston** an ex Welsh guardsman, who was the event organiser. **Simon's** charity event organising reputation is extensive and he was there throughout the event.

EXERCISE HARROGATE HIKE

Ex Harrogate Hike was a HF Comms Ex in support of the Hardy Hike organised by The Dorset Wildlife Trust. The original idea to support the Trust came from a chat between **SSgt** 'Chippy' **Chapman**, **Cpl** 'Drew' **Mechen** and **Alice Dearing** and **Harvey Davies**, of the Dorset Wildlife Trust, some months ago. 3 Sqn have young willing soldiers that help the Trust with conservation, scrub clearance and other tasks on a regular basis. There were 12 young soldiers and four technician up-graders from 3 Sqn who deployed on the Saturday afternoon to test the radios. The weather was fine and everyone was looking forward to the following day. The radio testing went well and all was set for an early start as the first walkers away were at 0600hrs.

SSgt 'Chippy' **Chapman** called reveille at 0500hrs (**Cpl** 'Drew' **Mechen** getting up at half past) and the day had begun with drizzle, horizontal rain and fog. The lads were deployed to the start at a windy Chesil Beach and other checkpoints around the damp and dreary West Dorset countryside. After a slight location puzzlement the walkers finally arrived at the start along with two teams from 3 Sqn headed up by **Cpl** 'Harry' **Cross**, Royal Anglians. The small car park at Chesil Beach was like a bee's nest buzzing with enthusiastic drenched walkers of all ages raring to go. They set off at 0645hrs with 25 miles up and down hills and through a bull infested field to walk. **Cpl** 'Nige' **Rogan** and the lads with the radio at the start-point followed on behind to give support and encouragement.

The day was going very well despite the appalling weather and an unfriendly bull. Radio comms were fine and the lads were happy. The weather started to get better about half way and the sun was shining by the time the first walkers were arriving at the last checkpoint before the final assault on the finish. The first person to reach the finish was a civilian who had run all the way along the beach. The two teams from 3 Sqn arrived at the finish looking a little bedraggled along with some added blisters. Even with sore feet they were in good spirits. The lads with the radio at the last checkpoint arrived at the finish at 1900hrs with the help of the last walker who was a 78-year old man who started walking at 0645hrs in the morning. The two members of the Dorset Wildlife Trust who organised the event were extremely happy the day went without any real problems and were very grateful for the help from the lads of 3 Sqn. There were in excess of 300 walkers of all ages who turned up on the day to give their support for the Trust.

EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENT TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Tanya M. Noakes**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'Chippy' **J. Pomfret**

The last half-year has been a turbulent time for our newly forged Troop, and 4 Military Training Squadron in general. External Development Troop as we are now will be responsible for personal development of Royal Signals soldiers through Adventure Training and Leadership courses. Such changes have not only seen many office changes, but also considerable change within the personnel of the team itself. First to move to pastures new was **Cpl Rob** 'GWAR' **Kirk** posted on promotion to Sergeant to 16 Sig Regt. No doubt he'll see many more office changes on his forthcoming move to Brugen. We wish him, his wife **Geraldine** (Mrs. GWAR) and his family all the best for the future. Second to leave was the Troop Comd, **Capt Richard** 'Johnny Vaughn' **Todd** upon promotion to civvi-street (Well everyone else who's left has been promoted) and we wish him well in his various management roles around the world. All too soon the next to leave was **Sgt** 'Because he's Sid' **Barrass** posted on promotion to Staff Sergeant to REME Borden (Watch out all you single girls!) From the entire Troop we wish you well and you will be sorely missed. Welcome to the new Troop Comd, **Capt Tania Noakes,** on promotion from 7 Sig Regt who is currently looking forward to cutting her teeth on the first Leadership course, which begins in October. In addition a prospective welcome to the new Leadership Corporal, **Cpl Bedward**, who has been keen to join us since he himself did the course in 1998. There has also been a spate of mysterious posting orders for others due to join in future....? The next year looks like it will be a thoroughly exciting and rewarding time for the Troop with many ideas cross-pollinated from Adventure Training to the Leadership course and visa versa. For those with an eye to develop their potential book your places early to avoid disappointment!

KOHIMA TROOP - *by LCpl Boyden*

Tp Comd **Capt Connor**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Bousfield**

EXERCISE KOHIMA ROCK,1–5 OCTOBER

Day One: One cold Sunday morning, seven members of Kohima Tp deployed to sunny Gibraltar on the first of hopefully many exercises to this hot bit of the world. **Sigs James** 'Rab' **Dunn, Alan Easton, Greg Chambers, Callum** 'Biffa' **Rollo** and **Mark Wootton**, under the ever-intrepid leadership of **LCpl Jim Boyden** and **Cpl** 'Barney' **Rumble** deployed at the rather unsociable hour of 0430hrs Sunday morning, much to the surprise of those crawling back into camp from Blandfords G-Spot. With much yawning, swearing and sleeping all the way to RAF Lyneham we boarded the magnificent luxury of one of the RAF's C130s for the five-hour flight to Gibraltar and had soon touched down in the blistering heat. We were met by **Sgt Nick McAnulty** from 642 Tp, possibly one of the Corps smallest Troops, who bravely offered to show us the town. After the smokers had discovered, to their delight, that they could buy a packet of 20 cigarettes and a bottle of Becks and still have change from £2, we settled in for the night at the local taverna and watched the world go by.

Day Two: After a leisurely breakfast at the Tri-Service cookhouse (cue lots of staring at the RAF's females) we were shown around 642 Tp, buried deep within the rock by **Sgt McAnulty**. 642 Tp man the main exchange for the Garrison, maintaining the several thousand phone lines

on the Rock as well as providing the landlines for the Royal Navy ships that dock in the harbour. In the afternoon we decided to risk the beach and settled down for the afternoon with the inevitable crate of Becks to cool off in the Mediterranean sun. Come seven o'clock the paler members of the group, namely **Sigs Callum** 'Biffa' **Rollo** and **James** 'Rab' **Dunn** turning a rather painful shade of pink. In the evening we were taken up in a Hercules with some men dressed suspiciously all in black and watched as they practised low level insertion by parachute over the water before retiring to the Gibraltar equivalent of the G-Spot for a few well deserved beers.

Day Three: 'We're going to climb the Rock today,' announced **Cpl** 'Barney' **Rumble**. There was a shocked silence. He tried again. 'I said; we're going to climb the Rock today.' We stared up the Rock. If, in thousands of years of warfare, better warriors than us had failed to conquer the rock, what chance did we have? 'There's a cable car most of the way,' he said. 'Oh,' we said, 'That's alright then.' After a short walk through the town centre we took the cable car up to the top of the rock. We all bomb-burst out into various activities, looking at the caves, being attacked by monkeys and cooling off in the bar. **Cpl** 'Barney' **Rumble** decided that we should climb to the summit. Shunning the normal tourist paths, which he deemed 'weak and un-military' we started off to the top along overgrown, unused and scary paths. We started to perspire heavily; '…because we're getting closer to the sun,' explained **LCpl Jim Boyden**. Things got steadily more precarious. Eventually after much sweating and swearing we reached the very top of the rock at the far end and gazed out over the Mediterranean and across to Africa. It was an amazing sight.

Day Four: Everyone looks really depressed because it's the last day. Some of the lads with passports decide to nip across the border into Spain to stock up on duty-frees. Those of us with NATO Travel Orders were denied entry to Spain on the grounds that we were British Military. (Boo!) The rest of us decide to take advantage of the hot, sandy beach and continue to work on our suntans, or going pink. A bit of a quiet day in conclusion, with not much drinking going on due to the RAF's 'No drinking before a flight' policy. After a mad rush to pick up more duty-frees and a last meal in Pizza Hut (proper local food, as always) we trooped off to bed for an early return to rainy England.

In summary, for the five SATTs that we took, it was a valuable exercise. It showed them the diversity of work available in the British Army and also a useful insight into the tri-services environment. Plus, it showed that there's more to the Royal Corps of Signals than Blandford Camp. Also we all got a jolly nice suntan out of it too. Special thanks must go to **SSgt McCulloch** of Kohima Tp's Atts and Dets office who arranged such a magnificent few days, and I'm sorry that I forgot your duty frees.

THE BRAEMAR HIGHLAND GAMES - *by Sig Jesson, Iron Tp*

The Highland Games took place on the 3 September 2000 in Braemar. I was a member of the Regimental Athletics Team, which had been invited to compete in the Relay Race during this prestigious event. Also taking part in the Games were the Joint Services Tug-of-War and Relay Teams. There were teams from all over the world competing in events such as Caber Tossing, Hammer Throwing and Throwing of the Braemar Stone. The Relay Race took place in front of a crowd of 20,000, which included **Her Majesty The Queen** and the **Prime Minister**. It consisted of four legs; the first and last leg was run over a distance of 150m, and the second and third legs were over 300m. Our Team, coached by **WO2 (SSM) Tasker**, came second beaten by a mere six inches. Each member of the Team was presented with a tankard to remember the event. It was a fantastic opportunity to take part in the Games and it is something I shall never forget. The two teams from 11 Sig Regt were; **Sgt Spruce, LCpl Lowe, Sig McSween** and **Sig Jesson** and **Sig Massie, Sig Hardy, Sig Siddal** and **Sig Gill**.

HARROGATE CUP - NETBALL COMPETITION

by Sig Gemma Coel

The August Harrogate Cup Competition was the inter-Squadron Netball. Beaufighter Troop of 2 (Catterick) Sqn, entered a strong team of girls led by **Sig Emma Pheasey**. The rest of the team were **Sigs Cheryl McKee, Mel Gros, Charmaine Reid, Gemma Coel, Jennifer Roberts, Hannah Willis, Becky Edmundson** and **Katie Costello**. Five teams were competing for the Trophy and after the preliminary rounds where Beaufighter Team won all three matches, we were to face the 1 Sqn Team in the final. We have already beaten them in a close prelim match and the final was to prove just as hard. It was a closely fought end to end game and **Emma Pheasey** and **Cheryl McKee** as Goal Attack and Goal Shooter led the Team by example. The final score was 17 - 14. The final overall places were first 2 Sqn, second 1 Sqn and third 3 Sqn. Thanks must go to **Sgt Vicky Hawtree** and **SSgt Tina Edwards** for organising such an excellent competition.

The winning Team with the Sqn Comd, Maj Louise Tomkins

RAF BENSON 7 MILE ROAD RACE - 21 SEPTEMBER 2000

How many times as team captain of the running team have you instilled into your runners the importance of the last man and how it is he or she that can make the difference between winning and losing? One team that will definitely not forget this is RAF Waddington.

On the 21 September 11 Sig Regt sent a team to run in the RAF Benson 7-mile Road Race, an event that is normally dominated by the RAF. Travelling up in the minibus the normal banter between runners was going on. **WO2** 'Taff' **Thomas**, as ever, threatening that this would be the race where he would make his come-back on and **Cpl Mark Whittaker** quietly making his game plan for beating the (very) old veteran, **WO1 (YofS) Stewart Little**.

As the race started the RAF elite went off into the distance but Army runners **Sgt Andy Arrand** (25 Sp Regt RLC) and **WO2 (FofS) Joe Docherty** were not going to let them have it all their own way and they stuck with the leading group. **Sgt Arrand** caught them all, crossing the finishing line in 1st position with **WO2 Docherty** close behind in 4th position and **Sgt Stewart Maughan** moving through the field to finish 18th. It was at this stage some half a mile back that the back markers were starting to feel the pain; looking around **WO1 Little** could see **Cpl Whittaker** picking up the pace ready to strike and chasing close behind him was **WO2 Thomas**. As each runner pushed the other to their limits the three runners started passing those around them, picking up what was to be vital positions. Finishing 22nd, 23rd and 24th respectively these runners gave little thought as to how the team event went, after all this was the RAF's home ground. The talk was centred on how well 'Taff' was improving in his come back efforts, only 13 seconds had split the three runners, and then the overall results were announced…the winning team with 67 points …11 Signal Regiment! RAF Waddington with three runners in the top ten had looked certain to win but the Team Event was four to count and our 'tortoise' was faster than theirs! The moral of this race is for all those runners out there who are not in the top ten, don't forget it's a team game, every position counts, and the last man is as important as the first.

COMPUTERS

Should computers be referred to in the masculine or the feminine gender? Two groups of computer experts were set up to examine this question - one of women and one of men. The group of women reported that computers should be referred to in the masculine gender because:

1. In order to get their attention, you have to turn them on.
2. They have a lot of data, but are still clueless.
3. They are supposed to help you solve problems, but half the time they are the problem.
4. As soon as you commit to one, you realise that, if you had waited a little longer you could have had a better model.

The men on the other hand, concluded that computers should be referred to in the feminine gender because:

1. No one but the Creator understands their internal logic.
2. The native language they use to communicate with other computers is incomprehensible to everyone else.
3. Even your smallest mistakes are stored in long-term memory for retrieval.
4. As soon as you make a commitment to one, you find yourself spending half your pay on accessories for it.

NEWS FROM NORTHEN IRELAND

3 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (203)

Sqn Comd **Maj D. B. Warne**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) A. M. Maxted**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS

After the maximum leave period, everyone is back into the swing of things, with never a dull moment in the Headquarters. **WO 1 (RSM) Andy Maxted** is still talking about hosting **Frank Bruno** back in July of this year. Never mind RSM, we bet **Frank** misses you as well.

WO1 (RSM) Andy Maxted and Mr Frank Bruno

WELCOMES AND CONGRATULATIONS

Squadron Headquarters welcomes **LCpl Ridgway** and **Pte Williams** to the 'A' Team. All Squadron and Headquarters personnel congratulate **WO2 (FofS) Jim Ross** and **Jackie** on the birth of their son (no sleep now FofS).

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt Andy Parfitt**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Bob Wallace**

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

All at Comms Tp TM section would like to welcome the following: **Sgt** 'Gillie' **Gilchriest** on promotion from Gibralter, **Cpl Chris Bain** from Bruggen, **Cpl** 'Hando' **Hatcher** from 280 Sig Sqn, **LCpl Adie Bennett** from Cyprus. A special mention must go to the 'work experience' lad **LCpl Ian Bradshaw**, newly arrived from primary school. In the SYSCON, hello to **Sigs King** and **Wood** both posted in from 249 Sig Sqn. A sad farewell to **SSgt Bob Wallace**, going to 2 Sig Regt in York, **Cpl Don Garner** on promotion to Sergeant but unluckily going to the COMM-CEN in Bessbrook

EXERCISE LAKE FINN

The Troop Adventurous Training Exercise took place from 3-13 September 2000 and was based at 14 Sig Regt (EW). The Exercise was split into two phases, with six of the Troop in Phase 1 (03-08 September) and eight in Phase 2 (9-14 September). Here are the views of two of those who took part.

Sig Shaw: The valiant crusaders set forth to Wales, in search of adventure, under the guidance of **Capt Andy** 'Richie Cunningham' **Parfitt, SSgt Bob** 'Pepperami' **Wallace** (yes I am a good driver) and **Sgt Paul** 'Spiderman' **Craft**. Our quest took us to a place not yet touched by civilisation and inhabited by barbarians. Starting at 0500hrs our journey took us via Stranraer (unplanned) and through every part of the UK. Some 14 hours later we finally arrived, helpfully aided by the driving skills of **SSgt Wallace**, who managed to annoy every driver in South Wales. We began our training with a trip to the seaside, where we were all given a bit of rock to climb. A thoroughly enjoyable day was followed by a trip to Haverfordwest, led by **LCpl Dave** 'Mongo' **Terron**. The next day took us cycling around the local area, where **LCpl** 'Camel' **Good** managed to lead us everywhere but the right way. After a quiet night in (not), we rose to go and enjoy throwing ourselves into the sea, also known as coast-steering. **Sig** 'Diesel (doesn't spark much)' **Price**, decided to show us a new swimming technique whilst floating out to sea. We finished off the week with indoor climbing as the weather was too bad for walking and had one or two down town to finish the week off in style.

Sig Squires: On 8 September 2000 eight lucky people set off to enjoy a week of all things Welsh. The group consisted of **Sig** 'Jackie Chan' **Squires, Pte** 'Pat' **Jennings, Sig** 'Gee' **Pyrah, Sig Emma** 'Spider-woman' **Jones, Sig** 'Sammy' **Samson, LCpl Matt** 'Elvis legs' **Page, LCpl** 'Paper-Boy' **Bradshaw** and **Cpl Si** (who likes to think he's the daddy) **Link**. We started off the week climbing with **Sgt** 'no neeeeed' **Craft**, ably assisted by **SSgt** 'Pepperami' **Wallace** and **Capt** 'Richie Cunningham' **Parfitt. Sig** 'Sammy' **Samson** leading the way, showing us a crack of his own. We thank **LCpl Matt Page** for showing us a good impression of Elvis, with a bit of remarkable disco leg, but on that particular day **Sig Emma Jones** turned out to be Spider-woman in disguise, scaling anything put in her path. The following day was a bit more chilled with people going on to harder climbs and the rest of us sane people trying a bit of Body-Board Surfing, with **RSM** 'Look it's easy' **Maxted**.

Next day **Cpl** 'Si' **Link, Sigs** 'Sammy' **Samson** and 'Gee' **Pyrah** decided a bit of sailing in the shipping lanes was on the cards. **Sig Pyrah** decided that he would try to sink the boat and now we know he is a bad driver on land and water. The lunatic element of the 'Motley Crew' went to throw themselves off cliffs and the others went climbing with **Capt Parfitt** and **Sgt Craft**.

The next day the whole team went coast-steering. Suicide would be a better word for it, as throwing yourself in off good cliffs is not funny, unless you have no brain (**Bradshaw**). **Sig Jones** showed us how to fall of a cliff face properly. With Wednesday being the last night in Haverfordwest, the team deployed to sample the nightlife once more. However, due to the petrol shortage the tractors couldn't make it town, so **Sig** 'Jackie Chan' **Squires** was the only one to get himself a nice lady. The entire week was a great success, enjoyed by all that attended. Thanks to the instructors for being chilled out.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt J. A. Wright-Jones** R SIGNALS
Tp SSgt **SSgt F. Crowhurst** RLC

After an interesting couple of months with Drumcree marches the Troop was able to settle back into a 'normal routine'. During this period the Troop has seen a few changes in personnel at all levels. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who are leaving or have left for all the hard work that they have put into the Troop and to welcome those who have arrived.

First we will say goodbye to the Quartermaster, **Maj Fred Payet**, I think the threat of killing each and everyone of us if we messed worked a treat when a job needed doing, and water sports just isn't the same without you. We wish you the best of luck for the future from each department of Sp Tp. We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the new Quartermaster, **Maj Wright-Jones**, and **Sig Gilmour,** with their families, into the Troop. We hope you and your families enjoy your tour here.

Since Drumcree the Troop has been busy getting ready for various docs and equipment inspections the extra hours put in by the Troop paid off in the end. Well done lads. Also **Cpl Pat Paterson** and **Cpl Gaz Harris** have been busy preparing and running Ex Drive Alive Phase Two, and the finals Quiz Stand: it was appreciated at all levels. **LCpl Steve Kite, Sig** 'Happy' **Gilmour** and **Pte Richie** 'Diesel or Petrol?' **Palmer** did manage to pick up two trophies but were just beaten for a place in the finals. Better luck next year.

During this busy period the Troop did manage to get away on some adventure training on the Isle of Wight. After the initial shock from the girls when they were told they do have to get out of their beds when the fire alarm goes off and parade without make up, they all settled into starting an enjoyable week.

The Troop were able to get stuck into the various activities such as water-sports, land walking (remember it is the Isle of Wight), drinking and meeting the local population. **LCpl** 'Oz' **Osborne** who was in charge of the mountain (small hill) biking could not seem to get over the fact that every time they came to an incline his chain would come off. After climbing aboard the minibus and shouting to his group to meet him at the top. When they got there it would be repaired again! Amazing!!

We also must congratulate **Cpl Paterson** on his promotion to Sergeant and **LCpl Osborne** on his promotion to Corporal, their experience and commitment to their jobs was second to none and their promotion is well deserved.

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (213)

Sqn Comd **Maj A. R. Knott**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. M. Lockwood**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS
ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

A warm welcome is extended to **WO2 (YofS) Nick Wood**, who arrives to replace the most marvelous and newly promoted **WO1(YofS) Brudenall**. In reference to **Yof S Brudenall's** departure, 'Best of British Blandford!' The Squadron would also like to welcome **SSgt Gaz Walker**, replacing **SSgt Don Anderson** as BTLO. **SSgt Don Anderson** is now sunning himself in Italy in what is advertised as a more taxing role, goodbye and good luck. Finally, **Cpl Mal Campbell** is welcomed into his job in the ISLO cell, working with **SSgt Craig Collins**.

LONG SERVICE & GOOD CONDUCT

Sgt Jonah Jones has been awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct medal after 16 years in the Royal Signals. The SoinC, **Brig C. J. Burton OBE, ADC,** presented him with his medal, along with three other recipients, at a presentation in the garrison Sergeants' Mess.

COMMUNICATIONS TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt S. Y. Richardson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt T. McIntyre**

OPERATIONS SECTION

Initially a huge goodbye to **SSgt** 'Robbo' **Robinson,** who departed Province for the new, green pastures of 1 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt. We wish you well. Into his shoes has ably stepped **SSgt** 'Rob' **Atherton** fresh from 7 Sig Regt. His bubbly, slightly mad approach ensures he blends into this wacky environment. Although it appears people are leaving on mass, this has nothing to do with rats and a sinking ship! Fond farewells are extended to **Cpls Tony King** and **Dave Rimmer** who are leaving the Squadron on promotion. **Cpl Tony King** moves to Romeo Tp while **Cpl Dave Rimmer** is on attachment to the BRB for a year. Leaving down the well-paid road to civvy street are **Sig Jenny Sarsfield,** who is joining the Police Force, and **Cpl Samantha Lee-Davis,** who starts work for Marconi. We hope that all works out the way you had planned and thank you for all your hard work throughout your time with 39 Inf Bde. **Sig Marc Richardson** has also left, on promotion to 280 Sig Sqn, while **Sig Claire Mathias** joins the mass exodus with a posting to 16 Sig Regt. Rover Gp's **LCpl** 'Big Jim' **Bowen** Pioneer, has moved on promotion to Corporal to ATR Pirbright, where we hope he is terrorising new recruits, while **LCpl Kev Board** has moved to JCU(NI) also on promotion. Well done and good luck to you from the Group. On a much happier note, a few 'welcomes. Syscom welcomes into its grasp **Sig Ben Andrews** winging his way into the Province from the depths of 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt in Bulford. Rover Gp extends a warm, welcome to **Pte** 'Stretch' **O'Hare** Pioneer, and a big sigh of relief for the Cavalry in the form of **LCpl** 'Brammers' **Bramwell** RLC, and **LCpl Andy Fleetwood** RLC, moving into the Brigade as the Commander's and Deputy's Drivers respectively. Congratulations to **Pte** 'Val' **Hardy** on his recent wedding to **Claire**, we hope you will be very happy together.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE SECTION

Joining the Section are **Sgt Billy Lilburn**, replacing **Sgt Richard Lougher** as IC Rigging Sect, **LCpl Chris Lord, LCpl Forrest** and **LCpl Donna Chivers** join the Fixed Systems Repair Team. Welcome and good luck to them all during their time in the Province. Farewells are extended to **Sgt** 'Maddog' **McAdam**, who lasted a grand total of six months in the job before hearing the call of the wild and returning to 216 Sig Sqn. Also to **Sgt** 'Taff' **Lougher** who finished his tour with a posting to Blandford. Congratulations to **Cpls Neil Beedon, Emma Dignall** and **Rachel Jacklin** on their recent promotion, and to **Sig** 'Huey' **Lewis** on deciding to 'sign back on'. Well done also to **Cpl Chris Dicks** on passing 264 (SAS) selection and we all wish you the very best of luck as you commence your new job. Finally, congratulations to **Cpl Al Temple** and his wife **Tracey** on the birth of their first child, **James**. On an initiative issue, 'Well done, a marvelous effort,' to **Cpl Aaron Ship**, who after much bartering managed to procure fleeces, balaclavas and gloves for the Rigging Team to help in their fight to maintain Comms within the Brigade area of Operations. The happy band of brothers can now be seen parading around the Squadron, one emulating the other.

RECENT TROOP EVENTS
DRIVE ALIVE COMPETITION

Congratulations to three members of the Troop who recently took part in both the 39 Bde Drive Alive Competition and the Northern Ireland Drive Alive Championships. **LCpl Andy Fleetwood** RLC, **Pte** 'A itch' **Aitchison** RLC and **Sig** 'Robbo' **Roberts** were the 39 Brigade Champions as well as the Northern Ireland-runners up, two points behind the 40 Commando Team.

SUPPORT TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt G. Maddison** RLC
WOIC **WO2 (RQMS) Belam**

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Welcome to **Sgt Andy Eley** RLC, who has now officially taken over as MT SNCO, his resemblance to Johnny Adair is slightly worrying, adding a bit of fear to the Department.

REGIMENTAL QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

Congratulations to **Cpl Rick Sherriff**, who recently competed in the Army Water Skiing Championships held at the National Water Sports Centre, Nottingham. He is the Army Mono-Ski Champion and the Army Novice Trick Ski runner up. Well done. Congratulations to **Pte Michelle Merrett** who became engaged to her boyfriend during their recent holiday in Jamaica.

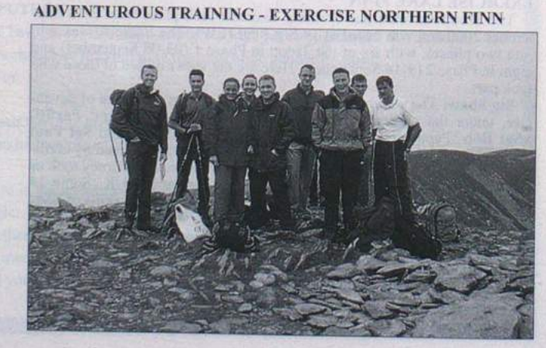
SQUADRON EVENTS
CLAY PIGEON SCOOTING

The Northern Ireland Clay Pigeon shooting Championships came as quite a surprise to the combined Brigade HQ and Sig Sqn Team, who had been expecting a fun-day shooting, courtesy of the Brigade. However, in true 39 Inf Bde style the 'A' Team, comprising of **WO2 (YofS)** 'Sure Shot' **Brudenall, LCpl Charlie Wood, LCpl Scott Tomblin** and **Cpl Tony King**, came away winning the Minor Units Competition, with the 'B' Team coming a close second. Well done to all those who took part.

FEMALE ROUNDERS COMPETITION

Congatulations to the 39 Inf Bde Team who won the Northern Ireland Rounders Championships. They just managed to beat 15 Sig Regt in the final. Unfortunately, such were the operational commitments, held by both Units, that a combined team was sent back to the mainland to represent Northern Ireland in the Inter Units Rounder's Championships. The girls performed very well and were runners up in the final, well done.

ADVENTUROUS TRAINING - EXERCISE NORTHERN FINN



Ex Northern Finn took place from 28 August to 3 September 2000 inclusive and involved hill walking and horse riding in North Wales. In true military style the intrepid few, headed up by **Sgt Jonah Jones**, left Northern Ireland in the pouring rain at silly o'clock in the morning. Whilst they made their way down from Scotland in a minibus, sleeping in a manner to make a contortionist proud, **Sig** 'Where is Wales?' **Roberts** was gamely setting off from Newcastle to meet them in Caernarfon. It was not that he was geographically challenged, but when he found himself on the MI heading for London, he realised that a map might be useful. All eventually arrived safely at the RWR barracks in Caernarfon and personal admin was carried out before the first walk the following morning. Problem number one arose the next day with **LCpl Anna Metcalfe** collapsing at breakfast. Had she been poisoned by **Sgt** 'Naked Chef' **Jones** or was the thought of climbing Snowden too much for her? After a day in the local hospital she was declared fit and returned to the group. Day One's walk over the saddle of Snowden passed without further incident for the other group members.

Day Two dawned with reasonable weather for Wales, so it was with a light foot and a song in their hearts that the group left to conquer Pen yr Ole Wen. This seven-hour route, kindly chosen by **Cpl** 'Im the MLT, so I can chose which ever route I want, besides I'm posted and won't see any of you again' **Board**, commenced with 1000m,climb in 600m! The singing soon turned to panting, as people began to save their breath to cool their porridge! A steady pace was set on the way up, supposedly for the AO, **Capt** 'Just a small beer for me' **Maddison**, who was rumored to have said that she was, 'No good at going up.' At the, highest point of the. day's walk the quote of the week came from **LCpl** 'Baby face' **Lord** who quipped ' There can't be anymore hills to climb around here, can there?' An evening in the local pub seemed to heal the walking fatigue and happy faces reappeared.

The horse riding day arrived at last and with it came the -rain. Unfortunately, certain members of the group experienced a few personality clashes with their horses. **Sgt Lee Rotherforth** had a horse that moved very quickly in short spurts, but had to have a little rest in between. **Cpl** 'Sick Note' **Gallacher** was seen, perched on a horse looking in dire need of hospital treatment itself, while it was with great delight that the group saw **Sgt** 'JSML' **Maycock** looking as uncomfortable and.. wary on his horse as the others had looked on the top of Pen yr Ole Wen!

Day Five on Snowdon was a hard, miserable day as the weather closed in, soaking the group to the bone and tiredness seemed to be combined with an element of grumpiness. Until the autopilot kicked in and despite the complaints of sore behinds, everyone completed the walk over the mountain. After packing up the monkeys and parrots and handing over the accommodation, a leg stretching exercise was undertaken with a couple of hours slow-walk up Nant Ffrancon to prevent cramp on the long journey back to Lisburn. However, the fun was not to stop there, as due to a cancelled ferry and the amount of drivers hours used, it became necessary to drive to Stranraer, with an overnight stop (on personal expense) in Blackpool.

39 INFANTRY BRIGADE CHARITY DAY
by SSgt 'Crate' Collins Event Organiser
CHARITY DAY 4 AUGUST 2000

The Brigade Charity Day took place on 4 August 2000. Preparations for the day started in January with over 400 letters and 200 E-mails going out asking for donations for the main funding event - an auction. The response to the letters was very rewarding with many companies generously donating items such as two return flight tickets to anywhere in Europe and theatre tickets for Phantom of the Opera. **Sgt** 'Paul I'll do that' **Parkes** took up the unenviable task of setting up tents, seating, notice boards etc. He did this with his usual prowess making it seem effortless with the help of his Rover Gp.

The day started very early for **SSgt Craig Collins** and his committee with a five a side football competition involving 16 teams from units within Province. **Cpl Lee Rotherforth** ran the competition and dealt with the usual complaints from the teams in his usual manner, 'The managements decision is Final.' The Brigade Team did well losing to the eventual winners, NICSS Regiment Team, one goal to nil. An 'It's a Knockout' Competition was run in the afternoon with all events comprising of getting wet, VERY WET. There were three events in which the teams had to take part. The first was a bungee run, transporting water from one end to the other. This proved to be great fun for the spectators, as they got involved throwing wet sponges and hosing down the competitors. The SHQ Team was obviously well practiced as they turned up with football boots on to stop them from slipping! The second event was an assault course, which of course involved going back into the S tank to retrieve a brick from the bottom. Someone said they saw the Titanic in there, as it was so cold. The final game was a pillow fight on a greasy pole suspended above, of course, the S tank. The eventual winners of the competition were the SHQ Team consisting of **Capt A. J. Smith, WO2 (YofS) Dave Brudenall** and **Cpl** 'Arnie' **Renforth**.

The auction was run in two sessions to allow the golden nectar to cloud the judgement of the bidders. It obviously worked as many items went for far more than they were worth. **Cpl** 'Mac' **McGuiness** was the auctioneer as he had the gift of the gab. Once bidding started the bidders were scared to move in case they made a bid as eagle eyed 'Mac' coerced ever-higher bids from all present. (Whether they wanted to or not). The generosity shown by all was very impressive and made a vast contribution to the final total. The evening event was a charity 'Medieval Night' disco organised by **Cpl Arnie Renforth**. In all it was an excellent day, raising around £3,500 pounds for the nominated charities.

NEWS FROM THE REGIMENTS

1ST (UNITED KINGDOM) ARMOURED DIVISION HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL REGIMENT

Lt Col E. M. Flint commands his own AFV 436 after Ex Rhino Spear,
prior to his departure from the Regiment

Lt Col E. M. Flint
inspects the Regiment on his final day in the Regiment

EXERCISE SILVER CHILD III 26-28 AUGUST 2000

18 soldiers battled against the elements to run, cycle, push a trailer and kayak 116 miles from Sutton Coldfield to Great Ormond Street Hospital, London. They raised over 43,000DM and donated thousands of pounds worth of toys to the sick children. The event, which started over seven months ago was the brain-child of **WO1 (RSM) Chris Hymas** and brought together 1 (UK) ADSR in Germany, 3DSR and 14 Sig Regt (EW) in England, to raise money for children's charities. The culmination of the event was the race that saw two teams from 1 (UK) ADSR pitted against a team from 14 Sig Regt (EW) in true Bank Holiday Weekend weather.

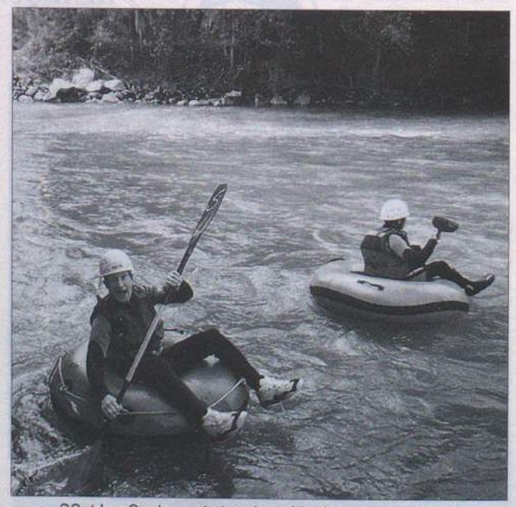
The Starting Line Up for Exercise Silver Child III

WO (SSM) Daz Newton brings a smile to the face of a young girl in Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children

A cheque for DM 43,565 is presented to Great Ormond Street Hospital for Cildren by the participants of Exercise Silver Child

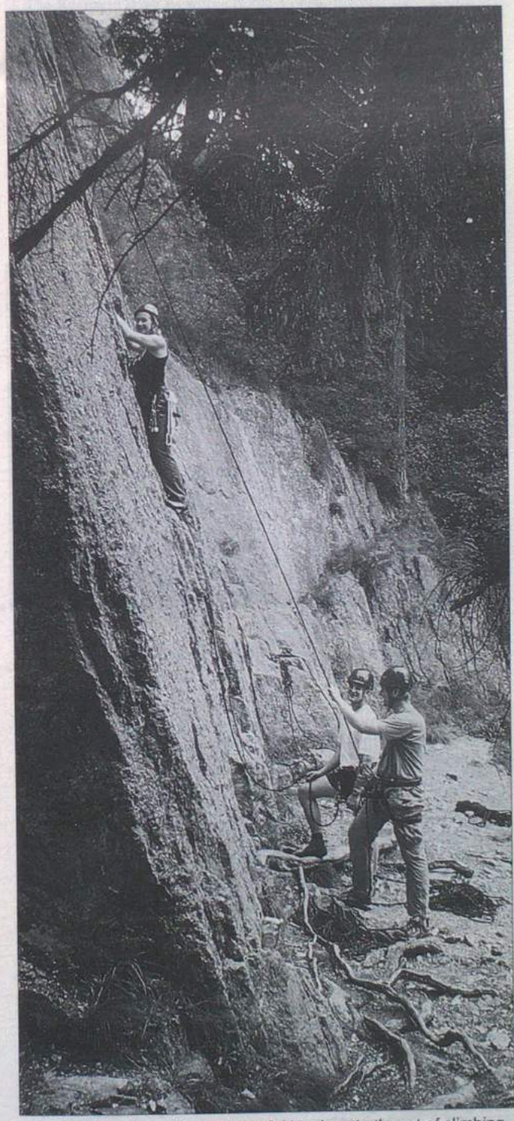
ADVENTURE TRAINING

212 Sig Sqn Cavers emerge victorious after a difficult battle with water, mud, and frayed nerves



SSgt Ian Conlan gets to grips with alternative paddling

Members of 212 Sig Sqn take part in some well deserved posing on the summit of the Weisseespitze



HQ Sqn introduce LCpls Wright & Henshaw to the art of climbing

MILITARY ACTIVITIES

Cabling Up Armoured Divisional Headquarters
212 Sig Sqn Line Dogs - LCpl Montgomery and Sig MacKenzie

MISCELLANEOUS

Eindhoven Volleyball - Cpl Ian Fowler

The newly arrived CO of 1 (UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt, Lt Col T. J. Watts, and RSM Hymas present a 12 year Meritorious Service Certificate to German Guard Service Member Trevor Allen

2 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO Lt Col I. Cameron-Mowat
RSM WO1 (RSM) S. C. Keilty

BATTLE CAMP – EXERCISE KOHIMA WARRIOR
by Cpl Dodds, HQ Sqn, Mike Tp

They climbed out of their coaches, their faces a mix of sleepiness and trepidation. After a six hour journey to Salisbury Plain Training Area, they are thrust into a week long battlecamp, starting with a 2.5km tab towards Battle Camp HQ (better known as the old court house/police station at Imber Village). There the members of the Regiment, split down into three platoons, and surprise, surprise, the rain starts to fall just as they set off. Ex Kohima Warrior has started.

Once they've arrived at HQ, it's time for the admin part of the Exercise. Food, ammunition and 349 or 351 radios are issued to each section. A few lessons on basic field skills, and how to use their respective radios and they leave HQ into the darkening night, intent on reaching the first military skills stand by 0800hrs the next morning. Over the next three days, they will do a round robin to three different locations, each location holding two stands of various military skills. The stands being Survival Skills, NBC, Tactics, BFAT, OBUA and a demonstration by 264 (SAS) Sig Sqn. At the Survival Skills stand, run by **SSM Hancock**, they are shown how to build various shelters, from the basic Mark 1 basha to the modern luxury of a log cabin. They are taught the art of rabbit skinning and the different ways of cooking, add into this a little bit of water purification techniques and you would have a really good stand. However, 2 Sig Regt prefer to have really great stands, so they throw in a bonus lesson of interrogation methods and an insight into meeting agents in the field. **SSgt Mills** ran the NBC stand, demonstrating the use of NAIAD (Nerve Agent Immobilised enzyme Alarm and Detector), and CAM (Chemical Agent Monitor). Lessons were also conducted on NBC sentries and NBC recces. It was hard to tell whether the students were more worried about getting gassed or of being told to carry the NAIAD! A pyro demo using the GPMG, trip flares, smoke grenades and thunderflashes provided plenty of noise for the Tactics stand. Under the watchful eye of **Sgt Sharp**, the sections experienced obstacle crossing, the six section battle drills and how to give quick battle orders. The culmination of these lessons being a scenario where the platoon had to rescue a downed pilot, hopefully without engaging the enemy. The most physically demanding stand was the OBUA (Operations in Built Up Areas) stand. Starting nice and gently with a confidence course to warm up the players, then they were taught the basics of approaching and assaulting an occupied building, and the principles of room clearing. The last of the stands run by 2 Sig Regt the BFAT (Battlefield First Aid Training) stand, with **SSgt Gardner** in charge. This stand taught the treatment and extraction of casualties in several scenarios including minefields, and in the middle of firefights. 264 (SAS) Sig Sqn had their own stand demonstrating some of the more exotic military skills. They displayed and demonstrated several specialist weapons including the M16 assault rifle with grenade launcher, and the highly accurate 7.62mm G3. They taught about patrolling in 4-man teams and the contact drills involved, they also demonstrated contact drills with vehicles. That little venture cost them a new windscreen on their Ford Scorpio, but was enjoyed by all. On a more participate note, they hosted a 'Spot the Sniper' test, with a man hidden from view at a range of approximately 60 to 70 metres. Needless to say that not many players would have survived that one!

After these full and busy days, the three pls trudged into HQ for a briefing on the next two-day part of the Exercise. Notebooks in hand and pens at the ready they listened to the briefing blissfully unaware of the dozen or so members of 249 Sig Sqn and a dog handler, complete with German Shepherd 'Khan' from 158 Pro Coy RMP, who stood outside the door of the briefing room, armed and waiting. The briefing goes on and on, until the magic words 'friendly forces' are uttered by the officer giving the briefing. A thunder-flash goes off, and the 'terrorists' pour in, rifles blazing on automatic and a few seconds of pandemonium ensues. The smart players hit the deck straight away. The rest are 'assisted'. The players are disarmed and subdued. Stereos playing white noise are brought out and the terrorists become silent. Disorientation starts to take effect. After a short wait lying face down on a cold concrete floor, they are lifted up and taken out of their holding cell. A little trip around the corner, blindfolded of course, leads them into the processing stage. They are searched and all their belongings bagged and tagged. A further small wait on the floor then they are taken out and thrown onto a TCV. A short drive out and the terrorists are ambushed by local partisans. The captives are freed and the Escape and Evasion stage is under way. For two days, they will have to live using the skills they have been taught. They will meet agents and avoid capture. Unfortunately, that doesn't always happen. Once captured they are subjected to the same interrogation techniques they had been shown at the Survival Stand, and although they had a reasonable idea of what to expect, there was still a lot of uncertain and worried people in the prisoner holding pen.

This would be a good part to relate some stories of bravado and foolishness relating to the E & E phase. The two best story awards would have to go to **Sig Zimmerman** and **Cpl Bevan. Sig Zimmerman** performed an extremely gutsy manoeuvre by putting on a limp and walking into HQ for some food from the main eating area. If it hadn't been for the fact that he started to chat to the admin personnel he would have got away with it. However, the RSM spotted him and he took a nice visit to the pen. The most gutsy move award must go to **Cpl Bevan**, he managed to 'acquire' a Land Rover from the local area and drive away in it. However, forty minutes later he returned to HQ to hand himself in. Eventually endex was called and the show of bravado was back on the faces of all. The players were debriefed and put on a nice luxury coach back to York. On their way home they undoubtedly passed their fellow workmates who were on the second week and who had yet to experience the joys that were planned for them in the week to come. There are only three points left to cover. First is a thank you to the three chefs who supplied the admin and DS staff with excellent food throughout. Although they did set an oven alight while trying to make Yorkshire puddings. Secondly is to **Sgt Stanley-Jones** on his commendable performance as recovery driver. Using only a DAF and his own driving skills, he rescued many a stranded vehicle including the ambulance. Last, but most definitely not least, is the fate of **Sig** 'Jazz' **Jaruszek**, who had to adopt a new and very short hairstyle, due to an accident with a Puffing Billy. One lighter, a large BOOM and the smell of fried hair all combined to ensure that 'Jazz' lost most of his eyebrows and eyelashes, and gently frazzled most of the front of his hair.

PRESENTATIONS OF LS&GC AND ACSM

Brig A. P. Farquhar MBE, Comd HQ 15 (NE) Bde presents **WO2 (SSM) Hancock**, **SSgt (RQMS) Cassidy**, **SSgt Curtis**, **SSgt MacPherson MBE**, **SSgt (FofS) Buddhi Bahadurhar Gurung** with their LS&GC medals. **Cpl Green** is presented with the ACSM for 1,310 days service.

EXERCISE KEY WARRIOR 2000 - *by WO1Terry*

On Friday 29 September, 20 brave partners of serving soldiers from the Regiment agreed to take part in a 24 hour Exercise. It started with an introduction to drill, **Julie Gardner** and **Sue Lloyd** were jailed at this point by **WO1 (RSM) Keilty**. The Exercise rapidly moved forward with a creditable attempt at the assault course instructed by **WO2 (QMSI) Clark. Maxine Manningham** achieved the 'best effort award' for overcoming her vertigo and completing the course.

The Exercise then progressed to Strensall Ranges, where the beastie boys from the Training Wing had set up a number of stands. **Sgt Pete Preece** tried his best to make the ladies disappear, with his instruction in camouflage. Special mention goes to **Liz Beswick** who was awarded the most entertaining in the field award, for her actions on encountering a trip flare..... 1. Run Away. 2. Ignore the ditch. 3. Dive head first into the water filled ditch. 4. Wait for the section to stop laughing. In the mean time make a noise which sounds like you are injured, wait until the flare is out, then join the remainder of the section in uncontrollable laughter. The night Exercise was taken in the ladies' stride, bergans were laden down with a few essentials, such as mobile phone, bottles of wine, make-up bags, and as much gucci kit as their husbands had convinced them that they would need. After a sleepless night for orange section and **LCpl Nichols,** it was back to camp for a champagne breakfast and well deserved presentations. The weather was kind, and the only thing that poured was the laughter from the patrols. You may hear a war story or two gents, so pin back your ears.

'Look RSM, were not interested in what you have got to say.....the conversation over there is more interesting'

EXERCISE LOG ADVENTURE - *by Cpl Findlay and LCpl Davison*

The Regiment were recently offered a once in a life time opportunity to attend adventure training in the Canadian Rockies. The Royal Irish were (fortunately for us) sent to Sierra Leone at short notice and therefore unable to participate in the pre-booked (free) package. So, after two weeks notice we left the UK at 2000hrs and arrived in Canada at 2010hrs, the shortest eight hours I've ever done. We arrived at Trails End Camp, attended some briefings, watched the 'What to do in the event of a bear attack video' were issued with kit and set off on the first of our two adventures.

Exercise Wapta Dance - Capt Julie 'Treat me like a princess' **Richardson** and **Cpl Weland** 'Fin' **Findlay** had a great time on the mountains doing fall recovery on snow, and ice/crevasse rescue, **Cpl Findlay** mad as ever had great fun being the one down the crevasse (Brrrrrrrr). The Exercise was extremely hard work, lugging all the kit up the mountains, however it was worth all the sweat and I'd recommend it to anyone.

Capt Richardson and Cpl Findlay on Athabasca Glacier

Exercise Ghost Run - LCpl Davison spent four days canoeing on the Kootney River. The day started with a day's training on the Ghost Lake. Basic things like how to stay in the boat, go in a straight line and how to stop. Not as easy as one would think! One of the most useful things that we got taught was the capsize drill, something that came in very useful over the next few days. Day 2 was spent on the Ghost River, for a bit of fast water, and some top tips on how to move about. We found out that capsize drills do work, and white water is a lot colder than the lake. Day 3 - Armed with all the new skills we had gained, we set off down the Kootney River. Of the 160km river some of the more interesting parts were 'the bolder' and 'the horse shoe' bends. The overnight stops were a chance to dry off and get some food, especially for the flying teeth that had a taste for rear end, as I found out. The smoke from the fire didn't stop the mossies as we hoped. Day 4, the last stretch down to where the van was parked and a chance to get back to civilisation after two days in the wilderness. After four days on the water, I was glad to be back on dry land, but also glad to have had the experience of Canada.

Exercise Rough Ride – We all attempted horse trekking for our second weeks activity, 'how hard can it be', people have been doing it for centuries, 'how wrong were we'. Now we know what made John Wayne walk so funny. We spent our time dodging branches and trying not to fall off. It was great, we did some proper off roading, horses can go anywhere. Every time we stopped, it was hilarious to witness **LCpl Davison** attempting to get back on his horse, a tree stub always came in handy to aid his remount. We stayed in prospector huts, in the middle of the wilderness and experienced some excellent thunderstorms, at one point I thought the mountains were falling down around us. Needless to say we all survived the experience, and had a great time despite the pain in our bottoms and **Cpl Findlay** going through horses like there was an endless supply.

EXERCISE ANETO EBOR
by SSgt Angus MacPherson MBE and Sig 'Ollie' Oliver

For the second year running **SSgt MacPherson** organised another excellent Adventure Training package to the Pyrenees. The exercise included a 5-day phase when conditions ranged from rain to -5^0C, freezing ice and fog to 30^0C, then brilliant sunshine. The team put snow, ice work and climbing techniques to the test and covered two glaciers, one col at 3005m, and peaks at 3107m 2842 m and 2738m. Some of the more memorable events to note: **Sgt Steve Howard** managing to overcome his fear on the rock face, **SSgt Angus MacPherson** rapidly sliding down a steep embankment and bruising his arm, **Sig Kris Blundell** demonstrating his acrobatic skills to test out the reflexes of his belayer, **LCpl Mark Dunnachie** sweating and complaining of nausea. **Cpl Simon** 'I'm not smiling' **Brewington** and **Sig** 'Ollie - I don't suffer from vertigo' **Oliver** opting to take a long lunch and await our return instead of climbing a rather large peak. **WO1 Andy Terry** convincing the group to take a swim, to the amusement and laughter of the surrounding onlookers 'well it brightened up their afternoon' and finally how could we forget the phantom snorer, **LCpl Mark Dunnachie.** In addition to conquering mountains the group managed to spend a day mountain biking and rafting, we are all still wondering how **Cpl Jason Wood** didn't take a tumble on some of the blind corners.

At the top of Superbagneres (2218m)
The whole of the Expedition party, prior to the start of the Mountain Biking phase
(L-R): Sgt Steve Howard, Cpl Jason Wood, Cpl Simon Brewington, Cpl Lee Wolstencroft, Sig 'Ollie' Oliver, Cpl Mark Dunnachie, Sig Kris Blundell, Cpl Pete 'I drive the bus' Longworth, WO1 Andy Terry and SSgt Angus MacPherson

AN INCREDIBLE JOURNEY - CHARITY CYCLE RIDE
by LCpl Beart, 214 Sig Sqn

The reason behind this charity bike ride was a rather personal one. Earlier on in this year my father **Charlie** was taken into hospital with bad circulation and later died in the George Elliot Hospital's Intensive Care Unit at the age of 50. My mother decided to ask one of my dad's best friends, **Mick Green**, to do a sponsored bike ride in memory of my father and to raise money for the very people that had cared for my dad in his final days. **Mick** had done various rides for charity before, including Lands End to John-o-Groats and Kilmarnock to Nuneaton in 24hrs, a staggering 346 miles. My father had always provided the general admin support for **Mick's** previous rides. **Mick** decided to combine my dad's passion for rugby with his passion for cycling. So the idea to cycle to my home rugby ground at Nuneaton via the three spiritual homes of British rugby was born.

LCpl Jon Beart (Centre) at the Millennium Stadium Cardiff

The ride consisted of 820 miles of hills, wind, rain, sweat and a few more hills. Starting at Murrayfield, the home of Scottish Rugby, I then ventured out on my journey. Although seven miles into an 820-mile journey, a high speed crash into a barbed wire fence, cutting my face and tearing my new cycling shirt did nothing for my confidence. **Mick** and myself gradually wound our way towards Cardiff, 120 miles the first day, 110 the next. On the fourth, I was finding it hard and near Newport I hit the wall. I was so physically wasted I nearly gave-up. Somehow I carried on and after six days riding with an average of 120 miles a day I wobbled into my home club Nuneaton RFC on Friday 18 August, having visited Murrayfield, Cardiff and Twickenham en route. With it now completed I feel as though I have done something for my father and benefited those people who helped him. Hopefully when all the sponsorship is collected a total of £5,500 will be raised.

ROYAL SIGNALS CORPS REGATA - *by LCpl 'Stevo' Stevens*

July was the month. Kiel was our destination! **Sig Kenny Welburn** and myself were to sail around the Baltic between Horsens, Arhus and Rudrobing to name but a few of the places we were to visit. The idea was to race against seven other teams including 1 Mech Bde and 7 Sig Regt. It was time to face the opposition, we had to learn as much as we could to enable us to compete and become better crew. Our particular training took us from changing sails whilst the boat was on the move to hanging over the sides desperately holding onto ropes and our breakfasts. There was even more hard work to follow. What with sleeping, cooking on board and sampling the local beer at most ports of call! Despite all this we had time to win the 'round the cans races' at Horsens which involved, not surprisingly, racing around markers. This gallant effort won us a very handy schnapps glass. After each race it was taken in turns to host a party which involved lengthy discussions on knot tying and making use of the handy schnapps glass won earlier. Our final day was the 'One to Win'. The race back to Kiel where we put all our hard work and training into action. 'Sounds a bit like a booze cruise' but you'd be wrong. The experience was genuine hard work but an extremely rewarding experience.

EXERCISE ROVING SANDS JUNE – JULY 2000

by Sig Woods, 219 Sig Sqn

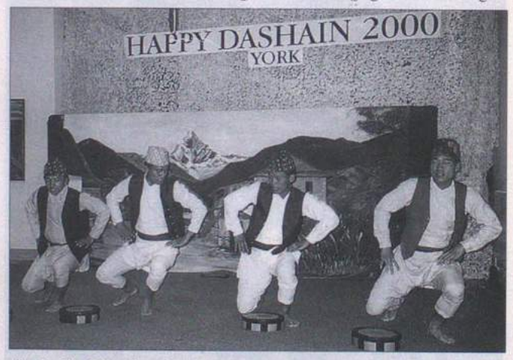
We deployed to Texas, USA to provide communications for 22 RA (AD) and 7 RA (AD). Being initially based at MacGreggor Camp near El Paso was not much fun, because if we said we were in the middle of the desert we would not be lying. The accommodation was a tad sparse and was shared with all sorts of creepy crawlies (and that was just the Americans). **LCpl Dave** 'Homer' **Hallway** made it his personal mission to kill anything with more appendages than him. To say that the food was disappointing is an understatement; let's just say it was not up to our great RLC chefs' standard (hmmmmm). We were therefore forced to take it upon ourselves to try out the BBQ method of cremation and we ended up with some amusing results.

Throughout the exercise the temperature soared, it could not get any higher (Satan's armpit could have matched it). During these periods **Sig Dean** 'Talks a good game' **Condren** was so enthusiastic about the sun that he ended up looking like Freddy Kruger's stunt-double, they do not get much sun in Leeds. All in all the exercise went well and everyone put in considerable effort. The Americans were more than helpful and **Capt Si** 'Where's my webbing' **Meadowcroft** did a great job as acting OC 214 Sig Sqn. PT every morning proved to be more difficult for some as **2Lt Paul** 'The Boy' **Trewin** discovered during a press up competition. He never recovered the power of speech after that….

R&R was eagerly awaited. A large group of the 2 Sig Regt boys commandeered a quaint little establishment called 'La Hacienda' just outside El Paso. The party included **Cpl Charlie** 'Alcohol can't phase me' **Kama, Cpl** 'Dylon - Delwyn Tidy' **Davies, LCpl Tony** 'Alpha Hotel' **Musgrave** and **Sig Jay** 'Where's my stetson?' **Jones**. At some point we ventured into the local town. Some of the excellent places visited were 'JB'S' and 'Graham's Central Station.' Antics round the pool included 'the dentist's chair' set up by **Cpl Ray** 'We daren't call you anything' **McLeod**, which brought the younger members of the Squadron on in leaps and bounds. **Sig Chris** 'The Fang' **Woods** kept us entertained by forcing some US Marines into the pool fully clothed and not allowing them out. The British contingent put together a powerful rugby team, 'The Scropions' headed by **Capt Stu** 'I'll slam dunk any Yank that gets in my way' **Whittley**, and convincingly beat the US semi pro team. The Exercise was a good learning experience for all that took part, but I will not be rushing forward to deploy on another like it.

DASHAIN

On Saturday 30 September 2000, the Officers and WOs celebrated Dashain with the 47 Gurkha soldiers and their families in the Kohima Restaurant. Dashain is the most auspicious festival of Hindus and takes place in the lunar fortnight of September or October. It lasts for 15 days, but in the Brigade of Gurkhas, only four days are celebrated. Many mythological stories are associated with Dashain. The common thread in each, however, is the triumph of good over evil – the victory of the Gods or Goddesses over the wicked demons that harassed mankind in ancient time. A legend amongst the Gurkhas is that the Goddess Durga slew demon Mahishasura, who in the form of a water buffalo, terrorised mankind on earth. Therefore Dashain is the celebration of victory and also a time when families come together to exchange gifts and blessings.



(L-R): Sig Pitamber, Sig Ishwar, Sig Amrit and LCpl Dev dance the 'Bhoto Selo'

3(UNITED KINGDOM) DIVISONAL SIGNAL REGIMENT

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

CO **Lt Col Phil Davies**
RSM **WO1 Chris Kidd**

3 (UK) Div HQ and Signal Regiment, the name is the same it is just the people that are different. All the new card players are now in place and are eagerly awaiting the arrival of dealer alias the new Commanding Officer, **Lt Col Phil Davies.** Meanwhile the 2IC is struggling to keep two day jobs afloat while orienteering, running and commuting back to Aldershot to keep his wife happy. Something has to go …….. But who is going to tell her! The new Adjutant has surprised us all by having an appetite for running rather than chocolate and appears not to have been permanently damaged by his spell of instructing at RMAS. He has, however, been unable to avoid those long working hours and the candle will very soon meet in the middle as he is getting to grips with the new Summary Dealings procedures. The new RSM is taking things in his stride but has so far failed miserably to improve the 2IC's turnout or the length of his sideburns. He has slipped right into the parrot fashion briefing of the guard commanders, and the only difference I detect is the

distinct lack of, 'It's a pleasure' ……whatever that means coming from the next door office. To the outgoing personalities who are now reading this for old times sake, we miss you all and wish you good luck in your new appointments (especially you **Capt Stoker**) but inevitably the King is dead, long live the King!

The hand-over of Commanding Officers

SPORTING SUCCESS

Congratulations to the following personnel for their successes:

Cpl Jackie Davies selected to Bobsleigh for the Ladies Great Britain Squad.

LCpl Ross and **Cfn Wall** for continued success in the Army football team (when they manage to avoid the red card!)

LCpl Dorrian for his initial selection to the Army Boxing Squad.

Maj Nick Bateson (who writes this stuff!) for becoming the Corps Orienteering Champion (What sort of a sport is that?).

A whole bevy of beauties presently in Cyprus with **SSgt Baker** on the Corps hockey tour (Now what sort of sport is that!!).

THE BLANDFORD TOWER CORPS HALF MARATHON OR 'MY FIRST REGIMENTAL CROSS COUNTRY FAILURE'

by 'Jock (The Hoop)' Castle

A whole squad of **SSgt Castle's** starlets eagerly awaited their first real test of the season in the Corps Half Marathon. Such was the team manager's confidence (Remember Keegan!) that he allowed himself the luxury of a rest day before the Army Marathon. (A young Cpl Castle actually won the Army Marathon title running 2hrs 29mins back in the 90's, so we should not be too hard on him). The great day dawned and the Regiment's big four (excuse ranks as they say, **Bateson, Conlon, Easterby-Jackson** and **Smith** ran together ahead of all but one of 11 Sig Regt's runners to the 6-mile mark. **Conlon** was not even breathing but the rest of us were hanging out of our proverbial hoops. He eased himself away to finish the eventual Corps Runner up leaving us to be caught by the chasing 11 Sig Regt's runners at about nine miles. The rest is history. Overall (civilian runners included) we finished in the following order:

Maj Bateson	10th (1st R SIGNALS Veteran)
LCpl Easterby-Jackson	15th (1st R SIGNALS Junior)
Cpl Smudge Smith	19th

That gave us a total of 50 points. Amazingly 11 Sig Regt's runners finished 8th, 11th, 14th and 17th giving them 50 points as well. We lost on the position of the last runner. Where was 'Jock' **Castle** when we needed him? He was not where we expected him to be. The poor boy had succumbed to flu and was forced to withdraw from the marathon. (Now what was all that about Kevin Keegan!)

6th KIWI HALF MARATHON 17 SEPTEMBER 2000

There was a break in the clouds and the sun did its best to fight back the traditionally wet day for the Kiwi Half Marathon. Tried and tested runners (or not), both civilian and Army ignored the fuel crisis and donned their favourite Ron Hills and took up this annual challenge. The Kiwi fi known in running circles as a 'tough one' coaxed 180 willing volunteers to line up at the start line. Each harbouring their own personnel ambitions and expectations before **WO2 QMSI Dave** 'I have been up all night worrying about this event' **Taylor** fires the gun to start the race.

As the runners jostled for position and a few civilians caught up the back markers, due to either being unable to work out how to open the portaloo doors or just releasing last minute nervous tension, it was clear that the front runners meant business. The athletes (?) started to spread out, to try and cover as much of Salisbury Plain as they could in one and a half hours. In the meantime the admin party back at Carter Barracks were left to set up the finish. Or maybe they just sat in the brew tent end contemplated how unlucky they were to be tasked with the job of fatigues and stats instead of running. Running commentary was relayed via a complicated network of radios organised by comms expert **Cpl** 'I am going to be a YofS' **Tharby**, using state of the art technology, the 320 manpack radio to the race organiser **Capt** 'I will run next year' **Crane. Capt Terry Crane**, using a combination of Geordie and his best telephone voice, captivated the audience with Grand National style race commentary. This had the cheering crowd waiting with bated breath for the race leaders to burst out of the mist on Salisbury Plain and through the trees at the North end of Carter Barracks.

Only one soldier had won the race in the past, previously seasoned civilian runners always headed the field. However, this year the first three positions were claimed by army runners, the first two both broke the course record. **WO1 Dave Rollins** came first with a time of 1hr 13mins and 59secs, **SSgt** 'Jock' **Castle** second in 1hr 14mins and 18secs and third came **LCpl Kevin Conlon** in 1hr 16mins and 37secs. The first female runner was a civilian **Daveena Tweed** from Poole who was also the first female veteran to cross the line in a time of 1hr 30mins and 14secs.

The seventh Kiwi Half Marathon will take place in September 2001 and will undoubtedly like every other year be a great success and will entice runners both civilian and service personnel of any standard to take up the challenge.

Organisers, Sponsors and victorious 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt
Back Row (L-R): WO2 Fretwell UWWO, Mrs Pat Le Fleur SSAFA,
Capt Terry Crane UWO, Lt Col Neil Couch CO
Front Row (L-R): 2Lt Neil 'I didn't beat the 2IC' Swift,
LCpl 'Off The Board' Conlon, Maj Nick Bateson,
SSgt 'Jock (the Hoop)' Castle

202 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj A. Long**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) J. McNaught**

These past couple of months have seen yet more turmoil and upheaval in the largest Armoured Squadron in the Royal Signals. Elements of the Squadron have just returned from Canada, where they have been for the last two to three months with the 3rd Division in BATUS. The Squadron's main effort for the upcoming month is the provision of the Divisional HQ for the Staff College Demo, followed immediately by deployment onto the Regimental exercise and Ex Iron Foray, the GOC's main effort for the Division for the latter half of 2000. In all a busy couple of months, roll on Christmas!

BUSSACO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Sean** 'Colonial' **Lumley**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Pete** 'Howling Mad' **Howson**

Since block leave, the Troop has been largely split up due to Ex Iron Hawk in Canada, but there have still been a few notable occurrences. Firstly, the Troop would like to send out an all stations big welcome to all the newcomers: **Sgt Kevin** 'Not long to go now..' **Dawes, Cpl Nik** 'Savo' **Savchenko, LCpl Reginald** 'Ross' **Dourley, LCpl Adam** 'Olly' **North, Sig Alison** 'Bob' **Sabiston, Sig John** 'Parades are too early' **Newson, Sig Danny** 'Scabies' **Hall, Sig John Duffy, Sig Sarah O'Reilly** and **Sig Andy** 'I want to be a NCO yesterday' **Martin.** We would also like to welcome back all our war heroes from defending the free world in the Falklands: **Cpl Don** 'Big Bird' **Brennan, Cpl Bob** 'Fat Bloke' **Dryden, LCpl Ross** 'Get in my belly' **Lyon, Sig Daz** 'That's it for me' **Clarkson** and **Sig Dale Thompson.** September saw **Lt Sean** 'Not another Colonial' **Lumley** being kidnapped by the Squadron while

on Squadron Adventure Training on the Isle of Wight and taken on a tour of the island's nightlife – in a sleeping bag! September also saw **2Lts Alisa** 'Lab Rat' **Labram** and **Ben** 'Squaddie Haircut' **Norton** along with **OCdt Simon** 'I'm faster than the Regt 2IC' **Swift** attached to the Troop while awaiting their Troop Commander's Course. They were exposed to off-road driving in Landrovers and AFV 432's which they both thoroughly enjoyed – the instructors, **Sgt Stevie** 'I hate port' **Weate, Cpl Colin** 'Bing' **Crosby, Cpl Vinnie** 'I love working in the DMI section' **Walsh** and **LCpl Andy** 'I'm never in trouble' **Standing**, will never be quite the same again. The Troop is now preparing for Staff College Demo and the major Divisional Exercise: Iron Foray.

WATERLOO TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt P. J. Simpson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt A. Wringe**

Well for a change this month, it's been slightly relaxed due to the squadron deploying on summer camp. A highly enjoyable week in the Isle of Wight gave the Troop the opportunity to unwind on some serious adventurous training. Many thanks to **Cpl Laz** 'Flo' **Watts** in the Chicago Rock Café for providing the entertainment with his karaoke rendition of Dizzy (thanks mate). Also we are not to forget the fact that **Sig Brett** 'Freefall' **Baber** believes he's a member of the Hells Angels after roaring around on his hired 50cc moped. With much of the Squadron on Ex Iron Hawk in Canada, preparations for the annual Staff College Demonstration occupy every working day. As a reward for their efforts, the OC arranged a Troop day out paint-balling at the start of October. The Radio Section was pitted against the Access Section, and the result was carnage, Radio Section winning by the slimmest of margins. The bruises and war-wounds were displayed proudly later on in the bar. The Troop says a fond farewell to **LCpl** 'Funky Moped' **Wood** to 1 Div and a big hello to **Sig** 'Barney' **Barnett, Sig Nicholls** and **Gnr Ridley**.

206 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj W. E. H. Adsett**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Smith**
MONS TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Gardner**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Fairfield**

Since returning from summer leave the Troop has been busy preparing, then executing Ex Iron Ration. The exercise only just went ahead, by using the countries last few drops of petrol! The Troop deployed in packets up to South Cerney whereupon **LCpl** 'No Comms' **Dodgson** took control of radio village. The first couple of days were shaky due to the bad frequencies they had been provided with. Strangely enough morale remained high mainly due to the never ending taunts that were levelled at **Sig** 'Sooty' **Sutton** for being the boss's little whipping boy. Over the past few months there has been some movers and shakers within the troop. Goodbyes are said to **Sig** 'Jane' **Darcy** who's off to NI, **LCpl** 'Taff' **Evans** on his departure to 1 Div (watch out the cleaners of 1 Div), **Sig** 'Ugly mother' **Tucker** who is off to 8 Inf, **LCpl** 'Big Smudge' **Smith** on his return to civ div, and finally **Cpl** 'Matt' **Kutzner** who is on his way to 3 Sqn of 11 Sig Regt as a Troop Sergeant. Greetings go out to **LCpl** 'No Comms' **Dodgson** from 30 Sig Regt, **LCpl** 'Abbo' **Abbott** from 21 Sig Regt and **LCpl** 'Nige' **Longbottom** from 2 Sig Regt. Finally the three amigos from Blandford, **Sig** 'Beci does Dallas' **Newton, Sig** 'Chunk' **Gee** and **Sig** 'Chocolate' **Waddington**.

INKERMAN TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Kemp**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Angove**

Firstly, welcome home to all the Inkerman Troop personnel who have returned from the Falklands. We hope you enjoy your leave, and we look forward to you all meeting the new Troop 'daddy'! Welcome to **Lt Kemp** who has travelled the immense distance from 259 Sig Sqn to be with us! Also, welcome to **Sig** 'Dave' **Webb, Sig Steve** 'Happy days' **Ellis** and **Sig Ronald** 'McDonald', all straight from the factory. Don't worry, we'll break you in gently. It's goodbye to **LCpl** 'Steph' **Catney** who is leaving the Corps. Also, a farewell goes to **Sig Andrews** who is going to 39 Inf Bde.

Congratulations to **Sig** 'Dave' **Harris** and his new wife **Jacqui**. We would like to congratulate her on her amazing catch. The Troop is currently en route from Birmingham to London on Ex Silver Child to raise money for Great Ormond Street. So if you pass us on your travels put some money in our buckets; it is not for our beer fund! **Cpl** 'Sean' **Thomas** is currently looking for a pussy! Apparently it has tabby hair with silver streaks.

The Troop would like to wish 'Chief Chick' **Michelle Angove** a speedy recovery. We know why you keep going into hospital. (George Clooney doesn't work in this area) Ten out of ten for trying. **LCpl Tony** 'Anton' **Richardson, Sig Phil** 'Guppy' **Baxter** and **Sig** 'Easily lead' **Simpson** are all in Greece at the moment; under the pretence of being on exercise. I am not sure if they think we are stupid, but they have left their RRB behind!

We have a few new guys in our Troop who have just completed their Wolf familiarisation's course. They now all think they are mini-racing drivers. We are on a large exercise next month; and when we move from location to location it is not going to turn into a Grand Prix. Half of our little wanderers who have just returned from the Falkland Islands are posted straight away to pastures new. We are losing **LCpl Sam Hall, LCpl Stuart Stephen, LCpl Dean Wicks, Sig Laura Best, Sig Charlotte Driscoll, Sig Mick Gee** and **Sig Dawn Wardley**. Good luck to you all, we wish you all the best for the future.

222 SIGNAL SQUADRON
OMAN TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Imogen Mulholland**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Daphne Clash**

Another busy time for the Troop, and quite a lot of people moving around too. Incoming: **Cpl** 'Powers' **Austin** (who's actually been hanging around Bulford for a while but has evaded the Div Sig Regt tractor beam until now), **Sigs** 'Relay' **Higham**, 'Masts –r-me' **Sinclair** and 'the' Major (straight from the Factory). Somewhere in the British Army is a **LCpl Bowring** too – he actually belongs to this Troop, so if seen please return to Bldg 272, Ward barracks, Bulford. Last, but certainly not least, **2Lt Alisa Labram** joins us prior to her Troop Commanders Course. She will rejoin the Troop in March in place of the existing OC who will by then have her hands full with a junior **Mulholland**. (Who's getting the best deal there then?). Outgoing: **Sig Mortiboys** – to pastures new in Germany and **Cpl** 'the Chimpmeister' **Christison** – to the world of Civilan Telecommunications! Yes, it's the end of an era – and you could spot it by the length of his sideburns. All best wishes to **Dave** and **Jane** for the future.

In true style, the Troop celebrated **Cpl C's** leaving in his absence – no real change there – with a bit of training over in Hampshire, Alton to be exact (this particular locality will be of significance to anyone who has been posted here). Needless to say, the Troop was terribly impressed that **Sig Major** and **Sig Evans** managed to distinguish themselves in true 'we cannot drink at all' fashion, endearing themselves to all concerned (especially the staff at the establishment in question). Following the completion of a successful training day, the Regimental MT did us proud by providing a Battlebus that blew two tyres on the way home – no problem with driver's hours there though. Hot on the heels of that little jaunt, Oman Tp then spent a week based at Worthing RFC on Ex South Downs Dragon. A Troop level adventure training exercise, involving water-sports, walking and navigational mountain bike challenges also a lot of tents and **Cpl Fearns'** Porsche all in close proximity to the charms of the Clubhouse. The weather was poor enough to prevent sea fishing on the R&R day – but spot on for the 'civilianised water-sports training'. Just lucky that no one had a waterproof camera to hand. The Squadron may have lost **SSM Frank Roberts** (now RSM), but that doesn't mean that the Topham Hatt train no longer stops here – on the contrary **Cpl** 'Medals' **Manaton** elected to be the main man (clearly not realising what he was taking on). He organised a creditable Squadron effort in support of the Swanage Railway, on which he is to be congratulated. Thoroughly well done to all who took part (especially the Squadron Boxing Team).

Lastly, who does the Corps turn to when it needs young, talented thrusters to splash all over its latest recruiting literature, but Oman Troop? The Squadron is deploying on a Comms Ex next week, but good old 083 will be recorded for posterity doing their stuff on the Beacon overlooking glorious Salisbury Plain. For reasons that are plainly obvious to us, we were selected from a cast of three as the Node least likely to spend most of the day in makeup! With the exception of **SSgt Clash** (who has more dealings with Saatchi and Saatchi than the whole of their client base put together), it will be a refreshing opportunity for us to get the publicity we so clearly deserve! On the subject of **SSgt** 'The Helmet' **Clash**, good luck on her latest round of selection at Lillehammer next month – we look forward to seeing her on Sky Sports in that lycra number!

A couple of models, and bit of Cyprus too!
Cpls Knapman and Moore
present Blue Peter live from Dhekalia ranges

ARE YOU READING SOMEBODY ELSE'S WIRE?

WHY NOT GET YOURSELF A CHRISTMAS PRESENT ?

RING: 01258 482085 OR
BLANDFORD MILITARY 2085
AND ASK FOR A SUBSCRIPTION FORM

7 SIGNAL REGIMENT

CO **Lt Col J. Richardson**
RSM **WO1 S. Smoothy**

The Officers and soldiers of the Regiment would like to extend a warm welcome to the new Commanding Officer, **Lt Col Jim Richardson**.

Lt Col Jim Richardson takes over command of the Regiment from Lt Col David Jones

Also, farewell and best wishes to **Lt Col David Jones** and his wife **Rachel**. One of **Lt Col Jones'** final events was the visit of the Lord Mayor of Leicester to Krefeld. Leicester is twinned with Krefeld, and maintains strong links with the Regiment as the main British element in the area.

Visit of the Lord Mayor of Leicester to Krefeld

REGIMENTAL FAMILIES DAY - FRIDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2000

This was run by 229 (Berlin) Sig Sqn, with the guys and girls from X-Ray and Yankee Tps putting hours of hard work into the set-up and coordination of the event. With Bouncy Castles galore, face-painting, free ice-creams and a fantastic kids entertainer, the parade square was transformed into a childrens' fun-day, particularly with the assistance of **Cpl** 'Teletubby' **Alexander**, and the resident clown, **LCpl Pincott**, who really stole the show.

Sigs Hutton and **Kennedy** sold an amazing number of raffle tickets, with the help of **Sigs Evans** and **Butler**. The Bars were kept well-stocked, thanks to **Sgt MacPherson** and his team, and **Glen Mansell** recorded dedications from wives and families, which were later broadcast on his 'Calling the Balkans' show on BFBS Radio. As usual, the Chefs had surpassed themselves, with an amazing BBQ spread, and huge thanks are due for the hours they worked, feeding well over 400 people that night.

LCpl Pincott clowning around with some young fans

Sig Nichols and the 'Gladiators'

The evening's entertainments included a well-supported Karaoke and Disco, with the first song expertly led by **Maj Wally Drain**, the supervisor for the whole weekend. It was a real family event, so thanks to everyone who came and joined in!

The Subalterns and Cpl 'I'm a Brigadier actually' Dawson

Karaoke
Can we have Barbie Girl again? Please!

BERG LINN COUNTRY FAIR – SATURDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2000

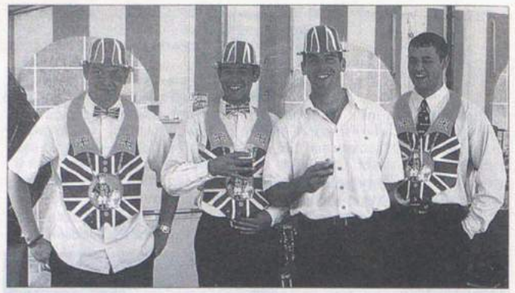
The British Country Fair in the grounds of Berg Linn Castle was a huge Anglo-German event. With free tickets for the Regiment, what could be better than a day out for the whole family. In glorious sunshine, there was something for everyone, including Falconry displays, Scottish Highland Games, Irish Bands and our own Royal Corps of Signals Band. They held everyone spell bound by a highly-polished performance, including a wide variety of modern and popular music.

ASCOT RACE DAY, KREFELD RENNBAHN – SUNDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2000

This splendid event was run by 232 Sig Sqn. With 7 Sig Regt Stakes starting off the afternoon's racing, the day proved an enormous success. The chefs surpassed themselves once again, with the most incredible display of culinary delights – and also did rather well on the betting front, it is heard! Many thanks to all those that took part, from the Standard Bearers to those that ran the transport, it really was an excellent day.

Maj Phil Baker, co-ordinator of Ascot Day, with his wife Collette

Lt Col Jones congratulates the winning owner, trainer and jockey of the 7th Signal Regiment Stakes



Soldiers from 7th Signal Regiment bring some traditional British cheer to the races

HEADQUARTER SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj Drain**
SSM **WO2 Ewing**

Yet another quiet period for HQ Sqn, with only the Regimental Weekend to organise, and of course the well-loved ITD week. The ITD Trg kicked off with an NBC demonstration by the OC, with all onlookers completely captivated as he tried to don a softy sleeping bag instead of his suit? With a little encouragement from the SSM, the instructor, **Sgt** 'Can I tell you about this Turkey' **Howe** proceeded to re-educate the offenders in the traditional way within the chamber - it really didn't take much encouragement!

QUARTERMASTERS (A) DEPARTMENT

QM(A) **Maj Doherty**
RQMS(A) **WO2 James**

It's been a busy time for the department, with the maximum leave period and preparation for the LSI. The department squash ladder goes from strength to strength, with **WO2** 'Neil' **James** trying everything in the book and some things not in the book to win games. Congratulations to **Sgt** 'Dave' **Howe** on his recent promotion, he is secretly hoping for a posting to 15 Sig Regt to meet up with absent friends. A sad farewell to **Sig** 'Thelma' **Marshall** who departs these shores to go all the way to the QM(T) Dept. However, she has not finished at the Department yet, she has yet to decide on her leaving present - either a decanter set or a bathrobe. Whatever her choice is, it will be a mystery. A warm welcome to **Sig** 'Brad' **Bradbury** who joins us from the QM(T) Dept.

QUARTERMASTERS (T) DEPARTMENT

QM(T) **Capt Cory**
RQMS(T) **WO2 Henry**

Autumn finds the QM(T) Dept in high spirits with a hectic summer's business completed. The Kosovo accounts are closed and ready for handover to the Closed Accounts Team. **Capt (QM) Ray Cory** has even had time to fit in the occasional game of golf. Yet another change of RQMS (T) sees **WO2** 'Taff' **Burdge** move across to become SSM 229 Sig Sqn, and **WO2 Trev Henry** moves into the hot seat. A fond farewell to 'Taff' and **Alda** and a warm welcome to **Trev** and **Glynis.**

The Department ran a highly successful HQ Squadron BBQ in June, with **WO2** 'Taff' **Burdge** proving you can get anything you want from TSG Dulmen. The reward for the team being a weeks adventure training in Bavaria where a good time was had by all. **LCpl Johnston** can still be heard complaining about the bicycle saddles - no such complaints from **Sig Macleod**. **SSgt Kev Scott** has decided he will not suffer the same player shortage he encountered last year as manager of the Regimental second football team by making sure the whole department turn up for training, willingly of course.

Congratulations to **Sgt Dom Cooke** on his recent promotion and the added bonus of having to rewrite the MSA. **Sgt** 'Scottie' **Scott** continues to improve his golf handicap, at the expense of the QM(T). The RLC contingent within the department are in buoyant mood as ever with **Sgt** 'Skip' **Skipper** and **Sgt Martin Didcote** back at work after sterling work on the Sergeants' Mess Summer Ball and HQ Sqn BBQ. **Sigs Verrill** and **Owen** continue to learn their trade within the URS world. In preparation for her class I course, **LCpl Boswell** has moved across to UET manager. She has taken to wearing a very serious frown, to such an extent that the civilian staff, **Emma** and **Collette**, have taken to calling her 'Sarge'.

For those who cannot make the golf course the QM(T) has introduced Friday afternoon darts, a serious business, as the battle for the Mickey Mouse champion rages on. **Sigs Pawsey**, **Verrill**, **Carter** ,**Valentine** and **Musgrave** have already fallen by the way. October will see **Cpl Lang** and **Sig Ellis** return from Bosnia and **LCpl Dunne** from his Class I. **Cpl Abbot** remains deployed in Kosovo. As ever there has been movement within the junior members of the department with **Sig Marshall** returning from the QM(A) Department being replaced by **Sig Bradbury**. New arrivals **Sig Wood** and **Sig Pawsey** joining the fold, welcome.

DON'T FORGET
THE DEADLINE FOR FEBRUARY IS
THIS OFFICE BY 10 DECEMBER

MOTOR TRANSPORT TROOP

MTO **Capt N. R. Coatsworth**
Tp SSgt **SSgt P. Hay**

MT Troop, 7th Signal Regiment, and 'Buster'

There has been quite a bit of movement within the Troop since the last time WIRE notes were submitted, and by the time this is published we will have said farewell to **Sgt** 'Bob' **Kirby**, **Cpl** 'Mark' **Knowles**, **Sig** 'Timothy' **Lockwood** and **Sig** 'Eyebrow' **Manton**, all of whom will be sorely missed, and we wish them all the very best for the future. We would also like to welcome **Sgt** 'Bri' **Sheard**, and **Sigs** 'Lisa' **Gavin** and 'Kitty' **Patterson** to the fold and hope they enjoy their time in the Troop. On the congratulatory front, slaps on the back go to **Cpl** 'Daz' **Mawson** and **Sandra** on the birth of their son **Patrick**, and **Cpl** 'Taff' **Kinsey**, **Sigs** 'Timothy' **Lockwood** and 'Eyebrow' **Manton** on their selection for promotion.

MT DAY OUT
(OR VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA)

Deciding to make the most of what little sun seems to be around nowadays, the MT donned their Bermudas and Ray Bans and took off in search of surf for a day's Water-Skiing. Ably led by **SSgt** 'Phil' **Hay**, this band of merry men and women set forth to display the kind of aquatic skills more usually associated with large rocks and ships with gaping holes in their hull. By no means afraid and eager to lead from the front, **LCpl** 'Scotty' **Scott** (that's original) explained to everyone just how it should be done, even offering lakeside instruction before finally skimming across the water for about three seconds then sinking to the bottom of the lake. **Sig** 'Del' **D'Lasselle** (even more original) quickly realised that Water-skiing perhaps wasn't going to be his sport, so decided to have a go at gymnastics instead, by launching himself 20 feet into the air and performing a triple somersault with two half twists every time he fell off - *and he fell off a lot.* Performance of the day however, goes to **Sig** 'Eyebrow' **Manton** who bored everyone with his apparent inability to fall off his ski and having the audacity to spin like a Whirling Dervish at will, performing all manner of tricks to impress the on-looking female fraternity. My how we prayed he would take a tumble,..... maybe next time.

LCpl Scott demonstrates his preferred technique, just prior to coming to grief, whilst the awe-inspired Sigs 'Swede' Clarke, 'Eyebrow' Manton and 'Del' D'Lasselle look on

TECHNICAL MAINTAINANCE TROOP

TM Tp would like to extend its welcome to four new Techs: **LCpl** 'Snitch 'n' Spew' **McKenzie**, **LCpl** 'Sticky Fingers' **McCormick**, **LCpl** 'Jones' **Logan** and wife **Becky**, **LCpl** 'Tommo' **Tomlins** along with his wife **Tracy** and children **Kaya** and **Blake**. Another recent attachment to TM Tp is **LCpl** 'Midnight Runner' **Long** who has come to join us after leaving 231 Squadron. A welcome goes to **Sgt** 'John Mod Man' **Ashman** and his wife **Mel**, who recently arrived from 249 Sig Sqn. Farewell to **Cpl Jenny Clasper** who decided to join 1 Civ Div upon getting married. Congratulations and good luck for the future. Congratulations to **WO1 (FofS) Tommy Steele** after being selected for commission - he will receive his Captain upon posting. We would also like to thank the FofS for a great barbeque and **SSgt John Hoyle** for some fantastic photographs... We would like to thank all parties involved in organising and running the adventurous training down in Bad Tolz. We all had an excellent time rock climbing, kayaking, mountain biking and adventurous hill walking. Finally, hi to all the guys on tour from TM Tp and a special hello to **Jeffrey** in the Falklands, 'Gogsy' (your little Hercules) will see you soon.

EXERCISE CRUSADER BACKSTOP 18-31 JULY 2000

HQ Sqn 7 Sig Regt took part in Adventure Training Exercise Crusader Backstop over the period 18-31 July 2000. The Exercise started with a 9 hour coach trip down to Bad Tolz, Bavaria. The accommodation, a luxury 5 star German transit camp was situated in the centre of a training area on the outskirts of Bad Tolz.

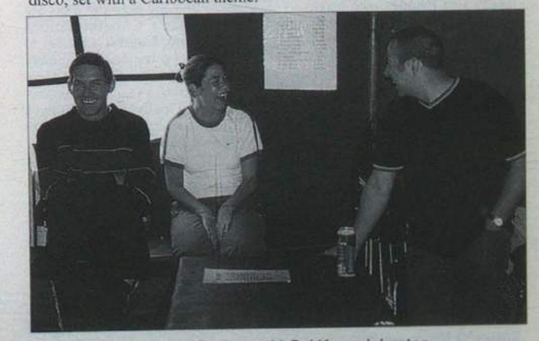
Climbing was instructed by **SSgt (SSI) Kev** 'I can come off the toboggan on the first corner' **Mason**, **Sgt (SI) Mandy** 'anything you climb I'll climb quicker' **Mason** APTC and **Sky** 'I climbed higher than Verrill' the Corps Dog. **Maj Wally** 'the mountain goat' **Drain** lead the way up the climbs during his visit with the SSI securing his confidential grade during the OC's abseil as he locked off the rope half way down, whilst **Sig Virge** 'I'm a photographer' **Verrill** kept his feet firmly on the ground. **Maj** 'the cinema manager' **Doherty** instructed on all of the hillwalking and controlled the Sqn film showings on an evening. He enjoyed himself so much in the first week, he decided to stay for an extra week.

Kayaking was under the instruction of **Sgt Ian** 'interesting' **Glover** and **LCpl Beth** 'I'm really shy and quiet' **Rees** REME. They taught **Cpl** 'Stace' **Stacey** to roll. He thought it was a very good option, after all when you are built as robustly as he is, dieting is not an option at that stage of the game. **Sig Lenny** 'I don't think kayaking is for me, even though I'm a PTI' **Leonard** has decided that watersports are for water based animals, not humans. Mountain Biking was controlled primarily by **WO2 (SSM) Steve** 'baboon arse' **Bovan** with **Sgt Dusty** 'Gel Seat' **Miller** and **Sig Chalky** 'Can I have a day off' **White** assisting. They lead the groups over a gruelling 35 mile course on a daily basis, hence **Steve's** nickname. A repair bill of DM281.00 helped keep the OC's Sqn bar profits down to a minimum. There was a volleyball competition held between the sections each evening. The permanent staff, needless to say, were the eventual overall winners, winning every game. The chef **Cpl Roger** '**Mellie**, the man on the telly' produced some excellent food over the Ex period and should be congratulated on passing his chefs course.

229 (BERLIN) SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj D. Webster**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Burdge**

The Squadron has been depleted down to just a handful of people, with the deployment of most of the squadron to Kosovo and Bosnia, but before they left, the remainder of the squadron put on a little farewell party organised by **Sig** 'Dinger' **Bell**, **Sig** 'Shady' **Kennedy** and friends. This consisted of a BBQ by the swimming pool in the afternoon for the families, then that night the lads and lassies had a bit of a boogie, with a disco, set with a Caribbean theme.



Sgt Don Cooke and LCpl Kerry Johnston
in usual mode behind the bar at the Squadron BBQ

Also in June we had a visit from The Royal School of Armagh Cadets. They were entertained by **2Lt** 'Jock' **Lawson**, **Sgt** 'Mac' **MacPherson**, **Cpl** 'Bungle' **Overall**, **LCpl** 'Stevo' **Stevenson** and **Sig** 'SSM' **Lowe**. The elite training team organised a fun-packed week of various military skills and a gruelling physical schedule.

YANKEE TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt Williams**
Tp SSgt **Sgt MacPherson**

This month we have had a fun packed schedule starting with 7 Sig Regt's open day on 8 of September. There was a BBQ with various bouncy castles for the children and **Sig** 'Orange Boy/Striker/Roy' **Woodward** who had hours of fun. We have had a couple of troop morale days organised by the king of the SQMS, **Cpl** 'Tyrone' **Woodward,** starting with a day out to Phantasia Land, and everyone had a great time except for **Sig** 'What's a gene?' **Lane** and **Sig** 'Shady' **Kennedy,** who were both chased around a ride called the Castle by a crazed hunch-backed Ogre, but apart from that they both thoroughly enjoyed the day. The second morale day was Go-Karting. The weather added to the tension of the race by pouring down, and we had to split the race into two heats as there were not enough Go-Karts for everyone. It was undecided who won the first race, but there was no doubt who won the second heat, as the man drove like he was driving Miss Daisy so he did not slip off the track. The winner was **LCpl** 'Rems' **Knowles**.

Now on to a few 'hellos' and 'goodbyes'...We say a warm welcome back to the lads who have just returned from a successful tour of Bosnia, **Cpl** 'Anne Summer model' **Andy Morris, Cpl** 'Notsolarge' **Lomas, Sig** 'Regimental Bike Rider' **Jay Preston, Sig** ' Furby' **Riches** and **LCpl** 'Copacabanna' **Lafferty.** We also welcome a few new additions to the Troop, fresh from the factory - **Sig Thornley, LCpl Simpson** and **LCpl Hart.** Goodbyes now....**Sig** 'Chesty' **Steph Evans** who is off to a new life in 'Civ Div', she promises to take her handcuffs with her....**Sig** 'Shady' **Sadie Kennedy,** who is off to Corsham to play with Crypto..lucky her....**Cpl** 'I've done that' **Alexander** is off to strut his stuff at 30 Sig Regt.... Finally, **Sig** ' I can't get out of bed' **Marie Butler** is off to 2 Sig Regt to brighten up their lives.

X-RAY TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Evans**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Thorburn**

A big hello from the biggest Troop in the Regiment! We've had an extremely busy couple of months, in particular with the organisation of the Regimental Families Day on Friday 8 September – many thanks to all those who helped make the day such a success, including all the willing Karaoke participants – what talent within the Troop! The highlight of this summer was undoubtedly the Troop BBQ, complete with a Bouncy Castle and outstanding food – all thanks to the organisation and hard work of **LCpl Crabb** and his wife. A few of the Troop enjoyed a week's Dinghy Sailing down at the Mohnesee Reservoir – some spectacular capsizing went on, as well as a great deal of piracy, and everyone achieved their RYA Novice 1 & 2 Dinghy Sailing qualification. Welcome back to all those returning from Bosnia, and hello to all the guys in the Falklands. Finally, goodbye to **LCpl Kemp**, off to 11 Sig Regt, and **Mr Barry Dear** who leaves us to join 1 Civ Div – best of luck.

232 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj P. Baker**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) I. Carter**

DELTA TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt S Allison**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Newton**

In good old-fashioned WIRE style, Delta Tp begin with arrivals and farewells. Welcome to a new OC, **2Lt Allison, Cpl Mundy** and **LCpl Thompson**. (Oh my God, two new techs to ruin the troops' kit!) Also, hello to **Sig Entwistle,** and finally some new guys from Blandford - **Sigs Creighton, Godwin** and **Reynolds**. We wave a sad goodbye to **Lt Jones** (Congratulations on your promotion to Captain!), **Cpl Gauchi, Cpl Bartlett, LCpl Cooper, LCpl Farland, LCpl O'Neill, Sig Barrett** and finally **Cpl Rhodes** who leaves us all to go to 263 Sig Sqn and a bit Sig Sqn. (By the way, **Dougie** still thinks you're a gasket!). Congratulations go to **LCpl** and **Sig Porter** on the birth of their son, **Connor** and also to **Sig Barrett** on the birth of her daughter. The Troop has been extremely busy lately with Ex. Arcade Falcon taking up most of June. Dets were deployed in BFG and a SAN group went to Spain. As you can imagine, some people had a much better time than others. Finally, the Troop have used Ex Warrior III as a pacex to prepare for their deployment to Spain and Turkey for Ex Arcade Fusion. A busy time for all!!!

HOTEL TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt V. Galloway**
Tp SSgt **SSgt G. McGuire**

The last few months have been a very disjointed time for Hotel troop, with summer leave, adventure training and the inevitable exercises that follow. Adventure training was once again enjoyed in Bavaria, with most of us getting something out of it and many discovering hidden talents. (i.e. **SSgt** 'Al' **Ironside** who is perhaps a future Olympian on the water – nice wetsuit!). Exercise season is well under way with the Troop receiving more work than it's used to. Morale within the Troop is good thanks to the gutter humour of **Cpl** 'Iarrcis' **Sigston** and **Sig** 'Scouse' **Girvan's** bear skin hair. With the predictability of a tech promotion it's time for the arrivals and departures. Starting with arrivals, the Troop welcomes a new OC, **2Lt Galloway** - well somebody always gets the short straw. Also straight from the factory, **Sig Orr,** our first installation tech, and **LCpl** 'show me your tongue' **Shirley.** Escaping to freedom, are **Sgt** 'Del' **Richards** posted to N.Ireland and **LCpl** 'Taz' **Williams** who'll be treating himself at Bulford, not forgetting **Mr** 'Phil' **Hughes** who has been promoted to civvi – good luck **Phil**. Congratulations are due for **Sig McGuinness**, ex Hills on her marriage. We would also like to congratulate **SSgt** 'Al' **Ironside** on his impending promotion. Well done also to **Cpl** 'Odd-job' **Johnston** on the birth of a son and also to **Sig Kay Murphy** who also gave birth recently.

EXERCISE LONG LOOK 2000 - *by Capt Nicky James*

On returning from leave in January 2000 I was delighted to have been successfully nominated for Ex Long Look. In this tri-service annual exercise, personnel do a direct exchange with a counterpart in either Australia or New Zealand. I had been picked to go to New Zealand, which having spent a year in Australia prior to university was perfect for me. Due to the smaller size of the NZ Forces only 45 Brits were able to deploy there, of which two were from R Signals, **Cpl John Reardon** from 20 Armd Bde and Sig Sqn and myself. We were both exchanging with personnel from 3 Sig Sqn based near Christchurch on the South Island.

The journeys to and from New Zealand were as eventful as the exercise. On the deployment we flew with the RAF and it took six days to reach our destination. We had overnight stopovers in Bahrain, Singapore and Brisbane before switching to the smaller NZRAF plane in Sydney to fly to the North Island. Finally, after another night stopover, the South Islanders boarded a tiny 'crop sprayer' plane to reach Christchurch. It took the same length of time on the return journey with NZRAF in a Boeing 727. The 727 could just take the weight of all of our luggage and us and could only fly for five hours without needing refuelling. This meant numerous stops and some people being moved around the plane so it could actually take off! Amongst the stops we also had overnighters in Hawaii, Winnipeg and the outback of St John's in Canada. In the end we had managed to see quite a bit of the world on the exercise.

3 Sig Sqn in Burnham Camp is the only signals component of the NZ Army in the South Island and it is small for a Squadron. On the camp just after our arrival two Companies of the 2/1 Battalion, the Logistic and Engineer Sqn deployed to East Timor to relieve the Troops already out there. 3 Sig Sqn deployed 15 of its personnel, which left about 30 in the Squadron. My job was 2IC/Ops Officer but with a Capt OC, Yeoman, Foreman, SSM and two Tp Comds for that amount of personnel, my in-tray never got very full! In the near future 3 Sig Sqn will be reduced to an Independent Troop but luckily for me that did not happen during my deployment, which left me with quite a bit of spare time to explore the country. 3 Sig Sqn contains the EW component of the NZ R Signals and the rest of the equipment is the equivalent to our radio detachments. There are no trunk communications. They support the Bn HQ and also provide communications for incidents requiring quick reaction and cordon control. I took part in an exercise testing the callout procedure and set up of the nets for an incident, which was very interesting. The NZ forces also have an excellent CIS system, which 3 Sig Sqn was responsible for maintaining and controlling within Burnham camp. This was run by CIS Troop, possibly the busiest aspect of the Squadron. There is an excellent tri-service defence intranet that is very user friendly. It seemed a superb system to me and definitely cut down on paper work. However there were very few secure terminals, so 3 Sig Sqn still had to man and run a COMCEN, which tied up even more of their limited number of personnel. My major task whilst there was to organise and run an exercise. Much of the Squadron were young and inexperienced Signallers, some of whom had never spent more than a night out on exercise. I was determined to give them a bit of the British Army Battle Camp experience and have them all out in the field for ten days digging shell scrapes and living off rations. Due to the inexperience of many, the first few days were spent in basic field craft and soldiering lessons. This, however, turned out to be fortunate because when I had done the recce the whole area had been covered in a foot of snow. When we actually deployed the snow had all melted and there were quite a few changes of plan needed. My time was split, for much of it I was riding around on the back of a motorbike on recces, as NZ R Signals still carries the despatch and delivery roll and 3 Sig Sqn had equipment and personnel trained to ride.

Lt N. James on exercise using the Squadron motorbike

The rest of my time was spent keeping warm in the control vehicle and being laughed at for my voice procedure. The prefix "Hello" for any message caused much hilarity and my refusal to answer a radio check with 'Loud and Clear' caused much confusion! The location of the exercise was amazing. It was native NZ bush and at one point a possum hunter passed through to check his traps. When I looked at the scenery around it was more like being on Adventurous Training rather than exercise. It was a pleasant change from Ayrshire Barracks and Sennelager!

Back in barracks the NZ Army is very similar to the British. The few changes I noticed most were the extensive variety of boots that were issued, the excellent fleece and poncho kit that they use, and that they all walk across the grass in barracks. I had to remind myself I did not have to walk around the grass but still felt naughty as I strolled across expecting to hear an RSM bellow at me. Finally there was their addiction to pies. We had PT every morning from 0800hrs – 0900hrs and on starting work at 0930hrs a 'pie lady' would come around in a little van and everyone would rush out to buy a pie, I think steak and cheese was the favourite. I never managed to work out how anyone could want a pie for breakfast after an hour of gruelling PT!

One of the aims of Ex Long Look is to experience another country and its culture through the forces and outside. There is another Sig Sqn in the NZ Army and I had a chance to travel up to 2 Sig Sqn in the North Island whilst we joined in an 'On The Job' training package. This was a larger Sqn and had recently returned from East Timor and it was interesting to see how they operated. I also travelled down to stay with the equivalent of a TA camp when they were assisting with an air show of which current and ex military planes were a major part. I was also involved in a week sailing expedition using a NZ Navy yacht, which not only introduced me to sailing but also to more of the North Island. However, most of my travelling was done by my own organisation, usually at the weekends. It is an amazing country with endless outdoor opportunities. I did a couple of weekends skiing, a couple walking (or tramping as it is called), I went swimming with dolphins, saw the sulphur and mud pools of the volcanic area and had a dip in the hot springs and tried many of the local wineries. I did, however, fail in the expectation that I would follow the precedence set by previous R Signals female officers on Ex Long Look in New Zealand. On my return I did not sign off so I could emigrate and join the Kiwis having met 'Mr Right' in the NZ forces. I must have been unlucky, maybe due to the deployment to East Timor, because I broke the tradition and managed returned unattached and not enamoured with any Kiwi men!!

Meeting Jonah Lomu and Ron Cribb
Lt Nicky James and Capt Beth Greasley (Int Corps)

Possibly the highlight of the whole exercise was my chance to meet the All Blacks. It was a task to produce a photograph, to present to the Commander of the exercise on our return that symbolised the culture of the country. I was determined not to just have one of me on exercise so I wrote to the manager of the All Blacks because Rugby is as much an integral part of their culture as football is in Britain, if not more so. The manager, Andy Martin, had been a Colonel in the NZ Army and had even been on Ex Long Look in 1982 and he was most obliging. I met up with him in a hotel in Wellington and had the opportunity to grab photos with the team that were staying there before the match against Australia. It was very exciting and the guys were very friendly, and I even bumped into some of them again the next evening after the match as they partied in Wellington. Ex Long Look is an exciting and rewarding exercise and I would recommend anyone to volunteer for it. However, do not expect to deploy and have everything laid on for you. To really see a country and get to experience the forces, the people and the culture you must be prepared to get out there and do it by yourself.

JOINT SERVICES SUPPORT UNIT (AYIOS NIKOLAOS)

CO **Lt Col D. J. Whitby**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) D. Richardson**

COMMAND TROOP

JSSU(AN) continues to operate under the Mediterranean sun and is now firmly established as a Tri Service Signal Unit following the amalgamation of the former 9 Signal Regiment (Radio) and 33 RAF Signals Unit in April 1999. The Unit consists of three Squadrons and a Projects Support Group where Support Squadron is the traditional administration and logistic support provider to the two Operational Squadrons, 234 and 840 Sqn. Command Group combines elements of all the three Services and civilian personnel from GCHQ. The Unit continues to host regular visitors that have in recent weeks included the Commander British Forces Cyprus, **Air Vice Marshall Rimmer** and the Chief of the Joint Operations PJHQ, **Vice Admiral Sir Ian Garrett**.

Command Group JSSU (AN)
Back Row (L-R): Capt Wilkes AGC SPS, Maj McCreath Int Corps, Sqn Ldr Kyte, Mr Tony Kennedy
Front Row (L-R): Mr Simon Hall, Adjt, CO, Sqn Ldr Keely, RSM, Mrs Deborah Bradley

SUPPORT SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj G. Hailstone** R Signals
SSM **SSgt (SQMS) P. Rouse**

LOG SUPPORT TROOP
QM **Maj P. Whitehouse** R Signals
RQMS (Station) **WO2 S. White**
RQMS (Ops) **WO2 D. Thornton**

The Log Sp Tp has seen some changes since the last *WIRE* notes - notably the arrival of **SSgt Neil Jennings** into the SQMS (T) post and the departure of **WO2 (RQMS)** 'Stan the Man' **Staniford** and **SSgt Brian Reid** to pastures new. The two RQMS incumbents spend most of their time on Health and Safety courses either in the UK or at Episkopi. The Catering Dept has a new master chef in the disguise of **WO2 (SQMS) Joughin**. Fresh from 59 Independent Commando Sqn RE, he and **Cpl Cooke** posted in from 1 Para seem intent on ridding the chefs of their lardy image. The MT is still led by **SSgt Mark Fitz-patrick** and they continue to cover the wide variety of details that a Station demands. Congratulations to **Cpl Mark McClafferty** from the Unit armoury who is off on promotion to the Commando Logistics in UK and welcome to **Cpl** 'Herbie' **Herbert** and **LCpl Karl Davies** to act as custodians for the Units ammo stocks.

TRAINING SUPPORT TROOP
SSI **SSgt G. Steel**

The Unit Training Wing has had a busy period of late with the postings out of **Sgt McNeilly** to Blandford and the posting in of the first RAF Regt Training Sgt into the Wing in **Sgt Steve Hills** from RAF Benson. Welcome to **Steve** and his wife **Debs** and family, we hope you enjoy your 3-year tour in sunny Cyprus with the Army. The Training Wing has also been implementing a Joint Military Continuation Training (JMCT) programme to ensure all the three Services receive effective annual military training. This has included field firing at Pyla ranges, security training within camp and the planning of the revamped Station Battle Camp at the end of the year to be held at Melanda in the West of the island. All three instructors within the Wing are eagerly awaiting confirmation of ammunition stocks

and pyro availability to ensure a good time is had by all! The Medical Centre under the watchful eye of **Sgt John Richards** remain ready to treat any injuries of any natures including heat aliments, snakes and LOA over load. Farewell from that department goes to **Cpl** 'Paddy' **Reece** who is off to 59 Independent Commando Sqn RE. The gymnasium has a new firm hand on the tiller with that of **WO2 (QMSI) Neil Bragg** who likes it so much he has took a year out of promotion to remain at Ayios Nikolaos. He is ably assisted by newly promoted **SSgt (SSI) Nikki Pearce** and **Cpl** 'Baz' **Bazzard** who has succumbed again to marriage within the Unit. Congratulation's to you both.

ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT TROOP

UAO	**Flt Lt S. Chadwick - Higgins** RAF
RAOWO	**WO2 (SQMS) R. Mills**
ROC	**Sgt A. Attwood**

FAMILIES OFFICE

Ably led by Capt **Blod Godwin** R Signals and supported by the Estate Warden, **WO2** 'Brummie' **Dowling**, the two play an intricate role in maintaining harmony in the Unit. It is a busy employment (or so they tell us) but both still manage to regularly prise themselves away from to the golf course. Both bandits spend so much time at the 19 hole that that the families Center could be relocated there….

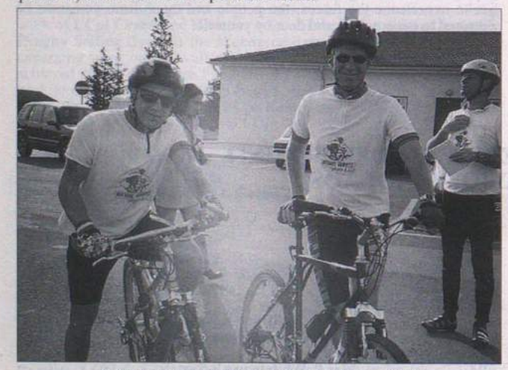
840 SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Sqn Ldr Mike Edwards**
WO Eng	**WO Dave Watson**

Sgt Kev Cooney is the only Royal Signals person in a predominantly RAF Squadron and holds the post of SNCO Crypto, assistant to the Custodian **Flt Lt Jim Higgins**. In March of this year **Sgt Cooney** took part in the Cyprus Mountain Challenge 2000 Cycle Ride to raise money for UK and Cyprus Charities. Held over three days and taking in all Cyprus Units on the Island, he and a total of 18 other JSSU (AN) personnel entered and completed this very demanding cycle

Day 1 Ay Nik to RAF Akrotiri (160km) Via Episkopi Garrison
Day 2 Akrotiri to Mount Troodos (64km)
Day 3 Mount Troodos to Ay Nik (176km) via UNPA Nicosia

Three days, 400kms – No mean feat. Not to be deterred **Sgt Cooney** is set to join another team in an attempt to raise more money but this time Off Road across the inhospitable local terrain (could be even more painful!!) See future *WIRE* reports for results.



JSSU (AN) Cyprus Mountain Challenge 2000
(L-R): Sgt Kev Cooney and Sgt Steve Pattenden pictured at the start point – Ayia Nik Forum
Rear right is SSgt Steve McInally preparing himself for an interview with Local Reporters

234 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Tony Urwin**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) S. Smith**

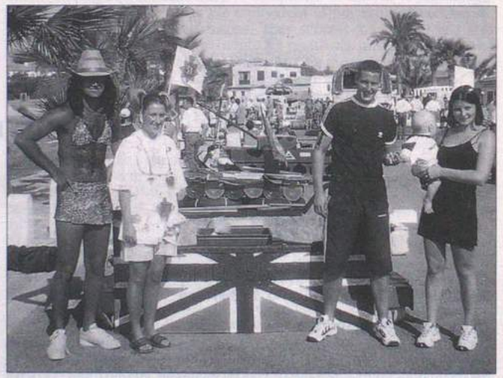
Changes out here in the sun have seen the OC, 2IC and SSM all on the move at roughly the same time. **Maj Mike Grittiths** leaves for the MOD and we welcome **Maj Tony Urwin**, (this Walkabout thing looks a piece of cake to me!) Look forward to you entering next year then Sir. **Capt Steve Palfreyman** leaves on promotion after his third tour in the sun for a cushier time in the UK. Good luck to you and Bev and the family and you did complete the Walkabout. Present incumbent 2IC is **Capt Caroline Woodbridge** who immediately enlisted into every physical event going on the Island, including the Walkabout although this didn't include any fire fighting courses. **WO2 (SSM) Martin** 'I've been around the block' **Boston** moves from the SSM slot to the Estate management post within the QM's – some CV for a Supvr R. Returning to the fold from Bosnia is **WO2 (SSM) Steve Smith** who immediately swapped computer and Supvr R brain for the more difficult job of SSM. Farewell and welcome to you all.

CYPRUS RAFT RACE 2000

Every year in Cyprus 62 Eng Sup Sqn organize the All Island raft race at the Cessac beach in Dhekalia. The aim of the event is to raise money for charities both in Cyprus and the UK. This year First Line Support (FLS) 234 Sqn decided to revamp last years model, which had had a maiden voyage rather like that of the Titanic although there are no icebergs in the Med! After acquiring several empty vegetables oil drums from the cookhouse, the lads from FLS set about making the raft armed with a few cans of lager and a box of ice pops! The theme was decided by the team manager, **Cpl** 'Geordie' **Tonks** who seems to have a fetish with the Spice Girls. The raft was made to look like the Spice World bus with Union Jacks blazing downs the side.

Last year we entered as an all male team so this year it was decided that a mixed team was in order and made for a better chance of winning. The day of reckoning arrived and everybody was prepared. It was quite a sight to behold. **Cpl** 'Hairy Egyptian rug' **Gaber** came as Scary Spice in a leopard skin bikini and boy was he scary! **Sig Saether** came as Sporty Spice and being daft lad that he is let the boys draw tattoos on him with a permanent marker! **Kersty** came as Baby Spice, complete with bib, dummy and pigtails! Then there was **Becky** who took the fancy dress one step further and dyed her hair black and came as Posh Spice. Every team was well stocked with egg, flour and tomato missiles and soon enough a full-scale battle was under way. Midway through the commotion a Military Police wagon turned up on its afternoon patrol. The battle stopped between teams, and in a fine military reaction everyone proceeded to bombard the patrol vehicle. The mixed race was first to go. It started with a 100mtr dash to the rafts then into the sea for flkm paddle. Our raft got off to a bad start going out in fifth place, but all in one piece and still floating. With a bit of grit and determination and also the fact that there were bits of other teams rafts sinking everywhere the team pushed up into second place battling with the waves and rival teams. The team managed to pass another 234 Sqn Team with a great tactical advance by throwing a massive bag of flour in their faces. Our raft made up a lot of ground on the front-runners who had got off to a flying start but we had to eventually settle for second place. All in all the team did well and received a warm round of applause from the spectators of 234 Sqn who turned up to watch. The raft team managed to raise £180 for RNLI and the 'Nicosia Special Baby Care Unit'.

Also taking part was the Wives Club team who came dressed as Bunnies, consisting of **Wendy** 'leader of the gang' **Hamilton**, **Collette Herbert**, **Claire Solomons** and **Traci Richardson**. They got off to a bad start getting caught up amongst another rafts oars, but then made good time to the first buoy. After battling with the wind and increasing waves they decided to head back to shore with most of the other contenders, thereby saving themselves and their raft for next year. Well done, girls!!



FLS Cyprus 2000 Raft race team
(L-R): Cpl 'Hairy Rug' Gabor, Kersty Tonks, Sig Saether, Adam 'Brooklyn' Clark, Becky Clark.

Wives Club Cyprus 2000 Raft race team
(L-R): Colette Herbert, Claire Solomons, Wendy Hamilton, Traci Richardson

14th SIGNAL REGIMENT (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

CO	**Lt Col D. P. Meyer**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) D. L. Palmer**

226 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

Sqn Comd	**Maj Jonathan Gillespie**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Dave Watson**

The Squadron welcomes the new Sqn OC, **Maj Jonathan Gillespie** who has joined us from across the water. Straight into planning and executing another deployment to Sierra Leonne, hitting the ground running, just about describes his arrival! The Squadron is still very busy with various exercises, demos, adventurous training and Operational deployments ongoing. The return of various equipment's now mounted in Pinscauer mean that 640 Tp are being kept very busy, not least with showing off their new kit to the CO who looked decidedly at home inside the PILOT vehicle. Congratulations to **LCpl Hambleton** (nee Griffiths) and **Sgt Hambleton** on their recent marriage.

640 SIGNAL TROOP (EW)

Tp Comd	**Capt Quinsey**
Tp SSgt	**SSgt Flaherty**

The Troop says hello to **WO2 Paul Crawley, Sgt Chris Dunn** on his dramatic return to 14 Sig Regt (EW) and 'straight from the factory' **Sigs** 'Mac' **McAllister,** 'Lofty' **Hannam** and 'Tranny' **Tranter**. Sad goodbyes go to **Cpl Paul** 'Petts' **Pettman** who seemed to be in the Troop forever and at last has managed to escape and **SSgt** 'Franko' **Flaherty** who will be sadly missed (by some more than others!). It started off as a quiet period for the Troop, due to the fact that August has been a maximum leave period. However, it did get more interesting towards the end of the month when the Troop disappeared to Weymouth for a week of 'adventure training'. As usual all Troop members went away and had a thoroughly challenging time. Numerous stories have already begun to circulate as a result of some events that went on that week. Firstly, if the Corps gymnastics rep is reading, you might want to contact **LCpl** 'Tinny' **Foyle**. Whilst running from one drinking establishment to another in the rain, he failed to see the chains between two bollards. This resulted in him completing a perfect triple somersault with pike and gracefully hitting the floor. For this magnificent effort he received a standing ovation from the masses of onlookers. The best incident of this adventurous training exercise was when the hill walking and mountain biking instructors, **Capt Quinsey** and **SSgt Clements** respectively, were called back to Cawdor Barracks on the second day. Ah well! No arduous training for us, but for the members of the Troop that were called back a nice little trip to West Africa lay in wait, a second time there for some of them, chin up lads! This adventure training was the last piece of organising that **SSgt** 'Frank' **Flaherty** carried out for the Troop. It was a most enjoyable exercise that was much appreciated by all those who attended. In the next few weeks we have two of our lads deploying on the Regimental Cadre Course. **Sigs** 'Phil' **Keen** and 'Steve' **Langhorne** are off for two weeks of fun on the lovely training area at Sennybridge. The top soldier on this course will be automatically promoted and so `good luck' lads.

LEWT

A restful period for LEWT on return from spearheading the EW support to Op Basilica. July saw the Troop support the 2 Para Battlegroup on Ex Eagles Green Strike in the Galloway Forrest. The initial phase with the Pathfinder Platoon was supported by **Sgt South** who carried out a night-time tandem HALO decent from 10,000 ft. This was the first time this method has been used by 16 AA Bde. The remainder of the Troop deployed with 2 Para Patrols Platoon ahead of the Battlegroup. The rest of the Exercise was carried out in normal LEWT fashion, congratulations to **WO2 (Supvr R)** 'Screech' **Spiers** on winning the best field soldier award. As normal **Sgt** 'My back's sore' **Burton** had to leave early, but was forgiven. Adventurous Training was carried out in mid-August in the local area. The highlight being **LCpl Neill** who actually thought that water-skiing actually happened under water! Congratulations to **Dawn** and 'Paddy' on their recent arrival of a bouncing baby boy. And a sad farewell to **WO2 (Supvr R) Jim Spiers** who has been posted to DSSS.

245 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

Sqn Comd	**Maj Justin Hodges**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Griffths**

Ex Mouflon's Wanderer was the Squadron adventure training summer camp at HMS *Indefatigable* in Angelsey. The course was designed in such a way that the participants were able to enjoy a variety of activities including, hill walking (enjoy and hill-walking in the same sentence) in Snowdonia, canoeing, mountain biking, rock climbing, orienteering and golf. The journey north was slow and unexciting and Squadron members on the bus were beginning to wonder why we had been driving for five hours and had not yet left Wales! We arrived, we were briefed and then followed **Sgt** 'Shaky' **Gilmartin** to the bar. A good night was had by all. The following day we were split in to our groups and the unfortunate Group 1 were sent on their way, with **SSgt** 'Norm' **Finnegan** and **Sgt** 'Blue Job' **Black,** to the top of Tryffan. The rest of us were off for a leisurely day with **LCpl Stu Green** in the unsinkable canoes, one of which **Sgt Ed Mortimer** managed to sink. The rest of the two weeks were spent swapping and changing between the different activities. Noticeable underachievers were **Sgt Mick Black** and **LCpl Stu Green** for getting lost on the mountains. Then there was **Sgt Ed Mortimer** for sinking his canoe the first time he got in to it, **SSgt** 'Gwar' **Timmis** for not climbing as high as the rest of his class. Not forgetting **Sig** 'Chunks' **Beale** for getting hit on the head with a golf ball and **Sgt** 'Shaky' **Gilmartin** for the bar. Ex Courageous Bat saw the majority of the Squadron get away to Denmark for a Multi National EW exercise. This served the purpose of A: maintaining relations with Drunken Vikings (Well done **WO2** 'Amazing' **Craig Shrives**) B: with the Brits and the Danes united as the 'non-Europeans' compete and destroy 'The Europeans' in horrible drinking games. C: Fail miserably in chatting up the Norwegian Model posing as an officer (Not so well done **Cpl** 'Fitzy' **Fitzpatrick**) D: Look at a bridge and lastly E: Give one of those speeches that ends ….and well done the girls, you're all very pretty.'

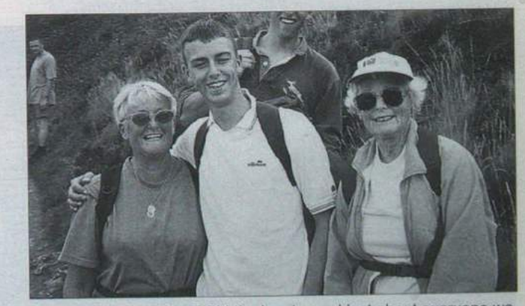
237 SIGNAL SQUADRON (ELECTRONIC WARFARE)

Sqn Comd	**Maj Dave Drinkall**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Richardson**

Still enjoying ourselves in Canada, back soon!

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP
ADVENTURE TRAINING TO COSTA DEL NEWQUAY
10 -15 SEPTEMBER 2000 - *by Sig Barn*

Day One began on the sea, fishing. Now this may sound rather boring but actually it didn't turn out to be after **LCpl Gray** and **Sig** 'Rubber toe' **Barn** used some alternative bait over the edge of the boat. Natural bait, it seemed works better than over the counter bait so we 'attempted' to catch some of what the skipper called mackerel. Given that we were not natural sea dogs we did not embarrass ourselves. The excitement was building, especially when **Sgt** 'Alfie' **Davidson** started, finally someone who knew what they were doing. The skipper decided to rename us all alternating between 'Love' and 'Sweetheart'. On the next exciting day brought rock climbing, abseiling and traverse. Especially fun for vertigo sufferers like **LCpl** 'Stavros' **Constantdi** who realised halfway down that he was a sufferer and decided to climb back up, to the extreme amusement of all the troops. We did however applaud him for his heroic effort. Well done 'Stavros'. Although everyone was not to scared of the climbing, for example **Sig** 'Trigger' **Read** who shot up the wall like a man possessed. We also had **Sig** 'Posh Geordie' **Turnbull** trying to keep his head down in order not to get a mention. Our next activity was hill-walking, along a coastal path perhaps? This seemed like a good idea to start with until a slight mistake was made by the bus drivers **Cpl Clifford** and **SSgt Evans**, who managed to turn an 11 mile trek into a 20 mile forced march. The march soon slowed down as a small number joined **Foreman Henly** who misplaced his teddy over the cliff and slowed the whole parade down. **Sgt Evenden** decided to jazz things up by coming up with the wonderful idea of getting **Sig Barn** to ask defenseless old ladies to have their photos taken with them. All in all a good time was had by all.



Sig 'Bob' Barn (white T-Shirt) who stopped just about everyone we met to have his photo taken, with Cpl 'Skippy' Roach obviously complementing him on his choice of subjects

EXERCISE SILVER CHILD
14 SIGNAL REGIMENT (EW) V 1 (UK) ADSR
26-28 AUGUST 2000 - *by Cpl Gunn, TM Tp*

Having completed our 'thorough' training schedule, the 14 Sig Regt Team, comprising solely of HQ Sqn, were in high spirits and ready for Ex Silver Child. Although, due to the communication skills between the two units, the programme of events had little resemblance to what we had

trained for! Our high spirits soon disappeared when the Team's Bedford broke down half a mile outside Haverfordwest. This wonderful beginning was soon to be a true reflection of the whole weekend. However, confidence was still high as the first event started. The 14 Sig Regt Team started against 1 Div on the 33 mile road run from Sutton Coldfield, and full effort was given even though their team had five Army runners. Eventually we completed the run, through six counties about ten minutes behind them.

The roads were then terrorised by the whole team on an assortment of racing machines ranging from a 'top of the range' mountain bike, ridden by **Sig Mick Brennan** down to **Cpl Gaz Bartie's** beer bike, which needed a lot of TLC to get it going. However, the determination showed when **LCpl Craig Wildgoose** and **Sig Mick Brennan** finished the 33-mile bike ride and crossed the line first. However, the rest of the riders slowly followed, due to being dehydrated, as our backup van, driven by **Cpl Mat Turner** decided to do a bit of sightseeing instead of handing out fluids. The second day started off well and injury free, although our chef, **Pte** 'Chef' **Hirons** had a meeting with a certain S. Artois the night before and subsequently had dubious stains on his clothes. Both rival teams joined together to push the 1 3/4 ton trailer the 25 miles towards London. During this time they managed to raise a considerable amount of money through the streets, although **SSgt** 'Dougie' **Douglas** informed us that he had picked up injuries in both calves due to driving the minibus at 5mph for 25 miles! Once thoroughly refreshed and nourished thanks to the manager of McDonalds, both teams started the second part of the competition, a 20-mile road run. Aches and strains were showing, and teddies were being thrown into corners at lightning speed as changeovers were being dubiously extended, well, at least for **Cpl Damian Gunn** and **Sig** 'Ilesy' **Iles.** Spirits were soon lifted though, as the 14 Sig Regt Team crossed the line beside the 1 Div team. As this was our last night, and the bulk of the competition was over, the 14 Sig Regt Team decided to do a bit of sightseeing in Uxbridge. However, the night seemed to drag as **WO2 (SSM) Daz Newton** insisted on showing off his horticultural skills as he pointed out every flower, tree and shrub in the area, not only naming them in English, but in Latin as well! Final day and the 11-mile canoe down the river Thames got underway smoothly with both teams setting off together. However, things were soon to change as canoes were wobbling everywhere due to the 'tsunami' caused by passing barges. Eventually **Cpl** 'Gaz' **Bartie** and **Sig** 'Ilsey' **Ilse** had to be forced onto the Royal Engineer's safety boats. Never the less **WO2 (SSM) Daz Newton** insisted he completed the 11 miles in his canoe - so the safety boats towed him! Well done to **LCpl Craig Wildgoose** who managed to complete the whole distance under his own steam. All that was left to do was pack up and head back to Haverfordwest, but a short delay and a whistle stop tour of London was to ensue due to a slight mishap. Still, it shows that we're all human after all! Overall though, a great time was has by all and the aim of the exercise was met. The three teams managed collectively to raise over DM 48,000.00 and the endurance over the last three days all seemed worth it as we handed over the cheque to Great Ormond St. Hospital. Also it was wonderful to see the faces of the children on the wards as we handed out the toys we collected. Eventually, it was decided that over all the events, a tie between the 14 Sig Regt Team and the 1 Div Team was the fairest result.

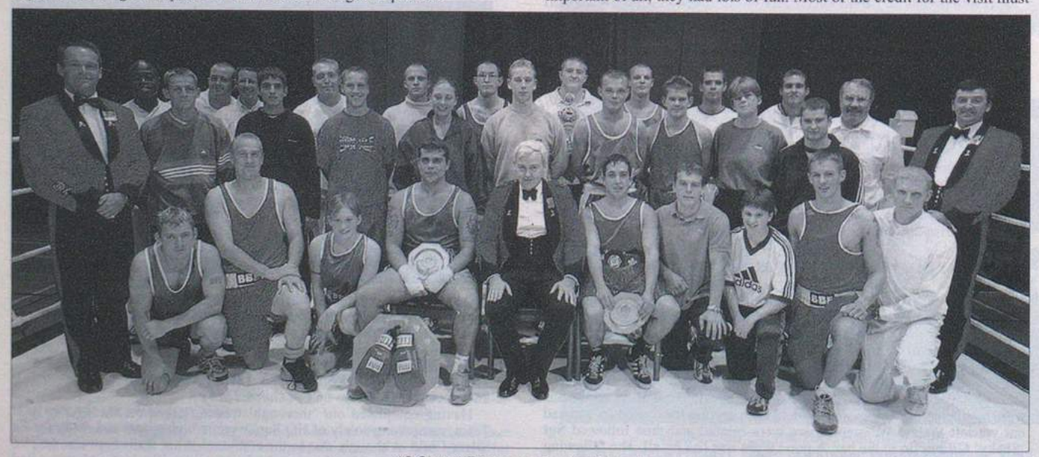
XVI 16 SIGNAL REGIMENT

16 SIGNAL REGIMENT BOXING NIGHT 27 SEPTEMBER 2000

The Regiment held their first Inter Squadron Boxing Competition since 1998 on Wednesday 27 September. The evening began with a Black Light demonstration by the 1 DWR, which was then followed by a comical 'Good and Bad' boxing demonstration by **WO2 (RQMS) Jed Robinson**, **WO2 (QMSI) Bob Price QGM** and **WO2 (MTWO) Dave Stewart**. This set the tone for the evening and was well received by all. The preliminary rounds for the competition had been held over the previous two days culminating with a total of 21 boxers progressing through to the Final Bouts on 27 September. The results were as follows:

Super Heavyweight	-	**LCpl Unsworth**	230 Sig Sqn
Featherweight	-	**Cpl Davies**	HQ Sqn
Lightweight	-	**Cpl Ferguson**	HQ Sqn
Light-welterweight	-	**LCpl Faid**	230 Sig Sqn
Light-middle	-	**LCpl Elkin**	252 Sig Sqn
Bantamweight (Female)	-	**Sig Steel**	255 Sig Sqn
Welterweight (Female)	-	**LCpl Robinson**	255 Sig Sqn
Middleweight	-	**Sig Winters**	230 Sig Sqn
Light-heavyweight	-	**LCpl Driver**	HQ Sqn
Cruiser-weight	-	**Sig Elliot**	230 Sig Sqn
Welterweight	-	**Sig Scott**	255 Sig Sqn

The following presentations were also made to **Sig Baron** (255 Sig Sqn) for the best runner-up and **LCpl Faid** for Best Boxer. The Inter-Squadron Boxing Champions for 2000 were 230 Signal Squadron.



16 Signal Regiment Boxing Squad

OXFORDSHIRE (RGJ) BATTALION ARMY CADET FORCE VISIT - *By Lt O. Dinnis, 230 Sig Sqn*

The Squadron recently hosted a visit by members of the Oxfordshire (RGJ) Army Cadet Force. **Capt Mike Harland** of the RGJ ACF took twelve cadets and two adult instructors to visit 16 Sig Regt to get a taste of Regular Army life. During their visit their experiences were not confined to the Royal Corps of Signals; they were also taken to visit elements of the Army Air Corps, the Royal Air Force, the RAF Regiment, the Royal Artillery and the tanks of The Queens Royal Hussars. The visit was not just a carousel of demonstrations for the cadets; they had plenty of hands on experience as well using the ranges (another special mention to **Sgt** 'I helped too!' **Wilkinson** for doing an excellent range package) and undertaking command tasks all mixed in with plenty of PT and sport. The emphasis for the visit, however, was on giving the cadets as broad a view as possible of Army life in Germany. The Cadets were fortunate during their range package as the nearby 7 Sig Regt also had cadets visiting. The scene was set for a shooting competition with a trophy for the winners. The competition was hard fought but the lads from Oxfordshire were eventually victorious following a decisive performance in the last round. The visit was a resounding success with all participants, both cadets and those who helped out, having a great time. The aim was achieved with the Cadets being exposed to a large slice of the Army in Germany but, most important of all, they had lots of fun. Most of the credit for the visit must go to **SSgt Rab Marshall** who put in excellent effort to ensure the visit went without a hitch. Also of invaluable assistance were **Cpl Billy Bedford** and **LCpl Jase Lowes**.

LEICESTER TROPHY FOOTBALL
by SSgt John McNeill, 230 Sig Sqn

Late in September, the Regimental Inter-Troop Competition (The Leicester Trophy) continued to be a highly charged and well-fought out occasion, the 7-a-side football competition, being no exception. **WO2 (SSM) Rob Hood** organised the competition into two separate leagues of six teams, the winners and runners-up of which, progressed to the semi-finals and final. These were contested by Support Tp (230 Sqn) v SCPR (252 Sqn) and by TN015 (230 Sqn) v TN016 (230 Sqn) as you can see, all three teams from 230 Sig Sqn were able to progress to the latter stages of the competition. It wasn't a fix, honest!

The first semi-final was won outright by Support Tp, however, the second semi proved to be a much tighter game, with yet another dazzling display and goal by **Sig** 'Wullie (Laudrup)' **Filson**. There were excellent performances by **Sgt Andy** 'I'm too old for this' **Simmons** and **YofS Oz** 'Adams' **Faramus** at the back, a hard (yours truly collecting a cracking black eye along the way!) but good spirited 1-1 draw was fought out. The penalty shoot-out then followed. **SSgt John** 'The Cat' **McNeill** continuing a sound performance in goal, saved the first two penalties (they were small goals!) helping to give us the upper hand. However, under pressure, it was the cool heads of **LCpl Jim** 'Poseur' **McGrory**, **LCpl Ross** 'Davie Cooper' **Quinn** and **Sig Billy** 'Panda-eyes' **Merrick,** which enabled us to progress to the final.

The final between TN015 and Support Tp was physical but well spirited and once more, resulted in a draw. With tiredness creeping in after playing throughout the day, the substitutes came into the fray. **Sig Nige** 'Vinny Jones' **McDiarmid, Cpl George** 'Ravanelli' **McMinn** and **LCpl Gaz** 'One Lung!' **Jack** all playing an extremely valued part that enabled the whole team to get to this stage. With another two penalties saved by yours truly and with the other TN015 lads coolly tucking theirs away, this left Support Tp only needing to miss one more. The ball struck the underside of the bar, hit the deck on the line and bounced out! For a short time it looked as if this would become the most controversial decision since Maradonna's 'Hand of God', as the referee adjudged the ball not to have crossed the line! The protests were short-lived and TN015 began to celebrate as Leicester Trophy Football Winners 2000.

EXERCISE PENNINE BACKSTOP - *by Sgt Taylor, 255 Sig Sqn*

Ex Pennine Backstop, ably led by **Sgt** 'Just a couple more kms' **Taylor,** took place in the UK from Edale, Derbyshire up to Kirk Yetholm just over the Scottish border. The primary aim was to walk the full length of the Pennine Way (274 miles) in just nine days. The secondary aim was to raise money for the British Heart Foundation to the sum of £200. The team covered around 50kms a day, sometimes over very difficult terrain. This proved one of the most physically demanding and mentally testing experiences any of the group had ever undertaken. The group consisting of **Cpl** 'Seve' **Seville**, **LCpl** 'Ginge' **Birbeck**, **Sig** 'Knuckles' **Whitworth** and **Cfn** 'I can trap anywhere..' **Smyth** spent between 10 and 12 and half hours a day on their feet. Walking the Pennine Way in such a short time proved to be a once in a lifetime experience, the scenery and solitude proved to be at times spectacular, the UK summer weather was again predictable with sun, rain, thunder storms and sleet all helping the journey. The 9-day expedition was followed by a much deserved two days R&R in Edinburgh before making the way back to sunny Germany.

EXERCISE OCTOPUS BACKSTOP - *230 Sig Sqn*

Ex Octopus Backstop took place in Cyprus during July this year. **Capt** 'Chinook' **Francis-McGann** organised the diving expedition to Larnaka for 12 people from the Regiment. The expedition left Germany for Cyprus via the UK and a rather expensive taxi bill. The aim of the expedition was for everyone to gain a BSAC qualification. The training went well with everyone successfully completing their club diver qualification and progressing to gain their sports diver. **LCpl** 'Pre-tour Leave' **Kneale** enjoyed his preparation for his visit to Kosovo by studying into the night for all his exams. **Sgt** 'Washing Machine' **Haslam** tried unsuccessfully to climb into the boat without using the steps after realising that floating in the ocean was not for him and **Sig Williams** decided she wasn't going down at all! Others took to the water like fish, notably the buddy pair **Sig Steph** 'Two Lungs' **Jackson** and **Cpl Mick** '007' **Burton**. The culmination of all the training for most people was a deep dive on the *Zenobia* wreck. The *Zenobia* sank in 1980 and has remained unsalvaged ever since. The group swam through the Officer's mess and along the decks through shoals of Wrasse and Bream. The more advanced divers descended to the seabed, where a cargo of eggs lay preserved as they fell over 20 years ago. Apart from a few minor transport details (what no flights?) the group had a fantastic time with everyone gaining at least one qualification and an enthusiasm for scuba diving. Can't write this without a mention for **Sig** 'Russian Liaison Officer' **Doherty** who definitely needs to improve his dancing techniques!

KAPPE MILITARY REFIT BRADBURY SHOP (16 SIGNAL REGIMENT) IN JHQ

The now well known Bradbury shop and perfumerie owned by 16 Sig Regt in JHQ has undergone a major refit and facelift paid for by KAPPE military. To the pop of champagne corks the shop had its grand re-opening on Wednesday 4 October initiated by the Commanding Officer 16 Sig Regt, **Lt Col Tony Morphet** Royal Signals accompanied by his wife **Katrin**. The Regiment continues to maintain a special link with KAPPE who supply quality perfumerie products to the shop, along with two qualified beauticians to give expert advice on the product range and for those who wish to feel pampered and revitalised, a free makeover service with no obligation to purchase.

CO, Lt Col Tony Morphet and UWO, Capt Kevin Fitzpatrick with the 'Team' from the Bradbury Centre

21 SIGNAL REGIMENT (AIR SUPPORT)

CO	**Lt Col Peter Gillespie**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Al Jenkins**

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Chas Dale**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Nick Organ**

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP

Tech Adjt	**Capt Lee Wookey**
FofS/OC M Tp	**WO1 (FofS) Ady Knight**

The Troop was involved in Ex Mike Muster, which was a slow time introduction to the setting up of a detachment and working in the field. This would be the first time for the majority of us and a necessary preparation for the upcoming Ex Red Beaufighter 3. The Exercise had the added bonus of experiencing **SSgt Ord's** Spence Witch Project'! This was a fun learning exercise to refresh Infantry skills, setting a basha up and living in the field without 240v from the ERVs and ESVs (what a *shock* (sic!) to the system that was)! A big hello and a welcome to the new arrivals to TM Tp, **WO2 Si Graham**, **SSgt Steve Pattenden**, and **LCpls** 'Ginge' **Ranson**, **Pat Eason**, **Wayne Lill**, **Siobhan Stanway** and **Stav Angelidi**. The departure of two great characters, **Sgt Chris Gearing** and **Sgt Polly Poulson** was toasted (hic!) in the usual manner. They have moved to more exotic and tropical locations (Germany and Scotland). So a hearty hello to the arrivals and a sad goodbye to the deserters; we hope they settle with ease! Finally just a small mention for **Sgt Roy** 'You'll never get me to buy a round' **Parr** who doesn't like getting his name in *The WIRE*.

MOTOR TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

MTO	**Capt Pete Griffiths**
MTWO	**WO2 (MTWO)** 'Chalkie' **White**

It has been another busy month for the Regimental MT Sect. Let us begin with the large number of new personnel posted in, **LCpls** 'Scouse' **Makin** from 19 Mech Bde and **Russ Russell** from 1 (UK) ADSR. **Sigs Mike Berry**, 'Cully' **Cultshaw** and **Pat Butcher** from 11 Sig Regt, **Si Laurenson** from 220 Sqn and **'Barny' Barnard** from 1 (UK) ADSR. A warm welcome to you all.

With this influx of manpower, the MT was able to enter the Regimental Patrol Competition. The day started early with a cold mist looming over Colerne. Once we all got onto the training area it seemed clear that everyone was very keen, (well one or two of them, anyway).

Full credit to the Team as they tackled every stand with confidence, even if we did have some experienced soldiers (not!) showing off their particular skills. The Observation Stand was all about being discreet which went well (not!); on the way out **Sgt Andy Hayes** tactically climbed a fence only for it to collapse! Map Reading Skills were tested with point man **WO2 (MTWO)** 'Chalkie' **White** leading the way showing the younger members how not to get lost (not!). 'Oh really! From stand to stand.' The Tactics Stand went to prove who the 'Rambos' in the section were (not!), even **LCpl** 'Russ' **Russell** crawled through a nettle patch without realising. The Survival Stand showed the team how fire starter **Cpl** 'Esky' **Eskdale** was at living in the field with only a match and twigs. Apparently, *all* the wood and grass in the training area was soaking wet. On the NBC stand **Sgt** 'Mac' **MacDonald** passed on his MT knowledge to the Team (not!) as everyone had to change a wheel on a landrover whilst in full NBC dress. At the end of the day the Team marched back to the finishing point with the help of **Cpl Steve Jay** setting the pace. As the results were announced, the MT Team came a well-deserved Third with the potential (OK!) to come First in future events.

On a closing note the MTO, **Capt Pete Griffiths,** has been boasting to all of his fellow officers that it's nice to come into work in the morning and hear the magic words so dear to his heart, ' Parade, Parade Shun', from the MTWO. This couldn't have been done two months ago. Things *are* looking up in the MT.

QUARTERMASTERS (GENERAL) DEPARTMENT
QM (Gen) **Maj Tom Dean**
RQMS(Gen) **WO2 (RQMS) Nigel Roberts**

Maj Tom Dean, the QM (G) who tends his flock with care and compassion, has issued a timely warning to all. 'Winter is fast approaching. I've even put the heating on, the nights are drawing in and it is getting late early, so, because I have no one else to do the work, please take care as you drive to and from camp. Those little country lanes can be quite dark, so be seen, use your lights and above all, ensure that you and your vehicle are up to winter driving conditions.' **WO2 (RQMS) Nige Roberts** is away on a course now, learning how to be a real RQMS. We, his hardworking staff, wish him well but are getting a little apprehensive about his return. Will everything have to be done 'by the book', (at least until the newness of his course wears off!). Anyway, the Department has been left in the safe hands of **Cpl Mark Brown** who, when he stops laughing, can take the job seriously. We offer congratulations to **Sig Glen Gibbs** and **Natalie** (Nee Yule) who gave birth to a 640 gram (what's that in old money!) baby girl on Wednesday 20 September (three months prematurely!). The slightly 'shell-shocked' dad is also doing well. His smug grin makes a puppy with two tails look sad!

The clothing store is on the move! Too many people got to know of its whereabouts and wanted issues. The answer appeared to the QM (G) in a vision, 'Let's hide it,' he is reported to have said! So with a lot of heaving, pushing and the odd naughty word, **Audrey & Co**. have packed up and left. They didn't go very far really, just round the corner to the old ASA store.

The PROPMAN, who is actually the QM (G) in disguise, declined to talk to the press and directed me to his stalwart aides **Sally** and **Jennie**. They are a lot prettier, so I had no objections, and the printable extracts from their report are as follows, I must admit that getting them to talk was a trifle difficult at first. The chauvinists may find this hard to understand, but women do get a bit shy in the 'interview' situation. However, the info from the PROPMAN Dept is basically that keeping control of the purse strings, whilst trying to satisfy all works orders, is a very difficult task, particularly on an old Station such as this. So spare a thought for your PROPMAN wherever you are (and no, there are still no Jacuzzi's for the SLA blocks!). The above tissue of 'truth economies', (I'm like a politician, I never tell fibs), was concocted in the absence of RQMS(G), by the MFO Clk who will deny all knowledge if questioned.

QUARTERMASTERS (TECHNICAL) DEPARTMENT
QM (Tech) **Maj Ken Clark**
RQMS (Gen) **WO2 (RQMS)** 'Geordie' **Merrie**

The QM (Tech) Dept has had a Board of Officers and is now tired and is on holiday, thank you!

TRAINING WING
Trg Offr **Capt Brian Johnson**
Trg Wing WO **WO2 Ged Keane**

The summer saw the arrival of ex-rugby star, now golfing bandit, **Capt Brian Johnson** as OC Trg Wing and **WO2 (SSM) Ged Keane**, running chimp, fresh from winning the M35 Royal Signals Orienteering Championships. Allied with **SSgts Elvis Hayes**, **Gordon Murphy** (happy fellow) and **Sgt Brian Kirkup** the Training Wing has organised a series of Regimental Training Days.

On the 31 August, a Patrol Competition was run under the name Ex Red Rover on Salisbury Plain. The aim of the day was to assess a number of military skills over semi-ardous terrain under time constraints. Stands chosen were NBC, first aid, combat survival, map reading, minor tactics, field craft and an inspection. **Lt Sarah Irwin** proved that Sandhurst still produces excellent navigators, however, **SSgt Andy Gill's** ad hoc team of warriors won the competition. **Capt Bill Holbrook** and his happy band of 'worriers' closely followed them. Congratulations also for **Sgt Roy Parr** and his team of Misfits who came last, though they still kept on smiling all the way to the end.

On 19 September a Special to Role training day was organised called Ex Red Baron. It involved **WO2 Dave (War) Giles** covering Helicopter Handling drills, 29 Regt RLC teaching Dangerous Air Cargo (DAC), JHSU covering Landing Point Commander (LPC) and Rigger Marshalling, RAF Benson providing a MAOT Team and 846 NAS providing a Naval Sea King which gave all personnel a chance to practice underslung load drills. The day went very smoothly under the organisational flair of **SSgt Elvis Hayes**, so well in fact, that the Charlie Oscar gave him a pat on the back – blush!

220 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj Jim Forrest**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Dave Giles**

Day to day life for the Squadron has improved immensely in the last few months with us settling nicely into our new hanger. The lads are just getting used to the fact that they now have electric lighting, heating and the running water comes from the tap and not down the side of the hanger wall. The only drawbacks with the hanger are how close it is to SHQ and the parking problems; who *did* put that lamppost there? An extremely well deserved promotion for **Cpl Robin Day Clement** who has run the Sqn MT brilliantly through the difficult period of settling into our new hanger. Fleet management is so much easier when you never allow vehicles out of the hanger, even if they are due on PRE.

The Squadron's input to the Regimental Open Day was in the form of a ducking stool. A straw poll was done to see who the lads would most like to see ducked and the **WO2 (FofS) Ally Duncan** came out top, that must have been a backhanded compliment. Thanks. In the end not surprisingly the CO, **Lt Col Peter Gillespie** (Sunday best suit and all – **Mrs Fiona Gillespie** threw the first sponge!) and the other Regimental personalities proved to be popular. However, all were eclipsed by the money taken to see **Sgt Jane** 'Oh are my jeans really see-through when wet' **Simmons** get ducked. As an attraction, she turned out to be head and shoulders (and clinging T-Shirt!) above the rest.

Welcomes to **Capt John** 'The Bandit' **Fraser** who has finally returned from Op Palatine, where he must have played a lot of golf. He was able to come back and finish second in the Regimental Golf Day. **2Lt Katherine** 'I never said I was good at volleyball' **Jardine**, direct from RMAS who on her first day was heard to comment on how handsome her new OC was only to find out it was the FofS acting as the OC for a wind up. **Sgt Das** 'Where's the DZ' **Kidd** met the Squadron, was sent straight on leave and then dispatched to Canada as IC of the advance party for Ex Iron Hawk. Three months in the Squadron, two days in the office can't be bad. Finally welcome to our youngest recruits **Sean** 'Bit of a Celtic ~~name~~' **O'Neill** beautiful baby son of **Cpl Rory O'Neill** and his wife **Emma**. Congratulations!

CHARLIE TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt Murray Macdonald** (In Split, not in Canada!)
Tp SSgt **SSgt Russ Ezard** (In Canada, not in Split!)

EXERCISE IRON HAWK 2000 - *by Cpl Brown, Charlie Troop*

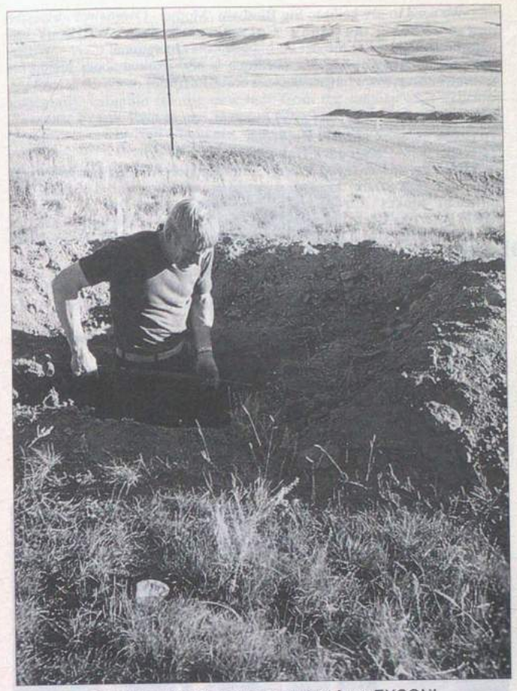
It has been a very busy time for 220 Sig Sqn from the months June through to October. Starting with adventure 'drinking in the last weeks of the summer, whilst based in Fremington, North Devon. This was greatly appreciated by everyone and a good time was had by all from sampling the local nightlife to the many different activities that were on offer. It was not so appreciated on returning to the Squadron to the Regimental Board of Officers, which seemed to drag on for a very long time. This left little time to get the vehicles ready and prepared for one of the biggest exercises that the British Army has ever undertaken; Ex Iron Hawk in Canada. It was all hands to the pumps and the vehicles were finally driven to Marchwood on Monday morning 24 July, with everything ready.

EXERCISE IRON HAWK,

Ex Iron Hawk, Canada, (MEDMAN 4/5) 20 August to 5 September for 220 Sig Sqn began with the advance party consisting of **SSgt Russ Ezard**, **Cpl Andy Brown**, **Sig Ian Lyons**, **Sig Jimmy Gentles** flying to Calgary on 6 August with approximately 160 other personnel from other units. Upon arrival, they spent two weeks in BATUS unloading the 2500 vehicles that had been sent over from England for the Exercise and sorting out accommodation. Then they blazed a path of glory as far south as Medicine Hat, as far east as Lethbridge and as far north and west as Calgary, Edmonton and the Rocky Mountains. After the main parties had arrived on the 14 and 17 of August the Squadron started to organise under the OC 220 Sig Sqn **Maj Jim Forrest**. This involved setting up two flying site detachments within Camp Eagle and testing a flight corridor from Camp Eagle to Wainwright using UHF, VHF, and HF equipment. The two radio rebroadcast detachments from 244 Sig Sqn, under **Cpl** 'Speedy' **Speed**, deployed north and south of the training area in preparation for the coming exercise, with the MAOT crews readiness and deployability being given a thorough work up.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

Don't forget to let us know so you can still receive your copy of *The WIRE*



Cpl Paul Howe's escape attempt from EXCON!

It was soon apparent that due to the lack of aircraft, and the 'Wainwright option' having being dropped, that things were not going to be that busy. Adventure Training and R and R packages were organised and were taken full advantage of: from **Cpl Shane Cooley**, **Cpl** 'Speedy' **Speed** and **Cpl Paul Howe's** fishing trip to **Sgt Daz Kidd**, **Cpl Dave Mears**, **Sig Ian Lyons** and **Sig Mick Secker's** free fall parachuting course. **Sgt Clayton-Batty** and **LCpl** 'Richy' **Bloodworth** both qualified as basic paragliding pilots on their week long paragliding package. As for R and R, **Sig** 'Scotty' **Steele**, **Sig Stu Mackie**, **Sig** 'Evil' **Stephen** spent four days at Edmonton and **LCpl Nick Berry**, **Sig Andy Morgan**, **Sig** 'El Gwapo' **Grist** and the OC, **Maj Jim Forrest**, visited Lethbridge. Eighty percent of the Squadron was able to do both R and R and adventure training, which were all thoroughly enjoyed.

Sig 'Taff' Secker seeks to defy gravity!

During the Exercise, the Squadron had to improvise with a number of things. From the normal resupply and manning of all the out detachments including the TAC HQ, which was set up at EXCON to the deploying of a 'light' FOB brick attached to an RAF refuelling point tactically out in the field. All, of this was against a live enemy with 'TES' kit. The two man-packed teams heli-lifted in, for three days supplying UHF/VHF communications out in the field whilst attached to a Tactical Supply Wing Forward Air Refuelling Point during the live firing exercises. Towards the end of the exercise all the vehicles were turned around in the field and prepped for travel back to England. The first of the parties travelled back on the 7 October to be closely followed by the rest of the Squadron. The Squadron has many commitments for the rest of this year, including Arrcade 'Confusion' in October and Ex Red Beaufighter 3 in November.

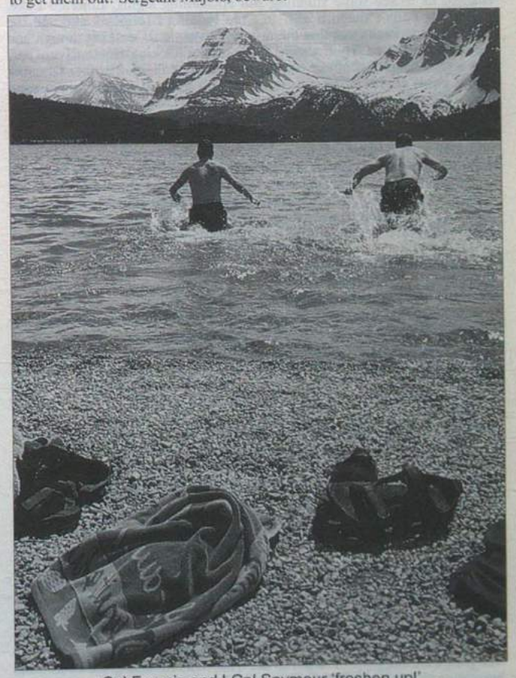
DELTA TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Sarah Irwin**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Mark Gilbert**

EXERCISE DRAGON ROCK 29 JUNE – 22 JULY 2000
by Lt Sarah Irwin

Ex Dragon Rock was a Level 3 Adventure Training Exercise based in the Rockies, Canada with nine personnel from 21 Sig Regt (AS) and one from 3 (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt.

The acclimatisation phase of the expedition was based at Banff, a small town with cartoon style 'wild west' bars crammed with people in cowboy hats and dancing the quick step. The mountains providing the Banff backdrop are spectacular and we spent three days exploring trails and peaks with fantasy names like 'Cascade Amphitheatre, Sulphur Mountain and The Hoodoos'. The Upper Hot Springs, located at Sulphur Mountain soothed our tired feet and aching muscles and, during this phase, three important lessons were learnt. First, don't trust the weather; second, don't take a bearing whilst resting your compass on a metal information board and third, don't fall into a glacier-fed river – **Sig Matthews** will tell you just how cold it is!

After acclimatising, we re-located to the Yoho Valley and swapped our tents for the relative luxury of Whisky Jacks Youth Hostel. It was here that most of the group had their first sightings of bears. Despite the time of year, there had been a large snowfall so the view from the hostel looked like a winter wonderland. Each morning, before the day's walk, expedition members could be seen sitting on the balcony looking at the view of glaciers, trees and mountains with wistful expressions. After the walks the campfire was lit and popcorn and 'snores,' (hot marshmallow and chocolate sandwiches) were enjoyed. We made friends with a Japanese man called **Makow** – the day that we drove to the hostel in a fierce snowstorm we had spotted a figure bent against the wind, struggling the 20km or so to Whisky Jacks. We stopped to give him a lift, and then interrogated him as to why he was wearing sandals – did he have no boots?! Of course he did, **Makow** replied with his characteristic smile; they were at the bottom of his bergen but he couldn't be bothered to get them out! Sergeant Majors, beware!



Cpl Francis and LCpl Seymour 'freshen up!'

The team head for the top of Sulphur Mountains, against a backdrop of the Rockies

Team photo call at Yoho Lake
(L-R): Sig Pankhurst, Cpl Francis, Sig Taylor, Lt Irwin, LCpl Seymour, Sig Turner, Sig Matthews, Cpl Cober, Sgt Francis

Trekking in several different National Parks throughout the Expedition enabled us to see some stunning and enchanting sights; Emerald Lake, Takakkaw Falls ('magnificent' in Cree Indian,) Moraine Lake and the Wenkchemna Peaks to name but a few. It wasn't all walking though and we were able to go white water rafting on the Kicking Horse River. This was a significant test of our nerves as we hurtled down the river listening to our guide's cries of, 'Right Back' or, 'All forward,' whilst negotiating 4km of grade 4+ rapids in 15mins – not bad! We visited the Calgary Stampede, a festival of cowboys and girls on bucking horses, cow chasing and using the lasso. This inspired **Sgt Francis** to arrange a day riding on a working ranch for us – as our confidence on horseback grew, we tried our hand at driving the cattle but we could only watch in awe as the lassoes were bought into action. Of course, there was a short R&R phase. A few returned to Calgary, some stayed in Banff to enjoy their eggs 'semi-well done,' and others drove to Seattle, where I am sure they were sleepless!

244 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj David Bizley**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Paul Williams**

The Squadron welcomes a new boss and a new Yeoman since the last submission of *WIRE* notes. **Maj Ian Walton** has decided to venture back to school (RMCS) for a year and in his place we welcome **Maj Dave Bizley**. **WO2 (YofS) Steve Firth** is replaced by **WO2 (YofS) Mel McCorry** as the Sqn YofS and is apparently already bored with **SSgt (FofS) Mark Todd's** chat and weasel-like tech antics.

AGRICOLA DETATCHMENT REPORT - *by Cpl **'Wills'** Williams*

This month has been a busy month for the Agricola crew. The relocation of the det to a new plush communications centre and new living accommodation, meant a sad farewell to the tented site at the APOD (only 14 months after arriving – 21st Century really!) and an even sadder goodbye to the HAZBAR! The election period is keeping the det busy, with the escorting of ballet boxes and the associated air support around the AOR. On the personalities front, the det would like to say goodbye to **SSgt Morris Render** who has just left for UK after completing his 6-month 'Regt intro' tour. We would like to say welcome to **SSgt Andy Gill** who has taken over the job as OIC. Hello again to **LCpl** 'Jacko' **Jackson** on his return to KOS for his second four month tour with only a months break in UK- voluntarily – sad! The det must be able to justify a shrink now! **Sig Mickey** 'Why-Aye' **Young** needs to be congratulated on his promotion to det YofS without doing the course and providing the Joint Helicopter Force with a mission, as they didn't have one. We need to say hello to **Sig Blodwin** 'Mother' **Owens** who likes the power of being the daddy. **Cpl** 'Oh ya Beauty' **Williams** has unfortunately just left the det on his last ever Operational tour – 'Wills - It's been emotional!' **Sig Jez Skelhorn** is also excited about seeing his favourite sheep when he gets back to beautiful Wales.

ALPHA TROOP AMF(L) - *by LCpl Dave Shepherd*

Tp Comd **Capt Bill Holbrook**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Jack Hawkins**

Alpha Tp has enjoyed a busy summer period with two overseas exercises, Adventure training, a patrol competition and a exodus and influx of 'blokes'. Firstly we say goodbye to **SSgt Daz** 'V' **Sheerin MBE** who has been unbelievably promoted to SSM and posted to Dundee UOTC. **Cpl** 'Ollie' **Oliver** posted to 11 EOD, **Cpl** 'Benny' **Hill** who was selected for 1 (SC) Sig Sqn, **LCpl** 'Boggy' **Marsh** to 101 Log Bde HQ & Sig Sqn, **LCpl Paul** 'Arctic' **Richardson** who moves to 30 Sig Regt his first non AMF(L) unit. Also **LCpl Phil** 'PhD' **Smith** and **Sig Liesa** 'Duckworth' **Matthews** (formally Howson) and **Sig Andy** 'Chronicle' **Day** on their promotions.

Welcome to **SSgt Jack Hawkins** from 94 Sig Sqn, **Sgt Sven Gronn** from 15 Sig Regt and **Sgt Willie Pool** from 3 RHA – **Capt Bill Holbrook** has never had so many SNCOs; are MCM Div trying to tell him something? Welcomes are also necessary for **LCpl** 'Fifi' **Murphy** – formally Appleyard from JCUNI and chocolate frogs **Sigs Joe Addison**, 'Aulbs' **Albury**, 'Melanie' **Hall**, **Leech** and 'Gunner' **Smith** straight from the 'factory'. In addition we would also like to congratulate **Sig Chris** 'SF' **Scott** on passing selection to 264 and **Sig Matt** 'I'm single now' **Mills** on being accepted into the Squadron as a 'hat' with a view to passing the next course.

Sgt 'Sven' Gronn enjoying the prime window seat in a US UH-60 Black Hawk on Ex Adventure Exchange

Just over a month after returning from Norway, the Troop re-equipped its vehicles and headed for the home of goulash - Hungary for Ex Ardent Ground, the AMF(L)'s annual live firing exercise. The Troop once again professionally provided C3 for the Multi-National Force Helicopter and Fast Air Cells. The Exercise gave the Troop the opportunity to hone and tone procedures and, after a busy and rewarding couple of weeks, the Troop took R&R in Budapest. Living up to the latter part of the capital city's name 'Taff' **Charnely**, 'Simmo' **Simpson** and **Purcey** the tech more than spent their reimbursed Food & Accommodation rates on cultural experiences!

After the Colerne Activities Week and Regimental Open Day, where the Troop raised £300 on BV206 rides, the Troop prepared itself for a gruelling 4-week exercise in Greece on the AMF(L) southern deployment. All went well and the good pace allowed us to train the newer members of the Troop.

Sig Taff Charnley and Cpl Dalrymple(REME) during a rare quiet moment on Ex Adventure Exchange

BRAVO TROOP - *by Sig Lea Snell*

Tp Comd **Lt Neil Clements**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Carl Budding**

Prior to the new Troop OC arriving the Troop deployed to Scotland for Ex Eagles Strike to provide C3 for the RAF SHF HQ. The Exercise was especially valuable for the new lads from the factory **Sigs** 'Turnip' **Parsons**, **Frank Reeves** and **Damion Shepherd** for whom it was their first exercise. **2Lt Neil Clements**, straight off his Tp Comds course, takes over as OC Tp from **SSgt Carl Budding** who was caretaker for a couple of months. Squadron Adventurous Training was held at Fremington Camp in North Devon. The weather, unbelievably, held out and numerous activities were enjoyed, including water-skiing at Chivenor, hiking on Exmoor, windsurfing, rock climbing and drinking in Barnstaple. **Sgt** 'Charlie' **Farley** demonstrated the need for brakemen on the aerial slide (and for them to weigh more than 20 B&H on a wet day). He was sensationally catapulted into the air after **Sig** 'Sadsac' **Sutherland**, weighing the same as a baby elephant, came thundering down the slide. **Sgt F** did show style by having his fag still lit and in his mouth when found face down in the dirt.

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT

30 SIGNAL REGIMENT WIRE NOTES APR 00

CO **Lt Col Mike Lithgow MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Al Higgins**

SUPPORT SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj R H Gladwin**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Young**

EXERCISE RETURN DRAGON - *by Cpl Brian Rawlings*

Ex Return Dragon was the Regimental Adventurous Training expedition held from 6 – 16 August on the wonderful island of Alderney. The party deployed from Bramcote in two mini-buses and a pre WW1 Bedford! Leading the way with map at the ready was **Lt** 'Tick-Tock' **Morris,** so far so good. We sailed from Marchwood where there were several sad faces at the prospect of spending ten hours on a "Saving Private Ryan" style flat-bottomed RLC craft on the English Channel. We arrived in Alderney bright and early on Monday 7 August, having spent a surprisingly calm night on the boat, even if it was a little cramped. Then just as it appeared that everything was going to plan, the landing craft couldn't dock, we were too heavy!The solution was simple- tell **Pte Steve** 'fat chef' **Powell** to swim for it. In the end by employing a few pieces of high tech wood we were able to get on the Island, stand by Alderney!

Our accommodation was 12 by 12 tentage, five in total, and they went up in no time with the guidance of **Cpl John** 'lunch box' **Culwick**, who immediately made it clear that not only was he the expedition Medic, but also the Camp Daddy. Just as we got them up the first drops of rain began to fall, not a good start to our trip. While the workers were putting up the tents **SSgt Pete 'Tan man' Crawford** and **Pte Steve 'five bellies' Powell** went shopping for the week's rations. This however proved to be more of a problem than we imagined, as the Island of Alderney appears to take Bank Holidays at the drop of a hat. As it was, they had decided to take one today and all the shops were closed. Much begging, bribery and running around followed before it was possible to eventually track down some food for the chef to attempt to cook.

Once we had settled, the group was split into two, one half going straight into the adventurous training and the rest cracking on with the community project. The Regiment has an ongoing commitment to the island of Alderney in which we provide manpower once a year to improve the island. In exchange we can visit once a year for adventurous training. The mission this year was two-fold, firstly to clear a path that had become overgrown and then clear out some old German trenches left over from the war. We also took it upon ourselves to improve some of the cadet facilities up in the hills. I was given a machete, a 58 shovel, a Siggy and told to "go". We cleared a tunnel and half expected to find some old German soldier still on stag in the land that time forgot. Instead we surfaced in someone's garden. One of the other teams found a wine cellar, however a rather disgruntled local arrived before this could be fully utilised.

The other task was to turn a shell scrape, used by the cadets as a briefing room, into a sandbag bunker totally hidden from the human eye with cam squares. It took a lot of time and effort especially from **LCpl Dean 'Andy, John, Dave, Mick' Dickson** and **Sig "Cas" Burgess**. The end result was a "gleaming" briefing bunker that **Cpl 'Pay Clerk' Brown** turned into a battlefield Admin Office that was just missing a UNICOM terminal.

Our visit coincided with Alderney Week, the islands party week, which considering the Island only has a population of 1500, seemed a contradiction in terms. They had a few events including an 'It's-a-Knock Out competition'. The highlight of which saw **Lt 'stop Waaahhhing me' Morris** getting damaged during the pillow fight. This resulted in a substitution with the cry of "Cpl Rickard please stand in for me!" Jumping at the chance to attack some locals **Cpl 'Wanna be PTI' Rickard** joined the team. As if by magic once the pillow pounding was over the boss was once again ready for action. Hmmm no skiving there then. The other event was a five a side competition. We entered two teams, a fatties team and a footballers team. The fatties had a semi reasonable player in the form of **Sig** 'Texas- I want to be in the other team' **Walker** to make the numbers up in the absence of five competent bloaters. By the end he was glad as we made it to the semi-final and the footballers led by **LCpl** 'if we lose I'm going to cry' **Ferguson** were lucky to draw a game! We also entered an unmanned flight competition, which involved flinging ourselves off a pier. Several imaginative costumes were created out of bits of kit found on a skip, and we took the plunge into the arctic waters of the English Channel. Great fun, and apparently character building according to the boss.

However, it wasn't all 'work, work, work,' and when we weren't digging holes in the mud, or getting lost on an Island measuring 2.5 miles by 1.5 miles, there was plenty to do. The Islanders like to entertain themselves by having parties after the pubs close. However, the only suitable place to hold them is in some abandoned German artillery bunkers. These proved great fun, if not a little strange considering that 60 years ago these things were winging shells at all things British and now we were partying in them. Exercise Swan Return Dragon 2000 was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended, and 30 Signal Regiment certainly aided the local economy. I would highly recommend Adventure Training on the Island, only don't forget your whistle for those bunker parties!

MOTOR TRANSPORT SECTION, SUPPORT SQUADRON

MTO **Capt G. Johnson**
MT SSgt **SSgt Nanda**

WELCOMES

Regimental MT's increase in manpower continues and we have quite a few welcomes to the dept. **Sgt Ganesh** and family, and **Sgt Ash Ingham** and family have arrived from 2 SigRegt and 15 SigRegt respectively. We have looked forward to your arrival for some time now, and hope you enjoy your tours with the Regiment. Also arrived to bolster the Gene Bay manning was **Cpl Hari**, and just as suddenly as he arrived, he disappeared to go on a course for three months, an actual case of here today and gone tomorrow. Regimental MT now endures a Scouse element, with the arrival of **Sig** 'Scouse 1' **McLoughlin** and **Sig** 'Scouse 2' **Brammell**. Welcome to you all lads.

DESK JOB RE-SHUFFLE

"Re-shuffle Day' was designed to move key personnel of Regimental Motor Transport to different desk jobs. It gives everybody the opportunity to approach a different aspect of his trade. Not as simple as it sounds as there is a lot to handover and it must all be done whilst continuing normal work. So moved – some say sacked – from the admin role was **Sgt Mick Hay**, and taken over by **SSgt Nanda**. Ration returns; well they're all yours Nanda. **Sgt Hay** moves to Fleet Manager and every phone call has, 'No you can't', somewhere in the conversation. Out went **LCpl** 'Kenneth' **McCall** from the details desk to be replaced by **LCpl** 'Ronald' **Pierrpont** – who was definitely sacked from POL Accounts! In came **LCpl Ian Campbell** to POL Accounts whose first words were 'What do you mean a Board of Officers next week?' and into the Yard NCO slot goes **LCpl McCall. Sgt Ash Ingham** arrives to do Driver Trg, because **Cpl Pugh** couldn't, and **Sgt Ganesh** to do all our licenses because **Cpl Pugh** didn't. Actually if you put it all on paper, it doesn't sound as bad as all that – honest.

Re-Shuffle Afterthought 1 - After all the re-shuffle has been completed, are you wondering what Cpl Pugh does now? So are we!

Re-Shuffle Afterthought 2 - LCpl Ronald Pierrepont wasn't sacked from the POL Account; he did a cracking job actually as the Board of Officers will show!

KIDS PLAY-SCHEME

Another summer gone and another Kids Play-scheme completed. Working with the Welfare Office of **Maj (Retd) Bob Fortune** and **Mrs Tracy** 'The Angel' **Garrett**, Regimental MT proved to be pivotal in the success of the scheme. Not only did we transport the kids to their activities on a daily basis, but we also were able to supply a clutch of supervisors. Senior supervisor **Sgt Mick Hay** was at the heart of all the activities and his 'it's a tough job but somebody has to do it' cry was getting to be a bit annoying towards the end of the four weeks. When he went on 'you all had the chance to go to Alton Towers' it would get particularly frustrating. As a team, we all came out with great credit for the play-scheme being such a success. From details clerk, coach drivers, and supervisors, everybody gave 100%.

FUEL CRISIS – WHERE?

With the country by all accounts gripped in a fuel crisis, Regt MT was prepared as ever. Naturally new POL Accountant **LCpl Ian Campbell** was taking all the credit for ensuring sufficient stocks were in place and

that the returns for Brigade/Division were accurate. OK so it took three or four attempts to get them accurate. The Regiment did wonder if the fuel crisis had actually hit Bramcote, when the entire MT turned up at the gym for a briefing having taken a mini-bus from the MT compound to the gymnasium – a distance of 400 meters !

BRAMCOTE GOLF SOCIETY DAY – 31 AUGUST 2000

The Bramcote Golf Society day was held at Brandon Wood on 31 August 2000, with a field of 25 eager participants. All handicaps had been well scrutinized by **WO2 J. P. Paterson** who even cut himself to 15. Everyone arrived at 0900hrs and having received free use of the driving range, golf balls were soon flying in all directions. The first three-ball teed off at 1030hrs and the competition was now well under way. Hours later tired but happy we sat down for the 'Brandon Buster' and the exploits of the day were discussed. Unfortunately the last three-ball were nowhere to be seen and a good hour passed by until **WO2 Mark Potter, SSgt Phil Joyce, SSgt Craig Wrath** and **Cpl Ian Brown** finally putted out to a rapturous applause. A great day was had by all and the choice of venue proved to be a fair test of golf, as the scores of the winners reflected.

Scratch Winner	**WO2 John Paterson**	(15)	86 Gross
Scratch Runner-up	**Maj (Retd) Bob Fortune**	(15)	92 Gross
Handicap Winner	**Sgt Andy Dutton**	(19)	71 Nett
Handicap Runner-up	**Cpl Ian Holmes**	(22)	76 Nett
Stableford Winner	**SSgt Craig Wrath**	(28)	40 Points
Stableford Runner-up	**Cpl Jase Curley**	(24)	33 Points
Nearest the Pin	**WO2 Mark Potter**	(28)	
Longest Driv	**Sig Aaron Nessling**	(28)	
Most Golf	**Cpl Ian Brown**	(28)	

EXERCISE PICOS CYGNET - *by LCpl Grant*

Ex Picos Cygent was an exercise produced to get a small number of troops away on adventure training to practice skills such as navigation, climbing, high level trekking and down hill mountain biking. The Exercise took place in the Picos Mountains in northern Spain and was organized by **SSgt** 'Froggy' **Higgins** and **WO2 (QMSI)** 'Johnny Bravo' **Blade**. The small number of personal were **SSgt** 'Porno tash' **Goodwin, Cpl** 'Ginge' **Buckely, Cpl** 'Celibacy' **Jones, LCpl** 'SSM' **Bolton, LCpl** 'Smoothie' **Bird, LCpl** 'Spiderman' **Grant, LCpl** 'Water' **Hodson, LCpl** 'Picotech' **Morley, LCpl** 'Skeletor' **Lowe** and **Sig** 'Our Tony' **Bramell**.

The Exercise started with a small introductory climb of about forty-foot straight up. First to attempt this was **LCpl** 'Spiderman' **Grant**, things were going well for the first ten feet then a decidedly ropy looking branch decided to give way and sent **LCpl Grant** flying across the face to a very accommodating boulder. An hour to find the hospital and seven stitches (no anaesthetic) later, his day on the rock face was sadly over.

Day Two and an easygoing trek, 'Just to break you in lads!', I'm sure what was meant was just to break you lads! One group led by **SSgt Chris Higgins** had a nice stroll with some apparently spectacular views over sheer drops. The other group led by **QMSI Martin Blade** had a rather different experience. Straight to 6000 feet with quick stop on the way to refresh at the donkey café. Unfortunately for **QMSI Blade** he decided to relieve himself. Good idea to leave your pack behind, NOT! So onwards we go 1000 feet later we decide making the QMSI walk all the way with that boulder in the bottom of his pack was unfair. From that moment on the group were 'marked men'.

Day Three was a day for swimming and checking out the local scenery.

Day Four was time for a little mountain biking. It was down hill and everyone was willing to be brave but with three attempts and three falls later Picotech was in pain. The last one ended in spectacular fashion with four summersaults and a half twist then landing in a barbed wire fence - any gymnast would have been proud of! The high light of that day was when the green goddess fought off a little challenge from **Cpl Jones**.

Day Five the group went up into the mountains for a three-day trek.

Day Six started off with a little trek to a mountain 2248 metres up. Once at the top the team decided to have a little dip in a cave pool. A total man test was called for, the first man to swim the pool was **Cpl Buckley**, and the pool was so cold that he had two sets of tonsils.

Day Seven the group were coming back down the mountain and the Exercise was starting to take its toll.

Days Eight and Nine were spent in Santander on the beach and checking out the scenery where we had the turn around with the other group. Little did they know what was about to hit them.

TECHNICAL MAINTENANCE TROOP SCAD DIVE

by LCpl Hotchkiss

A selected few from TM Tp were volunteered to do a charity scad dive to raise money for Altzheiemas disease. This consisted of being strapped to a 190ft crane by a harness and free falling into a safety net, a bit like a bunjee jump but without the bunjee rope! The event was organised through **SSgt Deano** 'Do it nice or do it twice' **Cartledge**, and the selected elite were **Fof S Gaz** 'Nappy rash' **Duffy, Cpl Craig** 'Kojak' **Anderson, Cpl Paul** 'Cocky' **Whitelock, LCpl Bill** 'Velcro wings' **Hotchkiss, LCpl Mick** 'I am my dad' **Hicks, LCpl Obi** 'You'll never be a fisherman' **Igboebisiokwu, LCpl Rob** 'Suspicious' **Wilson, LCpl Paul** 'Ya wee co-hont' **Korzeniewski, LCpl Wayne** 'Sweaty Sock' **Grant.** No-one seemed to show any pre jump nerves, that was until we saw the actual height we were going to jump from then people started to brick it! As we filtered through one by one the screams of terror could be heard from miles around as the fall turned grown men to pathetic little girls. Once completed though everyone seemed to be glad to have experienced the fall. **Cpl Craig Anderson** was glad to have taken a spare set of clothing. The Troop raise over £1000 for the cause.

256 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. W. Cooper**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Keen**

The Squadron says a sad farewell to **Captain Mike** 'Larry' **Grierson** who has handed over the Operations Officer job to **Captain Alun** 'Ginger' **Crapper. Captain Mike** 'Larry' **Grierson** is posted to 16 Sig Regt as the Technical Adjutant and the Squadron wishes him all the best for the future. If he maintains his current form then bar profits in 16 Sig Regt will increase significantly and the gymnasium will have an enthusiastic Officer beasting himself in preparation for the 2004 Olympics. Good luck **Mike,** a crate of Stella, cheers!

Capt Mike 'Larry' Grierson in training for his next BPFA!

30 Signal Regiment – Exercise Pico Cygnet
LCpls Morley and Bolton, Cpl Jones, WO(QMSI) Blade, Cpl Buckley, LCpl Lowe, Sig Brammell, SSgt Goodwin, LCpls Hodson and Bird

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Flt Lt Paul Pearce**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Paul Storey**

After having taken over the Spearhead role in July, the Troop was deployed to ATR Bassingbourne in order to exercise moving the equipment and testing the kit. Ex Battering Ram proved successful in highlighting a number of potential problems and also, it was the first time the Troop had lived in close quarters for a while. The main observation as a result of this was that **Cpl Brett** 'All-Round Sporting Hero' **Grist** had a concerning fascination with a formal messaging system used on the detachment. He was heard in the middle of the night tossing and turning, crying out 'Ooooh NSTN' over and over in his sleep.

The Troop has been involved in a number of Spearhead plug-ups since then as part of Ex Snowball. The most recent plug-up, however, was rudely interrupted by the sniff of an Op. After deploying to South Cerney with A Coy, 1 Para, and spending 72 hours in transit, the decision was made not to make use of our strategic satcom equipment on Op Barras. **Sig Robbo** 'Larium Kid' **Robertson** caused a massive health scare when he decided to swallow three weeks worth of anti-malarial drugs in one go. Nothing that a couple of fingers shoved down his throat couldn't solve though! Although the strategic satcom was not required, **LCpl Carl** 'Leaded or Unleaded?' **Ashton** and **Sig Dean** 'Glad I'm not a Para' **Roberts** did deploy forward in support of Op Barras with their Inmarsat equipment, and as we all now know, 1 Para went on to do a sterling job in assisting in the extraction of the 6 Royal Irish Hostages.

With a major deployment looking more and more unlikely during our time on Spearhead, the Troop now prepares to take on the JTFHQ role in October. The preparation will involve a plug-up on Ex Battering Ram 2, during which the Princess Royal, our Colonel-in Chief, is due to visit the Regiment. Shortly after this exercise, the Troop returns to its old stomping ground of MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa Bay, Florida, for Ex Purple Iliad. The exercise is intended to last for a month, supporting the staff of the JTFHQ. The Squadron, on returning from Florida, will hand the Spearhead and JTFHQ role to 258 Sig Sqn (who we know are just dying to get their hands on the BFT!), and enjoy a peaceful and very merry Christmas as a result - Oh apart from Charlie Tp who will be in Sierra Leone!

We would like to take this opportunity to say farewell to **LCpl Dave Needham** (JCUNI) and **LCpl Paul Taylor** (21 Sig Regt) - don't worry lads, the Troop hasn't fallen apart without you yet! We should also congratulate **LCpl Chris Bradford** on his recent success with the Royal Medical Corps, and welcome **Sig Neesam** (15 Sig Regt), **Sig** 'Rodders' **Rodwell** (15 Sig Regt) and **LCpl Richardson** and his family from 21 Sig Regt.

BRAVO TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt John Dagless**
Tp SSgt **SSgt McNair**

EXERCISE GANNEL RAM

In the early hours of Monday 4 September, Bravo Tp departed the mists of Bramcote for the sunny and tropical climate of Penhale Camp, Newquay to conduct some adventure training. Having finally jump-started the PRI minibus we finally made it down in time for our first activity; an afternoon of quad biking. These tiny machines soon saw most of the Troop flying around at 30 to 40 Mph in teams of three over a cross-country circuit. **Lt** 'Hells Angel' **Dagless** was the first to crash as he shot into, then over, the largest tyre wall on the track. Others were to follow in his wake, with special awards going to **Cpl** 'Chips' **Wilson** for style, **Cpl** 'I've just run myself over' **Parry** for the most entertaining crash, and **SSgt** 'Driving Miss Daisy' **McNair** for riding slower than four year old still using stabilisers.

Over the next two days the Troop split down into two teams rotating through trekking, coastering, rock climbing, and mountain biking. The trekking and coastering provided a number of outstanding views, mainly thanks to the good weather which was appreciated by all including **Sig** 'Are we there yet?' **Griffiss** and **Cpl** 'Legs' **Allen**. Those mountain biking on the other hand looked as though they had been riding horses instead of bikes due to the bikes sizes and age.

Sigs Bowyer, Yoxall, Welton and McMillan display their sand surfing prowess!

The highlight of the week was the day of surfing and instruction. Having seen all the peroxide blond hippies hanging around Newquay we were surprised to be met by two gruff little Australians who took us through our paces. Having squeezed into our wetsuits and persuaded **Sig** 'I can't swim' **Jeffers** with his 'unnatural strawberry blonde' hair that the local sharks would be able to smell his fear we took to practising our sand surfing. Having mastered this we all headed out to try and drown ourselves with the largest waves possible. The afternoon was finished off at RAF St Mawgon at the American all singing all dancing ten-pin bowling alley. Though the pins were faulty, who could complain at 95p a bottle of beer. **LCpl** 'Lucky B…' **Taylor** was the day's high scorer with 183.

All said and done the weeks adventure training was just what the Troop needed to recharge its batteries. The mixture of adventure training that continued into the nights will not be forgotten for a while. During this period **LCpl** 'Nikki' **Nichole** from the Troop also gave birth to a baby girl, and we would like to send our congratulations to her.

CHARLIE TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Lucy Pim**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Phil Joyce**

HELLOS & GOODBYES

A big welcome to **Sgt** 'Waggy' **Wagstaff** who has joined the Troop from Arborfield; and also to **Sigs Risley, Chignell** and **Marsden** who have come straight from Blandford. You've come in time for the fun to begin! Sad goodbyes go to **Cpl Tracy Main** and **Sig** 'Billy' **Harris** who have gone to 'the dark side' and joined civvy street. Also goodbye and the best of luck to **Sig** 'Smudge' **Smith** who goes to 7 Armd Bde on promotion – congratulations!

EXERCISE BETHESDA RAM
TROOP ADVENTURE TRAINING IN WALES

by Sig 'Richie' Harrison & Sig 'Glen' Niven

The Troop have enjoyed being out of role for a few months, and as part of this we have just returned from Wales where we spent a week adventure training. As soon as we had all arrived at Bethesda, near Bangor, we made our way to Betws-y-Coed where we went mountain biking. **Sgt Gaz** 'Who needs a map' **Shuck** took the map and we set off. At a track junction, **Sgt Shuck** stopped to check the route - the signpost behind him was pointing the right way – and after careful (?) consideration he decided to follow his own route, which involved climbing a fence! When we eventually got back on track and were on the home run, **Sig Gaz** 'Somersault' **Shaw** decided to come off his bike taking nearly half the group with him – 10 out of 10 for the acrobatics! After the hard day's biking, we sampled the social side of Bangor that evening – after this night on the tiles **LCpl Steve** 'Rocky' **Wilson** and **Sig Si** 'I can fly' **Powell** decided to spend a few quiet nights in…!

On Tuesday Mount Snowdon was on the cards, and for those who wanted to take it a bit easy there was a game of golf. However, these lucky few soon discovered that the golf course was built on a mountain steeper than Snowdon! Hard luck guys! Carrying on the injuries **Sig** 'Glen' **Niven** took a spectacular dive and twisted his ankle! Wednesday was probably our busiest day, with a package at a local mountain centre. We started off the morning with the indoor climbing wall – **Sig** 'Wyatt' **Earp** proved to be the spider-man of the group! The next activity was dry slope skiing, where **Cpl** 'Matt' **Booth** and **Sig** 'Richie' **Harrison** never graduated from the nursery slope! Then onto the kayaking – **LCpls** 'Gray' **Wootton,** 'Stevie' **Wilson** and **Sig** 'Ben' **McGinn** deciding to take a quick swim in the lake!

For the last day's activities there was a choice of hill walking, mountain biking and go-karting. **Lt Lucy** 'Freaky knee' **Pim** took the hill walking, and ended the day with a massive lump on her knee which looked like an egg. **Sig** 'Richie (Which way's North?)' **Harrison** took the map and gave everyone a few scares, like heading towards vertical drops, but he blamed that on the boss! At the go-karting, **LCpl Gray** 'Coulthard' **Wootton** got a puncture, but was allowed to keep the tyre as a souvenir, which made his day! Again we went to Bangor for a quiet pint, and **Sig** 'Andy' **Risley** sampled some great Welsh hospitality…! Then back to the cottage for a Chinese.

Sigs 'Nigel' Mansell, Gaz Shaw, Andy Risley and Marc Rigby trekiing in Wales and very wet!

Sigs Si Powell, Marc Rigby, 'Wyatt' Earp, SSgt Phil Joyce and Sig 'Lanky' Hancox, 'You're joking – we ain't riding up that!'

258 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj P. Deans**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Forrester**

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS NEWS

'All change! All change!', is the call heard around 258 Sig Sqn SHQ. Within the last three months the Squadron has witnessed a complete change of its hierarchy. **Maj Phil Deans** has been posted into the hot seat from HQ Land; life in the country certainly was at a slower pace! **Capt Emma Rae** has moved across from E Tp to take up the post of 2IC Sqn and OC SHQ Tp. **Capt Chris Preston** was posted in from the Arctic Warriors at 249 Sig Son and, after a short spell in Kosovo, has taken up the reigns as the Sqn Ops Offr and is currently still learning to ride, both in the office and in the stables (as Regimental Stable's Manager). **WO2 (SSM)** 'Fozzy' **Forrester** and his dog **Harry** have been posted in from 1 Mech Bde Sig Sqn in Tidworth. **Harry's** posting order still hasn't been found, but the notice boards are suitably adorned in Corps colours with bulled up bulldog clips. **SSgt (FofS) Gaz Duffy** has made the long distance move from 250 Gurkha Sig Sqn (all of ten yards) and **Sgt Lee Harris** travelled from Support Bn HQ ARRC. **SSgt Si Schofield**, the Sqn ISM, posted in from 238 Sig Sqn completes the new arrivals. 'Where is the continuity?' we hear you all ask. This unenviable task falls to **WO2 (YofS) Jim Knight**, who will be posted next month and replaced by **WO2 (YofS) Pete Goodliff**. Ah continuity, nothing like it!

The departures were as follows: The OC, **Maj Jules Swindells**, to Fort Halstead; the 2IC **Capt Andy Hopcraft** to Civ Div. The SSM, **WO2 Miles Webb**, was posted on promotion to RSM to 19 Mech Bde (hope he got the beers in, in the Mess). **WO2 (FofS) Bill Young** moved to TM Tp and **Sgts Brian Flynn** and **Dean Leach** moved on to sunnier climes in Germany and Cyprus, respectively. In summary, **Harry** continues to police the SHQ corridor, as the SSM's eyes and ears on the ground.

DELTA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Chris Smith**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Jim Lyons**

The remaining elements have now returned from Op Basilica in Sierra Leone having spent an interesting and damp three months during the monsoon season handing over the task to Foxtrot Tp for their short six week stint. After a brief period back in the Regiment everyone has got away for some post Op Leave. The Troop would like to extend a warm welcome to **SSgt Jim Lyons** who joins us from Germany. The rear party welcomed us back with open arms and a few guard duties. September has been another hectic month with preparation for our visit from our Colonel in Chief and a visit from the Master of Signals. We have also been very busy in preparing for Ex Cygnet Rock, with the Troop deploying to Gibraltar for the latter two weeks in September to familiarise personnel in HF Communications and engineering procedures. This month we say farewell to **LCpl Mark Palmer** and **LCpl Steve Lucas** and wish them well. The Troop would also like to extend their best wishes for the future to **Sig Steph Hawkins** as she prepares to make that transition into the PADS army.

ECHO TROOP - *by LCpl Stu 'Bubbles' Engleby*

Tp SSgt **SSgt Doc** 'The Temp Capt of the Ship' **Halliday**

Firstly the Troop would like to welcome **Sig Mick** 'Blinking' **Allen** from HQ 12 Mech Bde Sig Sqn; and then mourn the departures of **SSgt Doc** 'I'm the Daddy' **Halliday** who is finally leaving for HMS *Collingwood* and **Sgt Brenden** 'In competition with Doc' **Plant** to Foxtrot Tp.

Now for the gossip - Since returning from Ops Agricola and Palatine the Troop has kept busy by working the first two weeks back (thank goodness for ITDs!) and, on average, having five weeks post-op leave. All the office wallas have been busy trying to get everything in order, including having to make whole new databases on the PC. This whirlwind of activity has been increased by the sad fact that a lot of the Troop 'bibles' and various other office paraphernalia have disappeared whilst on Operations.

EXERCISE CYGNET GLOBE 2000

The annual plug up went according to plan – if not the original plan, then definitely a well thought out and improvised one! This approach suited E Tp's CNR 322 – long range HF - Det down to the ground; as at first we couldn't get COMMS in across a field never mind across the globe to our other Dets in Wales, Germany, Gibraltar, Ascension Island, Australia and New Zealand. The Det crew included the following outstanding COMMS individual, our learned Det Comd, **LCpl Stu Englby**, Det 2IC **Sigs John** 'One too many keeebab' **Lawrence, Steve Lamb, Andy** 'Skip' **Sellers** and **Mark** 'Preacher man' **Howland**. **Sig Howland**, being a Sys Op by trade, found the experience both enlightening and confusing. The Det was originally located in the field between the Officers' Mess and the CO's house but was relocated to the back of nowhere near the Stables. Some of the crew (ie. the most fortunate ones) got the opportunity to put into practice the Wotan skills we had acquired a couple of weeks beforehand. All in all the exercise went rather smoothly (ahem!) and here's looking **forward** to next years exercise

EXERCISE ARDUOUS CYGNET

This month also saw four members of E Tp involved in Ex Arduous Cygnet - the Regiment's COs cadre course. The four Signalers bidding to be Lance Corporals were **Sigs Allan, Fotheringham, Simmons** and **Hannam**. The course was an enduring three weeks long with one week of class work and two weeks in SENTA consisting of CTRS, Section attacks and an endless number of patrols and only one day of rain! On the whole E Tp faired well with **Sig Mick 'Blinking' Allan** taking top student. This could have had something to do with the airborne warrior fixing bayonets and charging a fig 11 target. **Sig Simmons** took fourth place, **Sig Fotheringham** sixth and **Sig Hannam** taking thirteenth. The mighty 25 great, gave a really good show as to who is the best squadron by having four of the top six and not one in the bottom half of the course. Could we ever improve upon this?

FOXTROT TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Mogs Southern**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Stu Fiddler**

The Troop says 'Hello' to **Sigs Claire Lounden** and **Shaun Brennan** straight from the Blandford Factory and **Sig Ben Kirton** from 15 Sig Regt. Also, 'Welcome back,' to **Cpl Lucy Mason** following her re-trade, then it is, 'Goodbye,' to **Sig Tom Lowe** who has earned a place at the Signal Squadron based in Hereford. An additional message of, 'Well done,' goes to **Sig Wilkinson** who achieved third place on the CO's cadre course. The majority of the Troop are currently deployed on Op Basilica in Sierre Lione and the remaining few are amidst preparations for JTFHQ which we takeover at the end of the year.

250 SIGNAL SQUADRON - *by Sig Bharat Ghale*

Sqn Comd **Maj J. J. Cole**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Chandrabahadur Gurung**

LIFE ON THE SEA! - (JOCCOMEX) 3-7 SEPTEMBER 2000

Almost every month, 30 Sig Regt, The Royal Navy, as well as the Royal Marines conduct an exercise, commonly known as the Joint Communication Exercise - JOCCOMEX, which is an HF exercise providing secure voice and RATT. The aim of this exercise is to prepare the personnel for the joint communication in operations, like the one in Sierra Leone and also to establish relationship amongst services. Usually we do this exercise from the camp, but this time two of us, **Cpl Shudham Gurung** and myself from 30 Sig Regt were invited to join HMS *Exeter* at Folkestone.

On 3 September, we were driven down to Folkestone Naval Base where the Ops Officer, **Lt Comd McDonald**, was there to receive us. We were then ferried by a passenger boat to the ship named HMS *Exeter*. It was quite a big ship, capable of carrying 250 people in total.

The Captain of the ship, Commander Richards, was very happy to see us and welcomed us on board. We were then led to the main communication office inside the ship, where **Radio Spvr Hart** introduced us to the main communication office staff and showed us the

Cpl Shudam Gurung on the wheel!

GOOD NEWS TRAVELS FAST - PUBLISH IT IN THE WIRE

communication equipment used in the ship and their roles in brief. Then **LOM Charlie** took us to our accommodation, which had treble bunk beds, thus reminding me of my school days. As it was our first time on board, we found it very congested at the beginning but soon managed to fit in. The duration of this exercise was only for 24 hours, so the rest of the days were spent on learning their equipment. As a consolation they entertained us by showing rescuing, man overboard, flag signaling, inter-ship communication, visual Morse transmit and receive and live firing demonstrations.

The exercise was a real success! They were happy to close down earlier but we carried on as we were enjoying just sending messages through the Teleprinter from one end to the other. We really had a great time working with them. All the people on board were friendly and helpful which made us feel the ship was like home away from home. The experience we gained out of this exercise will be an asset for the future operation. We are very thankful to the Captain and all members on board for making our stay so enjoyable and worthwhile. We sincerely hope that the trend of exchanging personnel will carry on in the future and looking forward to joining all the members on board again.

Jai Queen's Gurkha Signals.

31st (CITY OF LONDON) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col L. F. Harrison TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Gibson**

WHAT I DID ON MY SUMMER HOLIDAYS

by Ms Sarah Streete, Deputy Headmaster James Allens Prep School
Aka Maj S. Streete R Signals (V)

When asked if I would like to do a short tour in Kosovo during the school holidays (one of the perks of being a teacher), I jumped at the chance. I had always wanted to experience an operational tour and never expected to be able to do so without leaving my job. Also, my 'holiday' snaps and stories were certainly going to be more interesting than my colleagues' ones of sandwiches and ice-creams on the beach behind a windbreak.

Within 48 hours of term ending, I found myself on the way to RTMC Chilwell, near Nottingham for mobilisation, with just my respirator, beret and boots. Over the next 24 hours, I saw the British Army at its best. Firstly, I was kitted out with everything from the Union Jacks to sew on my brand new Combat 95 to floppy hat and jungle boots. My vision that I was to eat compo rations seemed more of a reality when I was given mess tins and KFS but it was not until I was offered a poncho that I really began to worry! I then had a medical, including the various jabs that inevitably were out of date and a dental check. The paperwork was completed efficiently and without fuss and I was given advice on insurance, pay and wills. No question seemed too stupid and no one could have been more helpful.

With two other TA R SIGNALS soldiers, I was taken to RAF Brize Norton to spend a night in the Gateway Hotel before flying out to Kosovo. Having heard horror stories about flying out in Hercules with the portoloo slopping behind the curtain, I was very relieved to be told I was to go in a VC 10. My relief was short lived though, as take off was aborted seconds before we left the ground (fortunately the runway was long enough for us to stop in time, although I was worried we would end up in a farmer's field), and I soon found myself in a coach on my way to RAF Lynham for a 4am departure…..in a Hercules! It was not as bad as I had anticipated and with no further delays, I arrived at the APOD, south of Pristina.

After a briefing on mines, cluster bombs and RTA's and collecting numerous aide memoirs and my Paradigm phone card (very important!), I boarded the bus for HQ MNB (C). I knew I was being totally irrational, but found it hard to control my fear that I was going to be blown up by a mine, despite the fact the road was made of tarmac and was very busy with traffic! I had never been in this environment before and had only been told the dangers, which seemed to be out of proportion to reality. This concern took several days to pass and as my job involved going out of the camp every day to attend meetings and visit various municipalities. I was fairly nervous for the first few days and during this time, even wished occasionally that I had a 'nice, safe' job as a watch-keeper!

Maj Sarah Streete taking a detour following a civilian RTA

Not for long, however! I was employed to work as a Liaison Officer in G3 CMO (Civil Military Operations) at the Brigade Headquarters and found it to be a fascinating experience and one that I felt very lucky to be doing. I was one of four Pillars matching the four Pillars in UNMIK. As my Pillar, Pillar IV had been gapped for a while, it had to be re-established. It was responsible for housing - reconstruction and allocation and also public utilities and I spent the first few days going around Pristina, visiting as many people as I could in order to introduce myself and to find out what was happening. My knowledge of the political situation was limited (very limited!) and I not only had to find out what I would best be doing, but also to get my head around who was fighting who and why we were there. Despite my doubts, it took only a short time to feel that I was contributing to the CMO Cell. Each day started with a briefing, which covered all the security issues in the country. It was hard to appreciate that all the incidents mentioned were real and I found myself waiting for someone to shout 'ENDEX!' for quite sometime! It also became apparent fairly quickly, that life, be it human or animal, was cheap.

A typical day, if there was such a thing, started with the morning briefing. I would then meet my driver to travel into Pristina for a housing meeting at the Town Hall, where the Administrator would be discussing anything from illegal building and demolition to requesting the use of KFOR to transport some of the building materials being used in reconstruction, to the outlying villages. The meeting could then be followed by catching up with some of the UNMIK personnel in the Town Hall, perhaps the city designer, brought over from Paris, (and what a job he had!) or the person in charge of reconstruction. If there was time, I would check my e-mails as I had a daily report from one of the organisations working in the area, the Kosovo Development Cell or a request from another organisation trying to help the local people. I would then 'stroll' down the road to the Housing and Property Directorate (HPD) who were part of UNCHS (UN Centre for Human Settlement), where I had an office. The HPD were responsible for all the registering and allocation of property and eviction where necessary. They were having to work very hard in order to keep up with the number of people, both Albanians and Serbs who were claiming property. It was not as simple as it sounds as during the 1990's the Serbs had been allowed to buy houses from the Albanians. This had recently been ruled illegal and so the whole area was a minefield (not literally!). After lunch back at MNB(C), I would head off to visit the Administrator in one of the seven municipalities which fell into my area and get up to date on the housing situation in that area. Sometimes I would call in on the CMO's at the Battlegroup level as they would have a very good idea of what was happening as they met with the local people on a day to day basis. On returning to the camp, there was sometimes time to do some exercise before the evening briefing, supper and a leisurely coffee outside with anyone else who was taking a break. Back to the office to write up the daily report and plan the next day, before meeting in the bar at 9.30pm for a can or two.

Op Trojan (Serb civilians returning to their homes in Slivivo)

Being part of a Multi-National Brigade meant I was fortunate to be working alongside officers from other countries. Pillars 2 and 3 were run by a Norwegian and a Swede respectively and the SO2 Plans was also Norwegian. I also met numerous other nationalities at KFOR Main – Americans, French, Greeks, Germans and many, many more internationals that were working for UNMIK. As a Brit., whose language ability consisted of O' Level French and Latin (a long time ago!), it was very impressive and a great relief that everyone spoke such good English. The cell in which I was working was a sociable and friendly one and I very quickly felt like I had always been there. Another TA officer and teacher, who had escaped from the classroom for a few months, ran Pillar 1. The Chief CMO, was an enthusiastic Black Watch Officer, who was looking forward to returning to Scotland, not for the fishing and stalking of course, but because he was going to be working with the TA!

The TFA was far better than I had anticipated and not once did I have to use a poncho or mess tins! The food was generally excellent, with a wide choice and plenty of fresh fruit. The accommodation, if rather cramped with dreadful beds, was perfectly adequate. I found it hard to decide what I really missed other than being able to keep in easy contact with friends and family and a hot shower. Access to Internet and e-mails was tricky, though we were led to believe that that was due to be improved. BFBS kept us up to date on world events, the post was quick and efficient and the laundry even quicker – in for 9am, out at 4pm.

Naturally, I have many lasting memories of the five weeks I spent in Pristina: the worries I had when wearing a loaded pistol for the first few days, convinced I was going to shoot my foot. Sitting for hours in hot, stuffy rooms listening to Albanians drone on about what they should be getting and how many houses they wanted rebuilt (all through an interpreter, of course!). Visiting male Serb returnees who were to be given a cow and 24 chickens to get them started, but who refused to make bread as that was women's work. There was the shelter, rife with scabies, in which numerous families lived in small rooms. The Auction of Promises organised by Pillar 1 to raise money to help the Serb returnees and my afternoon at the quarry with the Engineers as a result of it. The compulsory drug testing (no bad news yet!). Catherine, the cow, one of our first, that sadly died from a prolapsed uterus. The day the building supplies left Pristina City to go to the outlying villages. The pot holed roads, the long days, all the different people I met and worked with from such a variety of backgrounds and nationalities and so many more.

Certainly, if another chance were to come up during the school holidays, I would welcome the opportunity to work with a Regular or indeed, a TA unit on an operation again. There would be no need to give up my job and it would be short enough to maintain good contact with my TA Squadron, whilst carrying out a real job, such as I did this summer. This experience means I know what my soldiers are volunteering for and I have first hand knowledge as to what a peacekeeping tour is like; particularly important in today's world with areas of poor stability - who knows when the TA will be required? Without doubt, it was a worthwhile and enriching experience.

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON AND LAD

Sqn Comd **Maj Alec Ferguson**
OC LAD **Capt Alan Walton** REME

TRAINING

Throughout the summer months training continued at a steady pace. The LAD were probably the most active, making sure that as many jobs as possible were completed prior to deployment on Annual Camp. The Squadron also took part in a vehicle borne navigation and radio exercise organised in great detail by the TOT, **Capt Taylor**. The Exercise took the format of a treasure hunt by road from Southfields to Eastbourne, and involved some very detailed navigation. Once at Eastbourne, the annual air-show was in full swing, which we watched whilst driving to Beachy Head, to complete some fitness training before a barbecue hosted by 56 Sqn. The weather was perfect, and it was a particularly enjoyable weekend.

ANNUAL CAMP

HQ Sqn deployed initially to the Swynnerton Area, with the exception of Delta Tp, who where based at Leek. Thoughts of an impending diesel shortage (refineries blockaded) had not even emerged, as we moved into our smart 'des-res', a large abandoned brick shed, approximately 100 metres long. Despite the lack of glass in the windows, or doors of any description, it had a roof and was clean and dry. Something of a bonus on exercise! The mystery of the disappearing camp-bed was, however, beginning to vex **Capt Southey**, QM(V).

As **WO2 Brambles** began to cook the evening meal, a strange nightly ceremony commenced - the lighting of the Tilley Lamps. It is a ceremony shrouded in mystery and is almost as old as time itself. Several people cluster in a huddle around each lamp, whose efforts serve only to produce soot blackened lamp glasses, and disintegrating mantles. Cries of, 'You've not pumped the pressure up enough,' are then followed by singed eyebrows in a stream of high speed paraffin vapour. It became obvious that there was hardly a course qualified B3 Tilley Lamp Lighter to be found throughout the assembled 'old sweats' in HQ Squadron. In these modern times of generators and lighting kits, it seems that the skills of a Tilley Lamp Lighter have all but been lost. However, **SSgt Peart** eventually proved his prowess with both meths and paraffin, and succeeded where others had failed. Even the Padre had to admit that enlightenment was a difficult condition to achieve. Despite all of this, we started the Exercise with four Tilley Lamps, and finished with three. A case of defective 'mantle arithmetic'?

Whilst rumours of a fuel crisis began to grow, a full scale panic only broke out when both Land Command and the MTO **Capt Winterson** asserted, 'There will be no fuel shortage!', and some of us remembered President Nixon's famous statement during Watergate, assuring everyone, 'There will be no whitewash at the White House.' Maps were scoured, and RAF Stafford seemed to have more fuel than the Arabs, but chaos was growing. Confusion about a re-supply of rations for 41 Sqn led to the Padre, **Maj Crawley**, and the RMO, **Capt Anandan**, delivering boxes of 10-man compo to an RV at a motorway service station. An unusual composition for an SQMS task. Had the Padre arrived with some loaves and fishes, the enterprise would have been a major test of faith. Compo served just as well.

HQ Sqn moved to join the rest of the Regiment at Warcop Camp for a couple of days. Vehicles were fuelled, and soldiers were paid. Life was returning to normal, for a while anyway. When HQ Sqn deployed onto the Brigade Exercise, the Regimental Support element moved to transit accommodation at Catterick. Delta Tp was attached to 71 Sig Regt, as their rear link to Brigade. They were well looked after by their host unit, even to the extent of having their soaking kit dried out in a tumble drier on the exercise area! (But can they light a Tilley lamp?). The MTO began to concede that, yes, perhaps we should be cautious in our use of fuel, as there really didn't seem to be too much of it about. The POL point at Catterick was dry, and HQ Sqn was in danger of being unable to provide support to the Regiment if required. At the height of the fuel shortage **WO1 Knowles**, the MTWO, began phoning local Shell garages, to see if they had any fuel. By sheer luck, the garage at nearby Scotch Corner had received a delivery just five minutes previously! **Mr Knowles** assembled a small convoy, together with jerry cans, and proceeded in a northerly direction with good military discipline and some haste. Their subsequent filling of fuel tanks and jerry cans risked the wrath of the entire Yorkshire nation queuing up behind them, but fortune favours the brave. Vehicles returned fully replenished, and judging by the number of 'V for Victory' salutes received from the waiting motorists, it is clear that the Territorial Army enjoys considerable support from the public in such times of crisis!

This is probably a useful time to dispel some of the wilder rumours that may have been told about the Exercise conditions under which most of HQ Sqn were languishing. There is NO truth in the rumours that: All soldiers slept in heated huts with a mattress. All soldiers were fed three square meals a day at the nearby cookhouse. All soldiers had access to a hot shower. A nearby Pizza delivery firm was seen making several late night deliveries. Good. At least that has now been clarified.

Although HQ Sqn were not over tasked, there were still essential repairs to be done, spare parts to be ordered, and the usual logistics and administrative duties to ensure that the Regiment was able to fully play its part in the Exercise. All elements of the Squadron worked well, and achieved all that was asked of them. Delta Tp provided good communications for 71 Sig Regt, whilst chefs, vehicle mechanics, clerks, and the Quatermaster's staff played their part. It really was a job well done!

RECRUITING

Sgt Crowhurst successfully passed his Staff Sergeants Course, and continued to put all his energies into the recruiting and training of some of our new soldiers. Although HQ Sqn has not had many recruits so far this year, those that have enlisted have been of very good quality, and should become useful players in the team at Southfields.

INS AND OUTS

Sgt Matabdin has retired from the Regiment and TA after a long and dedicated career as a chef, for over 30 years. His assistance to the Regiment will be missed, but we all wish him well. He will be dined out later in the year. **Capt Winterson** (MTO) has also decided to retire from the TA, to concentrate on living life to the full in Spain. He generously bought the entire Squadron several drinks on our return from Annual Camp. Loyalty cannot be bought (cheaply!). **WO2 Podolanski**, our catering Warrant Officer has transferred on promotion to WO1. Many congratulations. Our Regular RQMS, **WO2 Roome** has moved to his next posting. Many thanks for all your work. **WO2 Lothian** has arrived as the new RQMS, and hopefully will enjoy working with the TA.

1 (PLK) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd **Maj T. Lankester**
SSM **WO2 R. Watson**

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The Squadron has recently been involved in various PR activities in and around the Coulsdon area. Firstly the Coulsdon Millennium Carnival at Coulsdon High School where we provided the beer tentage and a recruiting stand. Congratulations and thanks to **Sgt** 'Friar' **Tuck** and **Capt Krishna Gurung**, who's persistence enabled the residents of Coulsdon to drink in the dry! **Lt Debs** 'Broody' **Speakman** particularly enjoyed running the crèche! Secondly, the Squadron was proud to attend the opening of the new Memorial at Kenley Aerodrome. Five thousand people flocked to Kenley to enjoy the summer sun and pay tribute to those who served their country from the aerodrome. They were treated to a display of modern and classic military vehicles. The Squadron being able to provide one of each! There then followed a flypast from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, the LANWARD with its platform and height providing an excellent viewing gantry. Thanks should go to **Sig** 'PLK' **Davy** for his assistance and insistence that we support such a key local event.

EXERCISE HORSESHOE 1 – CAMP 2000

The run up to camp this year was not without stress. The constantly fluid ORBAT finally took its toll on the Squadron when we deployed with 24 vehicles and only 12 drivers! It is with great admiration that we thank **SSgt John** 'Cocker' **Mackins** for his flexibility in driving a whole convoy of tea wagons to Scotland and back aided only by **Sgt's Lambert & Butler** and our civilian driver **Mr P.G.Tips**. It was to be 'Mackins' last camp as he is due to retire this year after 108 years in the British Army (and he has never missed camp!).

At our first location it was with great surprise that **SSgt Dave** 'Halfman' **Holman** was relieved 2 hours early on shift by **Capt John** 'Stiltskin' **Symmons**. **SSgt Holman** was at pains to explain that Alpha time is 1 hour *after* Zulu time! However, **Capt Symmons** was at pains to claw back the lost sleep over the next few days! Quickly, we moved on. During the move we employed Regt SOP 197/2/3 by coasting down hills with the engines switched off in order to conserve fuel. The fuel crisis was hitting us hard! On crossing the Humber Bridge the Troop had a whip round to pay the toll and **Sig Lee** 'Spoon' **Harris** almost had to sell his webbing. Good job he brought a spare set! The rest of the Squadron arrived at Driffield somewhat late and smelling, strangely, of Imperial Leather. Or was it Fairy Liquid? Fortunately **SSM** 'Whopper' **Watson** had been banished to the other end of the Airfield from where his snoring only kept the northern half of the town awake.

The day off was spent in Penrith, which soon became a Mecca for fashion guru's the world over when **Maj Toby** 'Armani' **Lankester** strode forth dressed in his jacket, tie and army issue pumps. The local watering holes were a little taken aback by the arrival of the PLK but soon relaxed as beer tokens changed hands with ever increasing rapidity. Needless to say the whole Squadron was back in camp by 1800hrs preparing themselves for the Brigade Ex and the move up to Scotland. The Squadron deployed the COMCEN to Barry Budden and was immediately set upon by the TARSI Rebels. OC N Tp suffered from a sucking chest wound and miraculously survived thanks to the expert surgical skills of a barefoot **Sig Guy** 'Florence' **Scott-Douglas**. After a few further such attacks it soon became clear that we had a soldier in our midst! For efforts during the exercise **LCpl Warren** 'Tigger' **O'Driscoll** was awarded a commendation by the Brigade Comd for meritorious service. All, of course, part of Exercise play.

LCpl O' Driscoll receives his Exercise Bde Comd Commendation for dis-arming a Tarsi rebel
(no Cpl O' Driscoll it's not real and it doesn't go on your P file)

For the final phase we returned to Warcop, where we again set up the COMCEN (we were getting good at it by now!) inside the farmhouse fortunately as the heavens opened shortly after we arrived. A thunderstorm put paid to Bde Main for a short (chuckle) period, but **Sgt Ian** 'Gringo' **Mackay** did spend all night trying to keep the power running. Could it have been the night shifts kettle, toaster, sandwich maker ……!

Cpl May, 'Is there anyone there?'

CONGRATULATIONS

Best wishes to **Sgt Mark Trotter** and his wife **Louise** who have just had their first baby daughter **Katie**.

56 SIGNAL SQUADRON – EASTBOURNE

Sqn Comd **Maj Streete**
SSM **WO2 Godden**

PERSONNEL

With **Maj Sarah Streete** only recently back from Kosovo and **Lt Kieran Francis** still serving on FTRS in Bosnia, **Capt Tony Potter** was handed the Squadron reins for this year's Annual Camp. Furthermore congratulation go to **2Lt Rob Wood** who successfully completed his commissioning course at RMAS over the period 9-30 September 2000.

EXERCISE HORSESHOE 1 - ANNUAL CAMP

Unusually, the whole of camp was dedicated to communications; this provided an excellent opportunity for Squadron members to improve their skills. For **Sigs Trish O' Sullivan, Stella Jennings** and **Dave King** it was the chance to consolidate their first trade, for **Cpls Butler** and **Harding** to practise their Class 1 skills. From the outset it was clear that the Squadron was going to be pushed for manpower but with key players raring to go and all equipment serviceable the task was not beyond us.

After MOBEX and the first issue of CS 95 uniform the Squadron deployed to its first exercise location, Sennybridge. This move was not without incident as **WO2 (SSM) Roly Godden** managed to blow the engine on his landrover which gave the REME FRT of **Sgt Gary Windham, Cpl Pete** 'Poke it and see' **Paine** and **Cpl** 'I'll have it fixed in a jiffy' **North** the opportunity to practise first, their recovery skills and secondly their mechanical skills. This was to no avail and the unfortunate vehicle was consigned to ABRO Sennybridge. Undeterred and with blue skies and unbroken sunshine everyone quickly got into their stride. What odds, two days without rain in Sennybridge? Before long the Squadron was on the move to Altcar and another couple of days workup training in a FIBUA village. The building marked garage and proudly displaying the Shell Oil motif was as dry as all the other shell garages on the West Coast at this point.

Next, the Regimental concentration at Warcop and a well-deserved day off in Keswick. **Capt Ian Murray** planned an excellent walk in the hills high above Derwent water, the peace and quiet and yet more fine weather provided an excellent opportunity for everyone to recharge their batteries before the exercise started in earnest. The aim of the Exercise was to provide command and control communications to 2 (NC) Sig Bde staff. Our first location was just across the road in Warcop Training Area. It was here that we first met members of 47 Sig Sqn under the command of **Lt Mike Smith** who were placed under our TACOM for the duration of this phase of the Exercise. The pressure was now on and it was not long before the first incident. An IED in our midst. The situation was dealt with calmly and the only real anxiety was shown by **Sgt** 'Crusty' **Howell** the Chef for fear that he would not be able to prepare lunch on time if the situation was not quickly resolved. The next day he celebrated his 94th birthday although he swears he is only half that age!

A final move to Wathgill and now the characters were really beginning to show, Siamese Twins **SSgts Cooper** and **Maginnis** had their respective shifts working well and the communications stayed rock solid throughout. This was clearly lost on **Sig Dalton** who was clearly heard replying to another callsign 'Yes, ZBZ 5 send again over.' The main event during the exercise was a VIP visitors day with the GOC and various other high ranking officers and civil servants taking centre stage. **WO2 (SSM) Roly Godden** was caught taking detail to an unprecedented level during preparations when he was spotted drilling traffic cones. *Stand still the left hand cone!* **Sgt** 'Two heads' **Hall** and **LCpl Steve Spilsted** achieved the same high standards with the often forgotten, but equally important administrative details. The visitor day went extremely well even if a violent electrical storm and torrential rain disrupted the preparation day. **WO2 (YoS) Smith, LCpl Reader** and **Sig Jenkins** may have even qualified for the Olympic team had the 100m dash to disconnect antennas been timed.

LCpl Baldwin deserves a special mention, as he was detached from the Squadron to head up a rear link detachment for 83 Sig Sqn. By all accounts he performed admirably in *almost* every situation! By the time the Exercise had finished the fuel crisis had resolved itself and all assets recovered safely back to Eastbourne in time to celebrate. In summary the Squadron achieved great things on camp and clearly demonstrated a team spirit and a skills level that would be hard to match by anyone. Each and every member of the Squadron can be justifiably proud of their performance and the scale of their achievement.

83 SIGNAL SQUADRON(V)

Sqn Comd **Maj Julian Carmichael**
SSM **WO2 Stephens**

CAMP 2000

'He counted them out and He counted them back in again'

Annual Camp for 83 Sig Sqn saw its OC, **Maj Julian Carmichael,** scatter troops to the four winds. Tasked with providing the Rear Link Detachments (RLDs) for the Brigade Exercise, the Squadron despatched its 'BEST' in order to provide secure comms to each of the Regiments. A Liaison Officer whose primary responsibility was to act as a link between the Detachments and the Regiments accompanied each RLD. Well done to **Capt Liz FitzPatrick, Lt Paul Ukpai, 2Lt Mike Zazzi** and **SSgt**

Matt Cahill all of whom did a sterling job. Some locations even boasted the securing of showers! Congratulations and a big well done are also extended to the Det Comds and operators who manned the RLDs. Yet again the Squadron proved that it can rise to a challenge and provide the very best.

Cpl Ahluwalia was however sent further afield than the depths and breaths of Scotland. He spent camp with our American cousins at 1111th Sig Bn. It gave him he opportunity to exercise and socialise with our colleagues abroad. An enlightening experience for all concerned!

VISIT OF BRIGADIER D. R. d'A WILLIS CBE

The Squadron was honoured with a visit from the Deputy Commander London District and Commander London Area at its TAC White City. **Brig Willis CBE** was keen to meet with the Officers and Soldiers who make up the squadron and discuss issues surrounding their recent move. He was greeted by **Lt Col Linda Harrison TD** CO of 31 Signal Regiment (V) and the Sqn Comd, **Maj Julian Carmichael**. After coffee **Brig Willis CBE** was taken on a tour of the newly refurbished TAC and stayed for a few beers in the OR's bar.

SUBBIES SAILING

Skipper **Capt Colin Vaudin** (Adjt) and Mate, **Lt Beth Pollard** set off with a novice crew of four subbies on the Ensis for a weekend of sailing around the Solent. Leaving Gosport we head towards East Cowes, enjoying the Friday afternoon sun. On arrival it looks like there was no room at New Haven, but as the sun went down we found another yacht to moor along side. Time for G & T's in the cockpit while **Lt Lee McEvoy** finds his way around the Galley. With the sun risen we set sail for Southampton via Newtown for a lunch stop. After much trimming of the sails the anchor is thrown. Able crewman **Lt Debbie Speakman** dives over the side for a pre-lunch swim, quickly followed by **Capt John Symmons**. To ensure that all on board are able to rescue any sailor from over the side we practise hoisting drills, **Capt John Symmons** being the man in the chair. We then voyaged on towards Ocean Village for an evening of high spirits. Once more the sun rose high, we headed back towards Gosport with **Capt Liz Fitzpatrick** at the helm. With all crew able to tell the difference between a warp, sheet and halyard we moor safely back at JSASTC having had an excellent weekend.

32nd (SCOTTISH) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col J. K. McKee MBE**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) Hilborn**
SVWO **WO1 McVey**

51 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)
Sqn Comd **Maj Morna Strachan**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Davey Crocket**

Sgt Bullock (USNG) and SSgt Shand (51 Sqn) tour the Regiment whilst on Annual Camp

USNG EXCHANGE TRIP - *By SSgt Davie 'Coffee Mug' Shand*

Back in June I set off on an exchange trip with USNG, based at Fort Hood, Texas. I was on my way to the US on the 11.30 flight from London. After a few drinks, lunch, a few more drinks, a movie etc, I arrive in Washington DC. It is only local time, six hours behind UK time and I have already been on the go since 0500hrs this morning. There is a great welcome, including a thunderstorm, so the flights have all been delayed, not leaving until 1930hrs. Flying to Iowa, we have four different flights, with the planes getting progressively smaller. I arrive around midnight along with the five other SNCO's on the exchange. We are picked up by the USNG rep and taken to Marshalltown; an hour's drive away, where we spend the night in a motel. It seems that I have just got to bed when it is time to get up. We jump on the transport that takes us to the local Armoury (TAC) where we meet the National Guard - 234 Sigs Bn, C Coy. Big shock for me - there is no coffee, only orange juice and the biggest, stickiest doughnuts for breakfast. Next, we are on our way to Fort Hood, Texas, having just been told that it is a three-day drive. We leave at 0745hrs for Kansas City Armoury, arriving about 1800hrs. The night is spent on the armoury floor, after clearing away the cockroaches. Next day we are up at the crack of dawn. Breakfast, this time with coffee, is followed by hanging around waiting for hours - nothing new there, before setting off on the next leg of the journey, to Oklahoma City Armoury. We arrive at 1830hrs, the excitement of the drive having diminished as the pain of sitting increased. By this time I have managed to borrow a camp bed, not fancying another night with the cockroaches. We have started to build up some rapport with our hosts, but they are a bit shocked when they find that we have a few cans of beer, which we have to drink outside and well away from everyone. The next day we are travelling from early morning, until finally arriving at our destination at around 1530hrs.

Fort Hood is the home of the 1st Cavalry Div and holds about one third of the army so you can imagine the size of the place - well it is Texas after all. There are helicopters, vehicles and armour of all sorts everywhere, but we have no time to look around before heading off onto the exercise area and pitching our tents for the night. The next couple of days are spent moving locations, drawing kit and lots of hanging around - just like being at home, apart from the temperature being in the high 80s. On moving to the RV we got bumped - finally some excitement - but just as things started to get interesting a thunderflash set the grass on fire and everyone had to stop play and put the fire out - 'Millions of acres burned by British TA soldiers' would not be a good headline. On moving back to Fort Hood the weather changed for the worse with three days of constant rain with a good bit of thunder and lightning thrown in for good measure. We were just glad not to be out under canvass. The Americans had some lectures on their radios and antennas before we moved back out onto the training area, by which time the weather had reverted to 80 degrees of sunshine again. Unfortunately, all good things come to an end and we were heading back to Washington D.C. We arrived around 1430hrs, booked into our hotel, opposite Fort Myres and headed for the PX shop, followed by a few drinks in one of the local bars. We spent the next day and a half as tourists, visiting Arlington Cemetery, The White House, Washington Monument, etc, before heading back home. Looking back, the trip was one of the highlights of my TA career and I would thoroughly recommend a USNG exchange to any SNCO who can find the time and opportunity.

My host, **Sgt Bullock** spent the first week of annual camp with the Squadron and took part in Ex Saltire, a two-day NCRS Exercise on Ripon Parks Training Area, in preparation for Ex Horseshoe. Despite being looked after on the R&R day by various members of the Squadron, **Sgt Bullock** managed to remain teetotal. As the Squadron left Ripon to deploy on Ex Horseshoe, **Sgt Bullock** departed for a week of sightseeing.

52 SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)
Sqn Comd **Maj Donald Gordon**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Swan**

Members of the Squadron were approached by an ex-Royal Signals Soldier for use of a Royal Signals Tartan Beret to be worn on a 51st Highland Division reunion parade at Saint Valery where the 51st Highland Division Memorial stands. The Picture shows **Sig Albert Murray** who joined the 51st Highland Division No. 1 Company Royal Signals Aberdeen Territorial in April 1939.

He was joined on the reunion by **Sig Henry Hopkins** (also pictured) who joined the Royal Signals at about the same time in 1939. **Albert Murray** was sent to Le Havre in January 1940 and was wounded at Saint Valery, he was then taken to Rouen Hospital after the surrender. Both **Sigs Murray** and **Hopkins** were held as prisoners of war after the fighting at Saint Valery.

Sig Albert Murray (L) and Henry Hopkins (R) during the 51st Highland Division Reunion at Saint Valery

LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND SPORTS WEEKEND

The weekend of 11-13 August 2000 saw the Regiment deploy to Garelochead Training Area. The aim of the weekend was to test the leadership skills of the soldiers and JNCOs of the Regiment. This was done using that tried and tested method of the round robin on the Ardgarten training area north of Garelochead. The weekend got off to an inauspicious start when, in a desperate attempt to wipe out the real talent in the Regiment, namely **Maj Donald** 'My Lunch is Ruined' **Gordon, WO2 (SSM) Karen Swan** and **WO2 Sammy Shaw, WO2 (SSM) McGowan** of 61 Sig Sqn turned the 4 Tonne truck the aforementioned three were travelling in the back of on to its side. Fortunately this cynical attempt to topple 52 Sig Sqn as the best Squadron in the Regiment failed. The soldiers had to navigate to a number of stands including first aid, observation, a command task and many more. The teams were scored at each stand and a prize given to the winning team. This team was the mysteriously misnomered 51 Sig Sqn 'B' Team, which consisted of four personnel from 52 Sig Sqn, and two from 51 Sqn. Conspiracy????

The following day a sports day was held with Inter-Squadron competitions in football, volleyball and uni-hockey (You can't give Jocks real sticks). 52 Sig Sqn once again dominated this competition. The success began when the football tournament was won with the Squadron OC gently encouraging the team to victory. The team said later that it was due to his inspiring words that they put in the extra effort required to win. There was a slight blip in the Squadron's march to world domination, when in a moment of weakness, the Squadron Team lost their uni-hockey match. This was blamed on the fact that they were not used to keeping a stick below waist level. This meant that there was a nail biting volleyball final with the overall sports prize at stake. The game started in a bizarre way when the gym attendant at the sports centre at Faslane locked the volleyball away and a football had to be used. This meant nothing to the mighty 52 who swept to glory by beating 61 Sig Sqn 2-0, the team being lead by **Maj Donald** 'Set it, ya numpty' **Gordon**.

The final over, all that was left was the prize giving and to load the silverware on to the lorry hired for the occasion. However, one mystery remains; what happened to the overall sports champions trophy? Have 61 Sqn kept it in order to have something in their trophy cabinet?

ANNUAL CAMP 2000

The RSM tells the Comd that he is wrong '....it is only this big.'

Annual camp was strange for the Squadron this year because we had to split the Squadron in order to provide communications for three different exercises. The NCRS element of the Squadron deployed on Ex Horseshoe, a 2 (NC) Sig Bde Exercise. The Squadron CP, the Squadron FFR and the MIV Troop deployed in support of 15 (NE) Bde on Ex Migrant Merlin. A further MIV was deployed in support of 1 RGJ on Ex Quebec Venture.

EXERCISE MIGRANT MERLIN

Ex Migrant Merlin was a 15 (NE) Brigade Infantry concentration in two parts. There are three battalions in the Brigade: the Tyne Tees Regiment, the East and West Riding Regiment and 4 Parachute. There were also 200 regular Czech soldiers from the 4th Rapid Deployment Bde. The first week was to be spent in individual training by the battalions within the Brigade. An MIV was attached to each battalion for the duration of this week of training. The soldiers were required to undertake duties other than comms tasks. One example of this was when the crew of MIV 2, **Cpl Henry** 'Cross of Iron' **Rodgers** and **LCpl Alan** 'Pass the Loo roll' **MacDonald** were tasked to act as enemy. They single handedly defended the Skye Bridge against a descent operation by 4 Para in the form of an airborne assault on the bridge. Their defence was magnificent, as can only be expected, and they successfully defended the bridge. The Paras fatalities are believed to have been in the hundreds whilst the casualty list for the Detachment from the Fighting Fifty Second amounted to one cut thumb, when **LCpl MacDonald** had an accident with the dust cover of his rifle. Rumours that he requested an injury claim form to be sent with his pay are unfounded. One other strange duty resulted in medals of a different nature when **Cpl Billy** 'Midfield General' **McPherson** and **LCpl Tam MacCole** strengthened the Tyne Tees Regiment football team in a match against a talented Czech Team, where once again they were victorious. The Squadron CP deployed with one MIV to Altbea, which is just beyond the back of beyond, to conduct comms trials in preparation for the exercise that was due to take place the following week when all the units in the Brigade came together for a big finale. Unfortunately, due to the fuel shortages, the staff at HQ 15 Bde decided to cancel the exercise in order to ensure that the units had enough fuel to travel back to their home bases at the end of the camp. The battalions were ordered to continue training in their current locations until the end of the camp with the MIVs staying with their units. This resulted in **LCpl Anne** 'Attached Layabout' **James** getting a name for herself by ruining one of the subalterns from 4 Para. No details on how she did this have been forthcoming. The crew of the MIV attached to the TTR were also given some additional tasks which included running a signals cadre and operating a CNR rebro, something not included in our soldiers' training. The exercise cancelled, CP 52 decided to relocate to Warcop in order to support the NCRS element of the Sqn on Ex Horseshoe 1.

EXERCISE HORSESHOE 1

The Squadron CP deployed to Warcop Camp and were co-located with Echelon. The Squadron personnel who went there were surprised at the lack of activity as everyone at Ech was as still and as motionless as the Terracotta Warriors. The main difference being that the Terracotta Warriors were found on their feet, something HQ Sqn could never be accused of.

Sgt Miller (USNA) with the younger members of the Regiment

The concept of the exercise was that the NCRS elements of 2 (NC) Bde were to deploy on Peace Support Operations (PSO) in support of the UN in an unstable country. This meant that the soldiers had to employ their wits and ingenuity as well as their military and comms skills. The Detachments were required to move location, clearing it of any booby traps or indigenous population. They also had to deal with 'Displaced Persons' and troublemakers in the form of the RRTT and their recruits. The soldiers on the Detachments ignored the OC's suggestions on how to hurt them without leaving marks. His training on booby traps and ponji sticks also fell on deaf ears. One Detachment, **Sgt Hamish Graham, Cpl Frankie Holtz, Cpl Val Bowden** and **Sig Elaine Wood**, conducted their

own form of ethnic cleansing. One night they heard something rummaging in their rubbish. The big tough soldiers grabbed their rifles and surrounded the bag ready to brain whatever was invading their leftovers in the belief that it was a rat. The culprit however was a ferret that was adopted by the Detachment and became part of the crew. Rumours that this increased the Detachment's average IQ have been denied.

The RSM tries to teach the Macarena to the Comd 2 Sig Bde and the OC of RRTT

61st (CITY OF EDINBURGH) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V) ANNUAL CAMP 2000

Full of hope, anticipation and, dare we say it, optimism 61 Sqn deployed on the regular pilgrimage known as annual camp on 16 September. Early on Saturday morning a fleet of Landrovers and NCRS trailers lumbered slowly southwards towards Ripon Barracks. Upon arrival it quickly became obvious that the 'optimistic' feelings were well justified; **Sgt Jimmy** 'Nae Nuts' **Dunlop** had just proved that, having dispensed with one wheel in transit, it was possible to drive an NCRS on only three wheels.

Glasgow provide a kick-start to 51 Squadron

A 'quick shake out' at Ripon was all that was required before deploying on the first phase of camp, the practise for Ex Horseshoe. There were no 'dramas' at this stage and the troops returned to Ripon on Wednesday determined to enjoy their day off. At the Sergeants Mess Dinner, **Sgt Jane Chisholm** cleverly allowed herself to be hypnotised and 'pretended' to get herself into all sorts of compromising situations and positions, purely for the benefit of the Mess. Meanwhile at another social event in a local restaurant, **Cpl** 'Smiler' **Allen** performed his hilarious 'drunk man falling asleep at the table' impersonation before waking up again and going back to the bar.

On Friday it was gloves on for the real thing, Ex Horseshoe. 61 Sqn, charged with the responsibility for the site admin of RCP/Comms Ops, deployed to the muddiest and most cow-infested field in the North of England. As the dark clouds scudded malevolently across the forbidding skies, the heavens opened and the Squadron vehicles oozed into their muddied positions. Such was the extent of the precipitation that the site soon resembled a scene from a Wilfred Owen WWI poem:

'*coughing hags, bent double cursing their way through the vile sludge*'

The SSM conducts her daily butt check

To add to the entertainment the local bovine population decided to take a literal and metaphorical 'crash' course in NCRS training by unsuccessfully trying to avoid the various masts that populated the field. To combat this destructive dairy disaster, various Squadron members were charged with the serious task of herding the inquisitive beasts away from the sensitive communications hardware. Proof indeed of the important 'soft skills' that can be acquired in the TA. (Of course there are those say that it was **Cpl** 'The Bull' **Leslie** and not the masts which were the cause of the agricultural invasion)

Sgt Chisholm and Cpl 'Shoe' Traynor getting wound up whilst on Exercise

Relief of sorts came on the Sunday, when the Squadron re-deployed to the relatively hard standing havens of Longtown Camp. The relief was short lived in the Officers Tent when they discovered that, despite being on hard standing, the cleverly angled slope accurately channelled all the rainwater towards all dry kit. The gloom was quickly lifted with the arrival of **SSgt Roweena Clarke** who seemed determined to sleep with five resident officers. However, many believe that she was only there to catch another glimpse of the early morning exotic dance conducted by **Capt Jeph** 'Not a Yeoman' **Jephcotte,** wearing only his boots and tight boxers. The weather was indeed a predominant factor, even to the extent that, on a very windy dark morning, it allowed **Cpl** 'Smiler' **Allen** (still suffering from his hangover) an opportunity to conduct his kite-flying class with the MT Stores Tent. It was a shame that there was no audience to view this interesting and frenzied activity.

IF YOU'VE LOST CONTACT WITH AN OLD FRIEND, WHY NOT SEND AN ENQUIRY TO THE WIRE YOU NEVER KNOW ONE OF OUR READERS MAY BE ABLE TO HELP PUT YOU IN CONTACT AGAIN

Continued on page 567

At a time when the Army is facing undermanning and overstretch
we feature our Signallers in support of

The Signal Officer in Chief's Recruiting and Liaison Staff

SIGNAL OFFICER IN CHIEF'S RECRUITING AND LIAISON STAFF

IS THE CORPS POORLY RECRUITED? DO WE HAVE A RETENTION PROBLEM? WHAT ARE WE DOING ABOUT IT?

The answer to the first two questions is a definite **YES**. But what may shock you is that we are not any worse off than the rest of the Army … at least statistically. That doesn't mean to say that things couldn't be better or that we can't be doing something about it. With this in mind four initiatives have been started with the single unifying purpose of improving the Corps recruiting.

The first initiative was aimed at those civilian companies who develop and execute the Army's recruitment campaign - the 'BE THE BEST' campaign which is now entering its second phase. It was hoped that if we could capture the Marketing Agencies' imaginations and educate them about the Corps, then we might inspire them to sell the Corps better. Five companies attended the Marketing Initiative on 10 October 2000; Saatchi & Saatchi, COI Communications, Education Communications, PMT and CMI. Their collective brief from the Army is to recruit using every available means; television, radio, newspapers, cinema, internet, brochures and educational handouts. Their success rate has been proven from the first half of the BE THE BEST campaign and as they enter phase two they need fresh ideas and closer targeting. What became apparent during the day was that these PR gurus actually knew very little about the Army, despite being responsible for publicising it! Indeed three had never seen the Field Army before. When they left that night for London they had seen possibly the biggest gathering of the Corps' equipment on Salisbury Plain for at least five years and maybe longer. They had met our soldiers and been very impressed. Conversations had taken place in the backs of 436s and Land Rovers that was informed, frank and earthy (and out of ear shot of officers). They had been left under no illusions of what the shop floor of the Corps felt about the current TV advert and more importantly what a critical role the Corps plays in the Army on operations and exercise. We believe the day can be judged a success! For now, having no previous baseline to gauge the Army upon, when these companies picture a soldier he or she will be wearing a Jimmy. Lastly it would have been a sheer waste if we hadn't seized the opportunity of having the clans gathered to improve the Corps' recruiting photos some of which you can see on this page.

The second initiative was designed to tackle the coal-face of Army Recruiting - the Armed Forces Careers Offices (AFCOs) and the Army Careers Information Offices (ACIOs). Every television or newspaper advert, every online inquiry and every brochure or leaflet has but one aim, which is to encourage young men and women to walk into an AFCO/ACIO. It is at the AFCO/ACIO that the Army's Recruiters sell a career in the Army and in particular a career in a specific Regiment or Corps. The Corps is well represented at the ACIOs and has just been allowed by Headquarters Recruiting Group (HQ RG) to place eight special recruiters in eight more offices around the country. However, there is still a lack of understanding amongst the non-Royal Signals recruiters just what the Corps can offer in terms of a career, a trade, qualifications, operational experience and enjoyment. Therefore 137 recruiters were invited down to the Royal School of Signals on 1-2 November, where over two days they were thoroughly briefed about the Corps. They too saw an impressive display of equipment and took the opportunity to talk to soldiers from all over the Corps. They left with no illusions that the Corps can offer just as much as the rest of the Army in terms of excitement and war fighting, but also that we can't be beaten for the educational and trade rewards a career in the Corps means.

Of the last two initiatives, the first has already been mentioned, that is placing eight Special Recruiters in eight more AFCO/ACIOs around the country. The other is that the Corps Executive Committee has approved the formation of a second Mobile Presentation Team. The success of the first team in reaching out to schools and colleges throughout southern England and promoting the Corps can not be praised enough. A second team will allow the Corps to visit more schools, colleges and exhibitions. The value for money of these teams will be considerable as they actively recruit purely for the Corps from an audience that is just beginning to think of future jobs and careers. It is a rewarding year for anyone who wants to work in a high profile role and who is keen to make a genuine contribution to the Corps. SORLS would like to pass on their sincerest thanks to all those who supported the Marketing Day and the Recruiters Convention. They were: 3 (UK) Div HQ & Sig Regt, 11 Sig Regt, 14 Sig Regt (EW), 21 Sig Regt, 30 Sig Regt, RSS Blandford, 1 Mech Bde HQ & Sig Sqn, 16 Air Asslt Bde HQ & Sig Sqn, 8 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn, 249 Sig Sqn (AMF(L)), 264 (SAS) Sig Sqn, 660 Sig Tp.

ROYAL SIGNALS EI RECRUITERS

SSgt Laver AFCO Newcastle Tel No: 0191 2328749	**Sgt Smith** AFCO Hull Tel No: 01482 325901	**SSgt Ryan** AFCO Nottingham Tel No: 0115 9473629	**Sgt Goldsmith** AFCO Lincoln Tel No: 01522 524097	**Sgt Lodge** ACIO Doncaster Tel No: 01302 344128	**SSgt Laffey** AFCO Norwich Tel No: 01603 632382
SSgt Shield AFCO Middlesborough Tel No: 01642 243413	**SSgt Kimber** AFCO Belfast Tel No: 01232 425717	**SSgt Irving** ACIO Kirkcaldy Tel No: 01592 202024	**SSgt Byrne** ACIO Bathgate Tel No: 0131 3193100	**Sgt Gallagher** AFCO Inverness Tel No: 01463 231520	**Sgt Brebner** AFCO Bournemouth Tel No: 01202 557734
Sgt Abbott ACIO Taunton Tel No: 01823 272272	**SSgt Callender** ACIO Ilford Tel No: 0208 5184565	**Sgt Turner** ACIO Croyden Tel No: 0208 6887226	**Sgt Davies** ACIO Colchester Tel No: 01206 578167	**Sgt McNabb** AFCO London Tel No: 0207 305 1423	**Sgt Woods** AFCO Carlisle Tel No: 01228 522873
Sgt Whalen AFCO Manchester Tel No: 0161 8358250	**SSgt Needham** ACIO Stoke on Trent Tel No: 01782 281780	**Post Gapped** ACIO Lancaster Tel No: 01524 844888	**SSgt Campbell** ACIO Warrington Tel No: 01925 631574		

ROYAL SIGNALS LSL RECRUITERS

WO2 Gass AFCO Belfast Tel No: 01232 425717	**WO1 Reeves** AFCO Belfast Tel No: 01232 425717	**WO2 Simpson** AFCO Bournemouth Tel No: 01202 557734	**WO2 Cassidy** ACIO Galashiels Tel No: 01896 758842	**WO2 Altham** ACIO Gloucester Tel No: 01452 524539	**SSgt McNally** ACIO Kirkcaldy Tel No: 01592 202024
SSgt Waldron ACIO Luton Tel No: 01582 725752	**WO2 Palmer** ACIO Middlesborough Tel No: 01642 243413	**SSgt Smith** ACIO Oxford Tel No: 01865 515989	**SSgt Hoy** ACIO Wakefield Tel No: 01924 376232	**WO2 Hayhurst** ASR Bovington Tel No: 01929 403287	**Sgt Lawton** HQ RG - Online office Tel No: 01980 868180

OPPORTUNITIES IN RECRUITING

The Corps has now been awarded the opportunity to place eight Special Recruiters at Armed Forces Careers Offices (AFCO) and Army Careers Information Offices (ACIO) around the country and also to form a second Mobile Presentation Team (1 x SNCO and 4 x JNCO).

Do you fit the Bill? Passionate about your Corps? Want to make a difference in a high profile career job?
Willing to encourage people to join the Royal Corps of Signals?

If you are a SNCO or Warrant Officer who would like a 30 month tour starting in February 2001, that includes a civilian-recognised course in recruiting at the Army School of Recruiting Bovington, and want to serve in the following AFCO/ACIOs: Birmingham, London/Blackheath, Brighton, Cardiff, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Swansea, then call **Capt (Retd) Tony Reynolds,** SO3 Soldier Recruiting on Blandford Military 94371 2132.

If you are a SNCO or a JNCO who wants to be part of the Royal Signals Mobile Presentation Team for a one year tour starting January 2001 and based in Blandford: Then call **Maj (Retd) Keith Russell,** SO3 Recruiting Support on Blandford Military 94371 2130.

Continued from page 562

Exercise briefing for a visitor

The recruits tell it like it is

Throughout all these tribulations the morale factor was kept sky high with the publication of the camp magazine 'The Chocolate Slider' (The paper that tells the Tommy the Truth!) The Slider soon became mandatory reading and was produced by the dynamic dirt diggers **Capt** 'Doddsie' **Dodds** and **2 Lt** 'Tarquin' **Gaw**. No stone was left unturned and no moral standard unsullied, recent reports suggest that the two intrepid hacks have now engaged the services of recently retired libel lawyer **George Carman QC**, in order to defend the numerous libel suits. A regular appearance in the 'Slider' was **Cpl Paula** 'Stag on' **McLean** who was consistently a leading contender for most extensive Anglo-Saxon vocabulary, brought on by a urgent desire to do as many turns in the NCRS cabin as possible. Two other Slider regulars were **SSgt** 'Netty' **McGinley** and **Sgt Andy** 'The Naked Chef' **Crawford** who constantly performed miracles with compo in providing regular banquets for the troops. Both are currently considering a line in the 'wine to water' industry.

Haute Cuisine courtesy of 51 Squadron
('Would you like fries with that?')

The last day of camp was the usual organised frenzy of clearing up with the SQMS frantically resupplying personnel with teddies to throw. One person for whom the resup came too late was **LCpl** 'Shoe' **Traynor**, who vented her anger with a swift left-hook on the unfortunate **Lt Phil** 'Sans Pantalons' **Donegan.** A long day was brought to a close with a turnaround of the kit at Chesser followed by a slap-up, candlelit 'welcome home' dinner organised by **Captain** 'Gers still in Europe' **Campbell.**

The Capital Squadron enjoy a typical meal in the JRC

In summary; a hard camp made all the worse by the weather. However, the sheer hard work and attitude of the Squadron proved that 61 Sqn is both Capital by name and Capital by nature.

Visitors to 51 Squadron on Exercise

33 SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS
CO **Lt Col E. A. Davis**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) R. D. Cowan**

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

RHQ has seen many changes in the past couple of months. **Lt Col John Steed MBE** made a memorable exit from the Regiment in a WW2 American Half Track, he has now gone 'down south' to Blandford. He will be sorely missed by everybody and we wish him and his family all the very best for the future. A warm welcome is extended to his successor **Lt Col Elton Davis** who has come from Germany and brought his family (and six horses) with him! Another new face to arrive is that of **Capt Wendy Kirby** who replaced **Capt John** ' That's the Badger' **Harrington** as Adjutant and is to replace Training Major, **Carl Sforey** when he leaves next month to join the city slickers in London. Another gap was left in the Ops Cell when **WO2 (FoS) Aidy Glover** left the Regiment to go to a job in civvy street, but fortunately **SSgt (FoS) Clapham** has been drafted in to replace him. Finally welcome to **SSgt** 'Barbie' **Smith** as the Trg SNCO in Ops who recently celebrated his 40th birthday with a special pink Barbie cake.

EXERCISE REGULAR ROSE

The Regiment has just returned from its biannual exercise where all permanent staff (both military and civilian) come together and 'bond'! Much of the bonding this time took place on a minibus as we endured the six hour journey to 14 Sig Regt in Brawdy, South Wales. However, the activities that followed more than made up for the long journey. Most of the group went Horse Riding where the CO showed all of us up, but it has to be said that **RSM Cowan** looked very at home riding 'Dolly'. **Lillian Green** (42 Sqn) was bitten almost straight away by Dolly Mixture but bravely got back on her horse and rejoined the group. **RQMS Bob Forshaw** was said to be devastated when he found out that Sea Fishing was cancelled as was **Sgt Mick Watkinson** who brought his own special rod and tackle. Their disappointment, however, was quelled by the promise of a morning Go-Karting. The testosterone was flying as an all male party took to the circuit and battled it out for a bottle of champers which was won ultimately by the CO's driver **LCpl Scott Wilson**. The day was rounded off with a ten pin bowling competition which was won by a team comprised mainly of people from the QM's department – a bit of ' creative accounting ' with the scores we ask ourselves? The week was thoroughly enjoyable and our thanks go to 14 Sig Regt for their hospitality - we can't wait for the next exercise in the new year.

EXERCISE EBOR PONCHO

A Group of eight Soldiers and Officers undertook a three-week trekking expedition to Ecuador during July. After a long and eventful journey we arrived in Quito (the capital) where a couple of days (and nights) acclimatisation were carried out. We tackled a few different types of terrain during our stay the most unpopular being the jungle as it was wet, cold and extremely muddy (See Picture One – **2Lt Ross** 'Numpty Sticks' **McLeod, Capt Bob** 'I've got the money' **Dobson, LCpl Scott** 'Anybody got an Iron?' **Wilson, 2Lt Jo** 'Anybody got any toilet roll ?' **Down, LCpl Gerry** 'I want to go home' **O'Brien** and **Capt John** 'It's the principle' **Harrington**).

We also visited the only inhabited volcano in the world that was situated in the middle of a crater. Everybody walked down the crater and became ' Warriors of the Path' apart from **Capt Bob Dobson** who tried to hire a donkey but was told by its owner that he was too large! (See Picture Two – **2Lt R. McLeod, LCpl G. O'Brien, LCpl S. Wilson, Lt A. Mayo, Sgt M. Watkinson, Capt J. Harrington, 2Lt J. Down**).

Being in Ecuador it would have been a waste not to visit the equator, so we did - and were told by **2Lt Ross Mcleod** and his trusty GPS that it was in the wrong place! (See Photo Three – **Capt J. Harrington, Capt B. Dobson, LCpl S. Wilson, 2Lt J. Down, Sgt M. Watkinson, 2Lt R. Mcleod, LCpl G. O'Brien**).

Overall the expedition was a big success, the scenery was fantastic, the trekking was challenging and the food definitely had a lasting impact on all of us!

80 SIGNAL SQUADRON
Sqn Comd **Maj M. Brown**
SSM **WO2 Hale**

EXERCISE EBOR SCRAMBLE

After a hard summer camp in Germany it was about time that the Squadron indulged in some adventure training. The above exercise took place during the first weekend in August at Indefatigable on Anglesey. Many activities took place including climbing, walking, sailing and powerboat racing. The only thing of note to report was the old sea dog **Cpl** 'Bermie' **Bermingham** doing his usual over the side – What is it with him and boats! The evening's entertainment was a BBQ followed by a visit to the delightful city of Bangor and a good time was had by all. It proved to be an excellent weekend. Special thanks to **Cpl Haddock** for doing the bar and to **SSgt Paul Langley** for organising the weekend.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The Squadron would like to say farewell to **Maj Stan Fitzgerald** who after three years as OC of the Squadron finally hangs up his boots due to work commitments. All the best to **Stan** and **Joanne** and his family for all the time and effort that he put in to the Squadron – he will be sorely missed. The new OC, **Maj Mick Brown** arrives straight from Regimental HQ, plucked from the Regimental Ops team. Welcome to the Squadron and we all hope that you have a happy and successful time here in Runcorn.

42 (CITY OF MANCHESTER) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)
Sqn Comd **Maj M. O. Cummings TD**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) G. Ward**

ADVENTUROUS TRAINING (22-23 JUL 00)

Thirty members of the Squadron took off for Keswick in the Lake District to take part in the summer adventurous training weekend. Low Grove Farm, a traditional Lakeland farm house, situated at the foot of Skiddaw and with breathtaking views of the Vale of Keswick and the Barrowdale Valley, was to be the base for our weekend of fun and fresh air.

The weekend was ably organised by **SSgt** 'Rooster' **Coburn** and the activities on offer included canoeing, trekking, climbing and mountain biking. Canoeing was particularly successful with eight members of the Sqn passing their Kayak one star test and having the official certificate and badge from the British Canoe Union to prove it. Their instructor, **Mr Bob Morris**, a constable with the Lancashire Constabulary is to be congratulated for turning complete novices into reasonable canoeists in just two days. **LCpl Stuart Green, Sig Ann Donnelly, Sig Alex Thomas, Sig Georgina Evans, Cpl Mick Hanna, OCdt Danny Fenwick, Sig Geoff Fletcher** and **Sig Servane Gouda** are all now launched on the first phase of what will hopefully become a useful and stimulating hobby. The more energetic members of the Squadron experienced the joys of hill walking under the eagle eye of 'Rooster' **Coburn** and **Sgt Alan Moore**. The weather was hot and sunny and the first days trek in the Butterdale/Ennerdale area, starting from the Honister Pass and carrying on to Buttermere village certainly got the blood coursing through the veins and the sweat flowing. By comparison the Sunday walk over Blencathra was a doddle, depending on how much of the local brew had been consumed the night before. The highlight of the weekend was the Saturday night BBQ, expertly prepared by the PSAO, **Capt Gerry Whelan**, ably assisted by **Capt Dave Titheridge** and **Cpl Brent Jefferson**.

Pictured against the beautiful background of the Vale of Keswick the equally beautiful members of 42 Sqn (V)
(L-R): Sgt Hazel Trotman. Sig Alex Thomas, Sig Ann Donnely, Sig Servane Gouda,Sig Geoff Fletcher,
Cpl Phil Jennings, LCpl Michelle Holbrook, Mr Bob Morris (Canoe Instructor) and Sig 'BJ' Smith

Two of the regular permanent staff, Cpl Dave Neal and Sgt 'Taff' Powell,
members of the Rusholme chapter of the Hells Angels, pose by the lake at Keswick

EXERCISE MANCUNIAN REVIVAL (18-20) AUGUST 2000

In advance of the Regimental centralised military training (CMT) weekend, 42 Sqn conducted a range weekend on the Catterick and Bellerby training areas to polish up the Squadrons APWT and other ITD skills. Much excellent training was achieved, with shooting on the pistol range and gallery and ETR ranges being particularly beneficial in terms of training value. Concurrent activity was carried out on the assault course, run by **Cpl Brent Jefferson** and **LCpl Sharon Blythe**, and the Command Task area, run by **Capt Dave Titheridge** and **Lt Paul Edwards**. Instructors on the ranges were the SSM, **WO2 Ward, Sgt Kevin Westall** and **SSgt** 'Rooster' **Coburn**.

Action man, Cpl Mick Hanna on the pistol range at Bellerby

LCpl Sam Hickson
proves that the girls can shoot with the best of them,
especially when personally supervised by the Sqn's Comd,
Maj Micah Cummings

COAST TO COAST CHARITY WALK(1-10 AUG 2000)

(L-R): SSgt 'Rooster' Coburn, Capt Gerry Whelan,
OCdt John Schofield and Sig Geoff Fletcher
in the rain at St Bees before the start of the coast to coast walk

Put it down to mid life crisis or temporary insanity, but the PSAO, **Capt Gerry Whelan**, suddenly decided to walk across England during the summer holiday break, to raise money for a local children's hospice. Unfortunately for three other members of the Squadron, he also wanted company! This resulted in **SSgt** 'Rooster' **Coburn, OCdt John Schofield** and **Sig Geoff Fletcher** finding themselves huddled together on a rain swept and windy beach at St Bees in Cumberland, facing the prospect of a 200 mile trek! Fortunately for them, as they followed the PSAO along the cliff tops of St Bees Head to sample the delights of coastal walking before heading inland to the western fringe of Lakeland, the skies cleared and out came the sun which was to stay with them for most of the journey.

LCpl Sharon Blythe and **Sig Alex Thomas**, formed the admin back up party and were sent ahead at the start of each leg with strict instructions to park up in the best pub car park and to negotiate showers and toilet facilities with the local landlords. At this, they proved most adept, with **Sharon Blythe** charming mostly free facilities out of the pub landlords and even persuading a couple of them to contribute money towards the sponsored charity.

The Northern coast to coast walk runs from the Irish Sea lapping the shores of Cumbria at St Bees, to where the waters of the North Sea run into Robin Hood's Bay on the Yorkshire Coast. The most difficult part comes at the beginning, which is four days of hard slog across the Lake District from St Bees via Ennerdale Bridge, Rosthwaite and Patterdale to Shap on the M6. This part really sorts the men from the boys, with leg buckling climbs over Barrowdale via the Honister Pass and such delights as the High Stile Range, Haystacks and Red Pike to contend with. However, despite **OCdt John Schofield's** feet looking like raw hamburgers, the party coped well and by the end of the fourth day, on arrival at Shap, we were starting to become fitter, and to relish (well almost) the next day's walk ahead. After the M6, when Shap was left behind and the Lake District was just a painful memory, the scenery becomes completely different, now entering the realms of limestone country on a lengthy trek to Kirkby Stephen near Warcop. On this part of the walk the party was joined by the SSM, **WO2 Graham Ward**, who had come out to give the team some moral support and stayed with the team all the way to Richmond. From Kirkby Stephen the walk crosses the watershed of Britain at the trig point of Nine Standards Rigg that is the source of the river Eden and the Swale. Once over the Pennines the walk follows old lead and iron ore mining routes to Reeth and then along Swaledale to Richmond in North Yorkshire. The only relatively boring part of the coast to coast is the 23 mile section across the Vale of Mowbray between the Dales aand the North Yorkshire Moors, which is completely flat and has a lot of hard pounding on the roads. Ingelby Cross marks the entrance to the Cleveland hills and then an unrivalled crossing of the North Yorkshire Moors with superb views lies ahead.The concluding stage finds its way along old toll roads, across tracts of heather and moorland, through old villages and pleasant woodland until at the very end, as at the beginning there is an exhilarating cliff top walk down to Robin Hood's Bay.

The walk was completed in ten days, which meant that the average distance of twenty miles a day had been covered, and that is good going in anyone's book. Almost £2,000 has been pledged by members of HQ 11 Sig Bde and 33 Sig Regt (V), as well as local business men and traders, which will go towards the upkeep of Francis House Childrens Hospice in Didsbury, Manchester. **Princess Diana** opened Francis House almost ten years ago, for children from the Northwest who have a short life expectancy. 42 Sig Sqn (V) has a special link with the hospice through a former SQMS, **SSgt Tommy Smith** who had a neice who was a patient there.

The 42 Sig Sqn (V) coast to coast party.
(L-R): OCdt John Schofield, Sig Alex Thomas,
SSgt 'Rooster' Coburn, Capt Gerry Whelan
Kneeling: LCpl Sharon Blythe and Geoff Fletcher

VIP VISIT

The Squadron had the pleasure of a visit from the new commanding Officer, **Lt Col Elton Davis** on Monday 25 September 2000, he was accompanied by the outgoing CO, **Lt Col John Steed MBE.** This was an initial flying visit to view the Manchester outpost of the Regiment and we look forward to a more formal visit once **Col Davis** has settled in. All ranks of the Squadron wish the new CO a successful and enjoyable tour with 33 Sig Regt (V) and wish **Col John Steed** the best of luck with his new appointment at Blandford.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

We bid a sad farewell to our Regular Sys Op PSI, **Sgt Chris Glover**, who has recently retired from the Army. He has landed on his feet and secured a well paid post with NTL Telecommunication in Manchester. We wish him the best of good luck in his future. **Sgt Dave Kirk** has arrived to replace him fresh from 2 Sig Regt at York. He has settled with his wife **Kate** into his quarter at Ashton Under Lyne. Also newly arrived is **Cpl Dave Neal** from 21 Sig Regt (AS), our new MT Corporal. His wife **Jo** is a serving soldier working in the COMCEN at Hereford. Shift work allowing, they see as much as they can of each other in Warrington. We wish them all a happy and successful tour with the Squadron.

59 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj C. Heaton**
SSM **WO2 B. Paterson**

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The Squadron as a whole has said goodbye to Deysbrook Barracks and has moved to a more modern purpose built TA Centre in Aintree. The move has been fraught at times but now we are settling in well and taking advantage of the many facilities that the centre has to offer. We welcome **SSgt Oldroyd** and **Cpl Thomas** to the Squadron and hope that they will enjoy their time serving with the TA.

EXERCISE ABLE CONDOR

The Squadron deployed to Germany via (coach, train and boat) in order to take part in Exercise Able Condor. The exercise was tough at times particularly for those in Trunk Node 032 who had to put up with **Cpl Foot's** constant chattering.

Sgt Hankin and LCpl McCourt look remarkably happy
they must have all of their shots in !

Cpl Foot, Sgt Samosa, SSgt Halewood, Sgt Evans, LCpl Lewis

The Squadron was safe in the knowledge that Sgt Ramejkis was looking after the vehicles (and his shopping trolley)

34 (NORTHERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

EXERCISE IMMORTAL SALIENT

Ex Immortal Salient was a 34 (N) Sig Regt (V) Battlefield Tour held over the weekend 29 September-2 October 2000. The tour was centred on the Belgian town of Ypres. Ypres and the area around it was the scene of much heavy fighting from 1914 to 1918 and provided an excellent opportunity to examine the nature of warfare and leadership with many lessons that are relevant to today. The tour had an inauspicious start as the ferry from Hull to Zeebrugge arrived two hours late, causing the organiser, **Maj Chris Jones**, to tear out clumps of his hair; hair that he can ill-afford to lose! Nevertheless the group of 29 managed to reach the town of Poperinge in time to have a guided tour of Toc H (Talbot House). Following a quick lunch, some of it eaten from laps in the minibuses, the group went to Boesinge just North of Ypres to meet people who are digging (with the Town Council's authority) in an area about to be developed. This was fascinating, particularly when one of the diggers uncovered a German grenade that had been in the ground for over 80 years and casually threw it at those watching! The ensuing comment from the QM, **Maj Les Wood** is unprintable.

Next on the itinerary were two cemeteries: a German cemetery at Langemark and Tyne Cot, the largest CWG in the world. Both proved very moving. Finally the group moved to Sanctuary Wood Museum, described by **SSgt** 'Stu' **McKinnon** as the best in the world.

Back to the hotel for a quick change to 'black tie' before attending the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate. The Regiment had been given the honour of reading the exhortation and laying the wreath. This latter was nobly done by the CO, **Lt Col Ian Westerman** and captured on print by **2Lt Paul Denning**.

The ceremony is stunning and one not to be missed, this was followed by dinner at the Hotel. Credit must be given to the 2IC, **Maj Ian Hall** and two Sqn Ocs, **Majs Graham Jenning** and 'Taff' **Watts** for organising a splendid evening. It is ironic to consider that it would be cheaper to travel to Belgium for Mess Dinners rather than stay in the UK!

The weather was beautifully crisp on the Sunday morning and **Maj Dave Sixsmith** together with **WO2** 'Ally' **James** laid a wreath at the 49 (WR) Divsional Memorial. This was followed with another wreath at the 50 Div Memorial (both Divisions have connections with the Regiment) and then back to Ypres for a tour of the Menin Gate and walk around the town ramparts.

It was a glorious autumnal day and the walk gave the participants the time to reflect on what they had seen and learnt. A trip to the 'In Flanders Fields' Museum was followed by lunch before returning to Zeebrugge and the ferry to Hull. Everyone agreed that Ex Immortal Salient had been a resounding success and was an excellent follow-up to last year's tour of Ex Market Garden in Holland. Much is gained from Battlefield Tours and it is hoped to make them an annual event for the Regimental Officers and SNCOs.

Looking towards the re-built Ypres town square,
from the Menin Gate

This is the actual transcript of a radio conversation of a US naval ship with Canadian authorities off the coast of Newfoundland in October 1995 (Assoc. Press)

Americans: Please divert your course 15 degrees to the North to avoid a collision.

Canadians: Recommend you divert YOUR course 15 degrees to the South to avoid a collision.

Americans: This is the Captain of a US Navy ship. I say again divert your course.

Canadians: No. I say again, you divert YOUR course.

Americans: THIS IS THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER USS LINCOLN, THE SECOND LARGEST SHIP IN THE UNITED STATES ATLANTIC FLEET, WE ARE ACCOMPANIED BY THREE DESTROYERS, THREE CRUISERS AND NUMEROUS SUPPORT VESSELS. I DEMAND THAT YOU CHANGE YOUR COURSE 15 DEGREES NORTH, THATS ONE FIVE DEGREES NORTH, OR COUNTERMEASURES WILL BE UNDERTAKEN TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THIS SHIP.

Canadians: This is a lighthouse. It's your call!

XXXV

35 (SOUTH MIDLAND) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

CO **Lt Col S. J. Potter, TD**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) P. Marshall**

BULLET POINTS

Continuing with the CO's quality not quantity theme the plan to organise the next two Silver Bullet weekends for late Summer and early Autumn gathered pace during August with the organising Squadrons trying desperately to outdo their predecessors. Exciting new initiatives were proposed and one or two surprises promised with each drawing short of offering a framed copy of the CO's Certificate of Efficiency just for turning up or perhaps a mention on the Regiment's new Web Site. Or other dubious inducements such as issuing a guarantee that it wouldn't rain! The recipe for these weekends was an exotic mixture of train hard and play hard, spiced up with one or two competitions a sprinkling of presentations with a few ITD's thrown in for good measure. Dessert was the evening wind down with a wide range of entertainment over a relaxing pint (gallon) of beer including (for Silver Bullet 2) some very humorous smokers - most at the expense of the permanent staff who took it straight to the heart and vowed sweet revenge!

Silver Bullet 2 took place at both Altcar and Holcombe Moor training areas during early September with the Krypton Factor Assault Course providing the training highlight and finale of a very competitive weekend. It was here that **Sgt Steve Crooks** extracted the appropriate 'Revenge Factor' and atonement from those who made him the butt of some serious humour the night before. **Sgt Crooks** who is the Regimental AIPT used the two comedians in the shapes of **Sigs Dave Profits** and **Simon Parry Hall,** as training aids/dupes as a walk through before teams attempted the course. By the time they reached the final water obstacle their misery was complete especially as they had to do it all over again as part of a team effort. Despite some magnificent and memorable team efforts from the competing five teams, 95 Sqn built up an unbeatable overall score and took the final honours as the Champion Squadron. On hand to present the award was the Honorary Colonel, **Col Brian Foxon.** Other notable visitors included Comd 11 Sig Bde, **Brig Jonathan Cook** and his Deputy, **Col Roger Davenport**. On the Saturday evening during the Officers Mess Dinner the Deputy Comd took great delight in presenting the award of the Greenhill Trophy to **Capt Peter Ayre** a thoroughly deserved award and accolade to the undoubted best subaltern in the Brigade.

Capt Peter Ayre receiving his award from the Deputy Comd

The Regiment was particularly delighted however to receive a visit from **Jane Stockdale. Jane** had made the long trip to Altcar to present the award of the Stockdale Trophy, which was conceived in fond memory of the late **Lt Col Miles Stockdale. Jane** was presented with a replica of the trophy to mark her visit and association with the Regiment. The soldier who had made the most significant contribution to the well-being of the Regiment was then presented with the trophy. The first recipient of this special and much valued award was **Cpl Wendy Geddis** of 48 Sqn. Her contribution over the years has been one of unwavering commitment, dedication and selfless devotion to duty to both the Regiment and her Squadron at the expense of her personal life. The Regiment could not find a worthier guardian of this special award and will have difficulty in finding an eventual successor. The weekend, expertly organised by **SSgt Andy Egan** and his team ended as it began with high spirits and a true sense of achievement; sadly every story has a sting in the tale and this one is no exception. The sting was provided by a lone wasp no doubt stirred by the warm sun that descended over the range at Altcar. From its point of view it must have thought that its victim **LCpl** 'Mac' **McSherry,** who was on sentry duty, had invaded its space and stung him in the neck just to make a point. The fact that he was waving around a chocolate bar had nothing to do with it. Unfortunately **LCpl** 'Mac' is allergic to wasp stings and frantically made a call for help over the range phone. The end result, field firing ceased while an air ambulance was called in to evacuate our frantic casualty to hospital. However, it all ends on a happy note because his reaction was not as severe as expected and after some expert treatment he was soon discharged from the local hospital.

Cpl Wendy Geddis receiving her award from Jane Stockdale

Silver Bullet 3, which took place at Nescliffe and Donnington in October, by contrast was a more muted affair or was it! This was an ambitious weekend that with so many activities it was difficult to keep in touch with the numerous programmed events. These included a Sergeants' Course, Recruit Induction Training, Trade Training Tests, Battle, Survival & Navigation Skills and, for the lucky few, a GPMG shoot at Kingsbury Range and a most welcome visit by the Signal Officer in Chief. All this to be followed by an intensive football competition on the Sunday – a rather solemn event following England's defeat the day before.

The Krypton Factor Death Slide

When **Capt Alex Rodgers** of 95 Squadron agreed to organise it he couldn't have known what he was letting himself in for. But by firm but dextrous planning and by calling on his former Regular Army skills he put together a weekend that flowed with energy, interest and enjoyment that was a resounding success enjoyed even by those who didn't want to be there in the first place. The SOinC, **Brig Cedric Burton,** following his briefing by the CO and Regimental Ops staff, spent the day and evening with the Regiment and by all accounts had a most enjoyable and productive day meeting and chatting to many members of the Regiment. He even had a humorous encounter with a group of soldiers at the Section Attack Stand when he asked one of the participants what big event they were looking forward to next – the swift response was 'the disco tonight sir' – exit the SOinC to the next stand. The weekend reached its successful conclusion with the much publicised and anticipated football competition on Sunday morning.

The Champion Team from 95 Sqn

Once again 95 Sqn took the honours and beat all comers to take the Regimental Sports Trophy. 95 Sqn are clearly becoming the team to beat. Yet again the weekend ended with a spot of high drama only this time it involved the gregarious and garrulous **Cpl Wink Watson** of 58 Sqn. After a particularly rough tackle **Wink** was stretchered off the pitch with a suspected broken ankle and this time the paramedics had to be called to evacuate our hapless casualty to the local hospital. Unfortunately (for **Wink** that is) they had to remove the shin guard which was strapped to his leg which caused the most severe pain and distress to poor **Wink** who was also having to deal with the black humour of his team mates at the same time. Consequently they had to administer gas and air to ease the pain and **Wink** lost consciousness for a few seconds – some bright spark commented that it was the first time ever they had seen him quiet for more than five seconds. By the way his injury had no effect on the final result and he is now well on the road to recovery.

BREAKAWAYS

This was also the time of the year when all Squadrons shed their military training commitments to organise adventurous or activity weekends as a short but welcome break away from the rigours of the military training programme. The major adventurous training event of the year was of course Ex Pioneer Dragon, which took place in the USA over the period 9 – 29 September and involved an expedition that embraced the Grand Canyon, the Sequoia National Park, and the Yosemite National Park. The expedition was organised by the Adjt, **Capt Bob Lovett.** While 89 Sqn would have dearly loved to have their weekend jaunt overseas they had to console themselves with a visit to the Liverpool area over the weekend 29-30 July on Ex Stark Initiative. What follows is a brief but stark and somewhat startling report by **Sgt Colin Marshall.**

MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR

Members of 89 Sqn about to embark on a Magical Mystery Tour

Ex Stark Initiative was an imaginative weekend designed to improve confidence, communication, and social and general blagging skills. The weekend, which was held in the Liverpool area and at Altcar Training Area, was the follow up to a very successful Survival/Escape and Evasion Exercise. This time members of the Squadron had to perform various initiative tests and tasks around the city centre of Liverpool. The weekend started off well on Friday night by the mad scally **SSgt Andy Egan,** the bald headed loafer from Liverpool, creating a totally unbelievable impersonation of Sharon Stone. He was joined in an Oscar winning performance given by **LCpl Dave Jones** who gave an incredibly convincing performance as the bunny on the boil in a skit from the film Fatal Attraction. Well as they say one sketch led to another and **SSgt Charlie Walker** brought the house down with his impression of TVs Naked Chef, as a consequence sausages and the yellow mellow custard for the evening were quickly taken off the menu – and this was only Friday night! After a hard days night Saturday morning soon came round simply because we had been up most of the night and it was time for the Initiative Phase to begin. Teams were deposited in different locations around Liverpool and had to work their way around the city to complete a multitude of devious tasks that were both demanding and in some cases exhausting. **Sig Claire Sam el,** who was given the impossible task of finding a Blackbird singing in the dead of night, had her annual foot wash in the fountain next to the Wellington Monument whilst heavyweight champion **Sgt Colin Marshall** did his Rocky impression on the Museum steps – imagine that! Meanwhile an inconsolable **Cfn Jasper Green,** who is a Marine Engineer, failed to get a ticket to ride the Ferry across the Mersey so his team lost points on skills fade, but he got by with a little help from his friends. Notable near successes included **LCpl Richie Teale** and **Sig Ian Townsend** who so nearly got to play at the Everton Football Ground but failed the blagg, as they could not string a sentence together let alone a decent pass.

More marginally successful were **LCpl Liz J dge** and **Sig Dave** 'The Rave' **Proffitt** who visited the haunts of the Beatles and give an impromptu rendition of 'Get Back' and 'The Long and Winding Road' in the Cavern Club before being thrown out. Saturday night was looming and after an excellent Barbecue cooked by Rugby's celebrated Naked Chef all the participating troops donned the latest cross dress fashions. This included **Cpl** 'Prof' **Profitt** who had to wear a stunning burgundy satin bridesmaid dress complete with wig, tiara and rose pettled fan to celebrate his forthcoming marriage. It was something in the way he moved that made him look like a Fairy from across the Mersey. A memorable night on the town came to an end all too soon and at the crack of midday on Sunday. **Sgt Steve Crooks** sprung a surprise orienteering competition through the sand dunes at Southport. He assured us that this was just to shake off the cobwebs before our return to Rugby but we suspect the ulterior motive was to try and find the fiver he lost the day before. We didn't find the money nor half of the markers but it was a fitting end to a great weekend – but remember Steve money can buy you anything but it can't buy you love! A little bit up the road and to the left a bit you would have also found a group from 48 Sqn having a whale of a time in the Lake District on Ex Lake Placid during the weekend 18 – 20 August. What follows is **Lt Andy St rt's** account of 48 Sqn's break to the lake.

I CAN'T STAND THE RAIN BUT IT BRINGS BACK MEMORIES

The Exercise, which was mainly a navigation exercise designed to take in the breathtaking beauty of the Lake District, started with an arduous trek across the hills surrounding Ambleside. Each student (no exceptions) took turns to navigate our group along a pre-planned route the aim of which was to practise navigation skills in an area of moderate wilderness. When the weather closed in at lunchtime these skills were to be put through a severe test. Sheet rain, which is typical of the Lake District in its suddenness and persistence, lashed down and the group was left to steer its way through what was now thick cloud cover and torrential rain. Fortunately the weather cleared just as quick as it descended, which was a relief, as we had to encounter one or two treacherous rock faces and falls. Happily no one fell over a Crag and we resolved to find the fastest route back to the car park to re-plot the route. The group then split into two for the final leg. The group taking the lower route was soaked by another torrential downpour while the group taking the higher leg was battered by a severe hailstorm (all this and Summer to). Ironically the weather for the rest of the exercise was excellent. That night a small celebration was held for the birthdays of two of the officers on the exercise with excellent cuisine provided by **SSgt Jim H bbard** who proved once again that you can achieve small miracles with compo. Sunday morning was spent orienteering around Williamson Park in Lancaster. Now, while there were no major calamities yours truly was seen disappearing up a rock face muttering that 'the damned control must be around here somewhere'. A little later **Capt Simon Glover** was discovered cunningly camouflaging control markers in order to gain extra seconds over the opposition, an action that we will make sure returns at some suitable stage in the future to haunt him! Once **Sig Martha Kyle** had been rescued from the Butterfly Sanctuary it was back onto the M6 for the return journey home. Unconfirmed rumours that the snoring from the back of the mini-bus was so loud that the Environment agency was notified are completely refuted and unfounded – well it kept the driver awake and that's all that matters.

REGIMENTAL ROUND-UP

For the third successive year the Regiment was responsible for sponsoring the Army's contribution to the City of Birmingham Discovery Day held in the ICC on Sun 8 August. This was an important image event

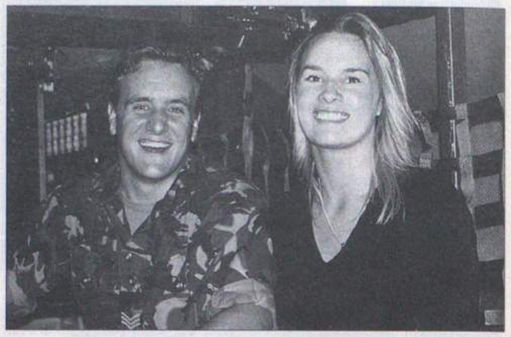
with units from throughout the West Midlands, including the Regiment, putting on lavish displays for members of the public. Special visitors on the day including the Right Worshipful Lord Mayor of Birmingham, **Cllr Teresa Stewart** and her consort. The CO, **Lt Col Stephen Potter** met the Lord Mayor and her consort and escorted them around all the military stands.

The CO with the Lord Mayor and her consort

The Comd 143 Bde, **Brig Andrew Meek,** also made a whistle stop tour and managed to chat to all participants before he left. It also proved a memorable day for **Cpl Jackie Sheldon** who, having been forcibly dragged from her stand to participate, won a flower arranging competition and was presented with a bottle of champagne by the ICC Director of Events.

Cpl Jackie Sheldon with her winnings (not incl Cpl Adrian Proffitt)

Elsewhere in the Regiment fundraising efforts have gathered pace with 48 Squadron heavily involved in Airborne Adventure. Airborne Adventure is a charity project specifically established to offer sick children the opportunity to participate in activities that might otherwise be unavailable to them and also to raise funds to both promote and host future events. 48 Sig Sqn hosted such a weekend at Tenby in Wales during August that included children from the BCH. **Sgt Eileen Monaghan** commented that all the soldiers involved were humbled to see at first hand children with a variety of disabilities and medical conditions overcoming considerable adversity, but were delighted to have been able to help if only in a small way. A team from the Regiment headed by members of 89 Sqn will soon be making their way North to participate in the Great North Run to raise money for the outright purchase of a Guide Dog for the Blind.



Sgt Martin Walton with a visitor (or his girlfriend!)

So far over £1000 has been raised so they are well on target to achieving their final goal – but more about this in the next edition of the Wire. Meanwhile **Cpl Jean Parr** of 58 Sqn is actively preparing to make a sponsored solo bike effort to raise money for the NSPCC in Stoke on Trent and we hope to have a report on her efforts soon. Turning away from such activities one or two changes have also taken place within the Regiment and we have bade a particular sad farewell to **Maj Tudor Hill** our outgoing Training Major and extended a warm welcome to **Maj Mick Boxall** his replacement. A further welcome was also extended to **Sgt** 'DB' **De-Burgh** who is taking up the reins of SPSI in 89 Sqn following a tour in NI.

The Handover/Takeover

Orienteering continues to feature prominently in the Regiments run of sporting successes with teams from the Regiment achieving runner up status in the 5 Div Minor Units Championships and the East of England Minor Units Championships. All team members are warmly congratulated on their commendable efforts. Finally a special congratulation has been reserved for that sporting stalwart **SSgt Dave Arnot** on his presentation of the Army Referees Meritorious Service Award. Very well done!

'Squarks' are problem listings that pilots generally leave for maintenance crews to fix before the next flight. Here are some squarks submitted by US Air Force pilots and the replies from the maintenance crews..... P = Problem S = Solution

P	Left inside main tyre almost needs replacing	S	Almost replaced left inside main tyre
P	Test flight OK, except autoland very rough	S	Autoland not installed on this aircraft
P	#2 Propeller seeping prop fluid	S	#2 Propeller seepage normal-#1 #3 and #4 propellers lack normal seepage
P	Something loose in cockpit	S	Something tightened in cockpit
P	Evidence of leak on right main landing gear	S	Evidence removed
P	DME volume unbelievably loud	S	Volume set to more believable level

(Continued on Pag 579)

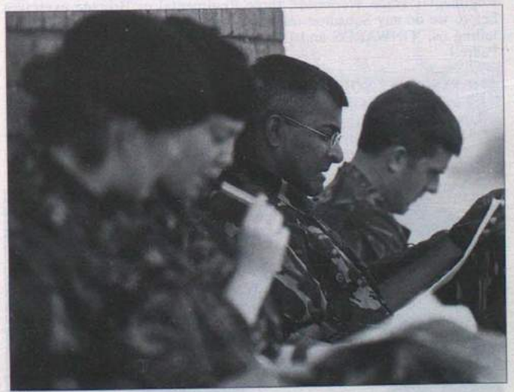
36th (EASTERN) SIGNAL REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON – *by Capt (PSAO) Ernie Feasey*

Sqn Comd **Maj P. J. Minshall**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) A. C. Wells**

The Squadron continues to go from strength to strength (i.e., we are recruiting hard), and is performing well. We have just returned from an extremely busy Annual Camp at Castle Martin ATE in Wales, where the Squadron provided the administrative support for the Regiment. We carried out the whole gamut of military and trade training in a tight and cohesive programme - in the end the Squadron, and LAD, gained an enormous amount from the fortnight, with seven more HGV qualified individuals, three new Tech Sup Specs, one new R SIGNALS Electrician and three new Area System Ops (Radio). Well done to all of them for their hard work leading to trade qualifications.

Anyone familiar with the organisation of the Regiment will recall that we used to have 746 AMC in Ilford pre- SDR; post SDR this Troop has moved to 44 (CP) Sig Sqn (V) at Grays and Southend, and in exchange the Squadron has gained the CNR Radio Troop of the Regiment which was reformed at Ilford for Annual Camp and renamed as 817 (Radio) Troop. The number 817 is historic within the Regiment as it was a Radio Relay Troop within 36 Sig Regt (V) when it was formed at Ilford in 1969 'in the good old days of C41's and fish fryers'. Its resurrection has been the pet project of the OC who has fond memories of those 'good old days', but of course he is showing his age these days (more of that later). In terms of personalities, **LCpl Ramish Manickavasagan** disappeared to Swansea a couple of years ago to study for a degree in accountancy, which he gained this year. However, he did not waste his time there, he undertook an attachment to the Wales UOTC whilst there and when he eventually reappeared with the Squadron, it was via RMAS as **2Lt R. Manickavasagan** R SIGNALS(V). We have been fortunate enough to retain his services at the first Tp Comd of 817 (Radio) Tp. He has the congratulations of the whole Squadron on his achievement (as well as the disbelief of some of his former contemporaries). In the meantime, he intends to go into the City and earn Mega-Bucks (his words) counting the money of big business. Just to maintain solidarity, **WO2 (FofS) Mick Meddeman** seized the opportunity and was granted a direct commission as the new TOT.



2Lt Manickavasagan during young officer training, desperately trying to decide whether to phone a friend, go 50-50 or ask the audience

In addition to **Mr Manickavasagan** and the shiny new **Capt Meddeman**, we welcome two additional recruits to the Sqn and 817 Tp, **Sig's Jade Painter** and **Sig Jagdeep Sanger**. **Pte Tracy Harrington** RAMC has joined the RMO (to train him, or so she says) and another warm welcome is extended to **OCdt Emma Powell** who has transferred from Manchester UOTC. Finally, **Sig Kate Crockford** of 54 Sig Sqn has 'seen the light', decided to become a Chef and is transferring to the Squadron and RLC as we write. Welcome to the madhouse, all of you. Farewells go to **WO1(SWVO) Mick Grimshaw** who has departed to 44(CP) Sig Sqn to take up the post of NRPS SQMS; we welcome his successor, **WO1 (SVWO) Les Scott** from 54 Sig Sqn (V). **Sig Glen Thompson** has moved back to the North, and 34 Sig Regt (V), whilst **Sig Denise Owen** has decided to move to the RGJ(V) in West Ham. Finally, the outgoing TOT, **Capt Alan Newbury,** has decided that retirement was not necessary just yet and moved to 54 Sig Sqn (V) as a Squadron Officer.

ANNUAL CAMP 2000
CASTLE MARTIN ARMY TRAINING ESTATE
2-16 SEPTEMBER 2000

For the last two or three years, the Regiment has been deployed on exercises in Germany, and therefore while we had got used to getting our duty frees, the chance to 'rest' and to undertake the first UK camp was welcomed, as it would provide the opportunity for concentrated trade, military and adventurous training. It would also be a chance for the Regiment to practise just being a Regiment with all the normal peace time duties, both social and administration, in a normal garrison environment. The programme included formal dinners, for both the Officers and Sergeants Messes, and an all ranks function prior to the R&R day; all were well attended and extremely successful.

Deployment to camp went well, despite the requirement for the Padre, **Maj David Eaton**, to drive the PSAO, **Capt Ernie Feasey** (despite his best efforts to escape it) through the darkest expanses of Wales. The Padre apparently has a penchant for driving cars down flights of steps, which has given him an unfortunate reputation as a driver. Luckily all went well on the actual deployment (or so the Padre says) although the PSAO, a hardened smoker but confirmed tee-totaller, arrived at Camp as a non-smoker who wished that he was a hardened drinker!! Other highlights of the deployment were the RMO, **Maj John Jenkins** (a consultant Psychiatrist in civilian life) ably assisted by **Cpl** 'Ginnie' **Brown AGC** being utilised as Traffic Wardens at Membury Services to direct the Regiment through the staging area - there were lots of comments about 'cutting up' etc. **Capt Mick Meddeman** in the ERV was seen trying to take out a rather awkward car driver who persisted in getting between him and the vehicle in front and than slowing down, an appointment with the RMO to discuss 'Road Rage' or behavioural control is on the cards.

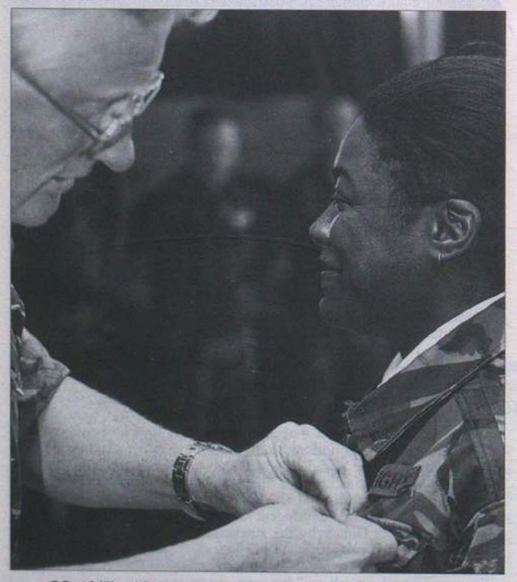
The deployment to Castle Martin was well planned, and after the realisation that the camp area was vast, and the need to cover ground on routine tasks was the equivalent of a CFT, all of the closet cyclists 'came out'. Many strange contraptions with two wheels were loaded onto unit tpt, including the OC's bike. After several hours of hard riding, the OC resigned himself to continuous discomfort around the nether regions for the duration - the peculiar gait he adopted and the constant need to adjust certain parts of his uniform to relieve the pressure caused some comment and hilarity - however, he wishes all to be reassured that the 'family jewels' remain intact, albeit a little warm (or is it worn). One conclusion the OC has reached is that he definitely is not as young and resilient as he used to be, this was evidenced on the many occasions that he tried to demonstrate his ability to bounce back after PT. Even as a spectator he developed aches, pains and stiffness over most of his body, which required the varied ministrations of the RMO, **Pte Harrington** or anyone else who he thought might have sympathy for his plight - however his perpetual limp and rubbing of sore parts was seen to be a bit of a bluff when he could not remember which foot to limp with. His excuse was it was so sore that he couldn't make up his mind? His decision to go horse riding was evidence enough of someone in denial about lost youth, he suffered injury to his dignity and nether regions (again) when he lost control of the poor animal, whose whole day was spoiled by the rather large gentleman imposed on her (We are still talking about a horse, aren't we Ernie?). Other incidents over the fortnight which served to relieve the pressure and lighten the load occurred, one which a Corporal who shall remain nameless, managed to send a post card to the 'love of his life' full of loving messages and endearments. He forgot two vital things, to put a 'TO' address on the card, and the efficiency of the post office in returning the card to our post room the following day - nice one! The inability of the MT Sergeant, **Sgt** 'Babs' **Babester** to read a map is legendary, a fact which puts him on the defensive and which he is in denial about. We, however, now have ample ammunition after several interesting journeys undertaken by him to pursue this attribute to the death.

A certain MT NCO **(LCpl Ellis)** who returned from detail with an empty car at the height of the fuel crisis to be told to go away and fill it up, he took it literally and spent 3 leisurely hours including dinner out looking for fuel, leaving the OC stranded - you can picture the scene, when the wanderer actually returned - take one large, robust, irate Major (a former Warrant Officer) and one errant Lance Corporal, light the fuse and retire to a safe distance - needless to say, the thunder heard over the camp that evening had nothing to do with the weather. Another notable event at Camp for the Squadron was the visit of the Mayor of Redbridge, **Cllr Barbara Hoskins** and her husband **Tom**. Redbridge is the major Recruiting Area for RHQ and HQ Sqn, and the Mayor managed to meet most of the Ilford based contingent whilst visiting Regimental Training and was hosted at Dinner by the Regimental Officers. During her visit she expressed a keen interest in the Squadron, and took the time and trouble to speak to as many of its members as possible - Redbridge is a very supportive borough and the visit, given the time and distance the Mayor travelled, was much appreciated by all Squadron members.

The Mayor of Redbridge, Councillor Barbara Hoskins
with members of the Squadron at the Trade Training field location
Rear (R-L): Sig Mann and Sig Hill
Sitting (R-L): Sig Pearce and Sig Meredew,
Standing (R-L): LCpl McIntosh, Sig Mannion, Councillor Hoskins,
Lt Col Brown
Kneeling is Sig Columbine

Other visitors included Comd 49 (East) Bde - **Brig D. R. Wilson**, Dep Comd 49 (East) Bde - **Col S. A. G. Abrahams TD**, Comd 11 Sig Bde - **Brig J. R. B. Cook**, Deputy Comd 11 Sig Bde - **Col R. Davenport TD** and the Bishop to the Armed Forces, who all took the opportunity of visiting the troops during training.

Our Master Chef, **SSgt Norma Miller-Kight** RLC, is normally a switched on cookie (excuse the pun), but when she was summoned to the WO's & Sgts Mess by the RSM she was definitely not expecting to be presented with her Territorial Efficiency Medal by Comd 49 (East) Bde, **Brig Wilson** - to say she was surprised is an understatement. The whole Squadron congratulates her on the well deserved and hard earned medal.



SSgt Miller-Kight receives her Territorial Efficiency Medal
from the Comd 49 (East) Bde, Brig D. R. Wilson

A notable addition to the Squadron Team before Camp 2000 was **Sgt Les Eldridge** who rejoined the TA and took up the appointment of Sqn SQMS; he has proven to be an asset who has more than justified his admission to the Sqn Club. A former member of the old 39 Sig Regt (V), he has fond memories of parachuting days, and he and the SSM, **WO2 Tony Wells** (another ex-39 Sig Regt (V) man) form a small clique to reminisce about the blue badge of courage whenever possible. On the recovery, however, they suffered a severe case of de ja vu when we diverted to Hullavington Airfield (now an RLC barracks) to refuel. This really allowed them to swing the lamp about the good old days. However, we have now caught on, the good old days means that they are now TOO OLD to do the things they did then, and in fact are looking forward to their pension books. The LAD, although a separate establishment, is an integral part of the Squadron and is currently thriving, having the luxury of being nearly 100 % recruited. Our picture shows **Pte Dave Edwards** RLC and **Cfn Paul Edwards** REME, two brothers who joined the LAD after the TA Open Day in March as a Dvr/Operator and Veh Mech respectively, tinkering with (sorry, repairing) a vehicle during Annual Camp.

We now look forward to a busy Winter training season, with six Regimental Trade Weekends, three Regimental or Brigade exercises before we do any Squadron training - but as our erstwhile leader keeps telling us, 'ONWARDS and UPWARDS', perhaps he thinks he is the Padre!!

44 (CP) SIGNAL SQUADRON
VISIT OF COL DAVENPORT, DEP COMD 11 SIG BDE

Grays TAC was the venue for the visit by **Col Davenport**, Dep Comd 11 Sig Bde. After the usual high level meetings involving the CO, OC and Troop Commanders, the Colonel went on to 'press the flesh' with the majority of the soldiers within the Squadron, including several recruits.

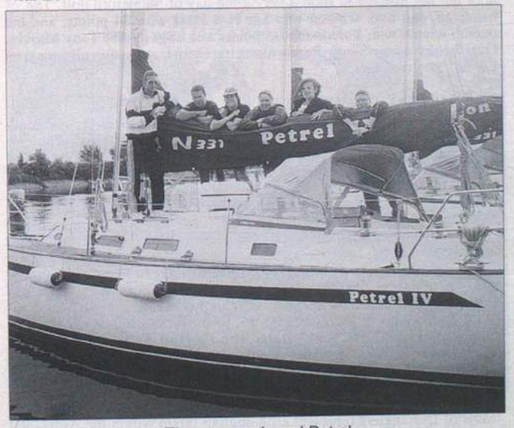
LCpl Lee and Colonel Davenport, deep in conversation

He was also invited to try his hand on the .22 range shoot, which had been arranged as a competition between the two rival TA Centres within the Squadron, Grays and Southend. Although the result of this competition shall remains a closely guarded secret, suffice it to say that the Deputy Commander was most delighted with his own scoring (he certainly surprised a few of the younger members of the Squadron). As the Colonel stated afterwards, it was all about the employment of experience, the marksmanship principles and a newly sharpened pencil.

The Deputy Commander proudly shows off his target card
In attendance is Sgt Child, who later went on to say that
it was certainly no 'Micky Mouse' competition!

EXERCISE TIGER ISLANDS – *by LCpl Keirsty Shaw*

It was a hot sunny August Sunday that we all met at Grays TAC. The minibus was packed with possessions and people squeezed aboard as we set off for Dover. Once at Calais, we set off across the continent, arriving in Kiel, Northern Germany at 0530hrs. A few hours of shuteye were had, provisions transferred to the boat, safety briefs given and oilies collected with laughter of, 'Do we really need these?' as the sun beat down on our heads. After going through basic boat handling skills we set sail for Marstal, our first port of call. We had a good introductory shake out sail with the weather fair and the sea kind to the novices' stomachs.



The crew on board Petrel
(L-R): SSgt (YofS) John Bagnell, Cpl Windy Gale,
SSgt Anita Smith, LCpl Keirsty Shaw, Sig Katy Crockford
and Sig Andy Cole

Next stop Haderslev, a long 45 mile sail. On route man overboard drills were carried out. **LCpl Keirsty** 'Bowline Queen' **Shaw** tried to bribe the skipper and wedge herself into a corner until a bucket and buoy were produced as the training aids, which were later recovered quickly and safely. We left Haderslev in sunshine for Sonderborg to be hit by high winds and torrential rain. A foresail change was required and **YofS SSgt John** 'Tweak em' **Bagnell** and **Sig Katy** 'Paddlemaster' **Crockford** were sent forward for a wet and rocky experience at the mercy of the elements.

THE EDITOR IS ALWAYS EAGER TO RECEIVE INTERESTING SUBMISSIONS FOR PUBLICATION

SSgt (YofS) Bagnell at the helm
with Sig Katy Crockford in support

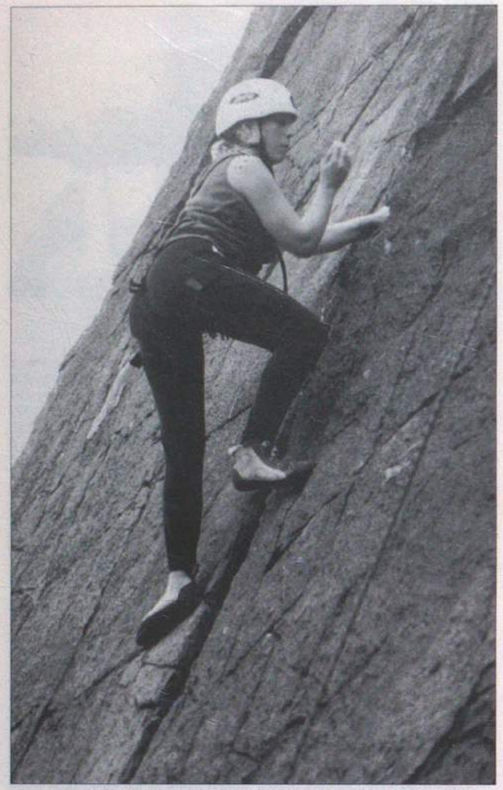
We slipped Sonderborg with the by now SOP's applying – leave harbour, don oilies! We headed for a sheltered cove for anchoring and dinghy drills, with a fresh breeze making controlling the dinghy hard at the best of times. Various methods of rowing were invented **Sig Andy** 'Colgate Grin' **Cole** with his knees in his armpits found the going hard, **LCpl Keirsty** 'Bowline Queen' **Shaw** found it easier once she realised the pointy end went first! With **Sig Katy** 'Paddlemaster' **Crockford** doing well as long as you wanted the dinghy to go downwind. We waited for darkness to fall before setting sail for our night sail to Faaborg. With lights twinkling **LCpl** 'Bowline Queen' **Shaw** disappeared to check the charts only to reappear as we entered the harbour, rubbing her eyes asking, 'Are we there yet?' It was 0400hrs before we were safely moored and a tired crew went to bed. On route to our last port of call Svenbourg the skipper **Cpl** 'Windy' **Gale**, who had been forced to follow our healthy eating regime, voluntarily asked for salad and yogurt within 10mins of each other; we knew we could convert him! Once everyone had recovered from the shock, gladrags were donned and a cultural visit to the town was embarked upon. Various forms of the squaddie 2 step were performed before everyone made their way home in the early hours. Once back in Kiel, the boat was cleaned until it gleamed, then the nerves started as the Competent Crew tests began. There were no worries though and everyone passed. Then a tired but happy crew, wedged back in the minibus for the 12hr cabby home, while the sun, for the first time all week, shone hot and bright!

CAMP 2000 ADVENTUROUS TRAINING - *by SSgt Anita Smith*

Some were lucky enough during annual camp to get away from trade and driver training to take part in adventure training. There were four different activities; coastal path walking, mountain biking, kayaking and rock climbing. Coastal path walking was a mini exped with each group covering 30 miles in two days with an over night stop at a camp site to rest their weary legs and blistered feet. Many found the walks challenging but all found it interesting due to **Lt Simon Carvel** who was the instructor. The scenery was breathtaking and many of the city dwellers saw wildlife such as seals for the first time.

Capt Gordon Shelley QM(V) giving a royal wave on his descent

We were lucky enough to have two instructors from the REME, **Cpl Daz Freestone** and **Cpl Marcus Adams** to take some excellent kayaking. During the days paddling many different games and tests were set. Some being accomplished with more easy then others, and with some people staying drier than others! For instance **WO2 Drew Johnson** was convinced that another kayak could not be piled on top of him, how wrong you can be. As the water crept further up his body the seventh kayak hoisted on top, the task was achieved and a relieved AQMs refloated!



Sig Juliet Bland stopping to check for broken nails!

SSgt Gerry McGachy who took the rock climbing lowered his students down to a ledge and with the sea next to them the only way out was up! Many people were able to combat their fears of heights to some degree to climb up the face. Whilst other more proficient climbers enhanced their skills and conquered hard climbs due to **Gerry's** instruction.

45 SIGNAL SQUADRON - A SHORT (ISH) HISTORY

The present Squadron was formed in 1967 and has SHQ and two Troops based at Colchester, and two further Troops based at Warley near Brentwood. The Squadron can, through its antecedents, trace its history back to the 16th Century, just before the current PSAO joined up. 45th (Essex) Sig Regt and 54th (East Anglian) Sig Regt both spring from the same source. In 1559 Queen Elizabeth of England issued instructions for the muster of a regular 'City of London Militia' as part of the 'Trained Bands' of soldiers. One of these was the Tower Hamlets Regiment - an element that later became the Royal Corps of Engineers. In 1660 a new Militia replaced all but the City of London trained bands, but in 1794 all were abolished. However, some companies of volunteers in the Tower Hamlets division were later revived, and in 1798 a dozen volunteer 'associations' were formed as part of the Tower Hamlets. It was in 1868 that the 2nd Tower Hamlets RE were raised, and a section of this unit served with 26 Field Company RE in the Boer War. 1885 saw the Tower Hamlets Engineer Volunteers as the nearest arm taking administrative responsibility for Bedford Grammar School Cadet Engineer Corps. The Corps flourished and in 1900 it was proposed to raise an Engineer Corps in Bedford, and so it was that in the spring of the same year the 1st Bedfordshire RE (Volunteers) were raised.

On the inauguration of the Territorial Army in 1907, the 1st Bedfordshire RE (Volunteers) became the East Anglian Divisional RE, which included a Divisional Telegraph Company. This Company, the 54th Divisional Signal Company, was mobilised and dispatched to Gallipoli in 1914; they subsequently served in Egypt and Palestine until the end of the war. Disbanded in 1919, in 1920 the Company was reformed as an independent unit and titled 54th (East Anglia) Divisional Signals TA with its HQ at Stretford, East London and a sub unit at Bedford. In 1939, with the threat of war looming on the horizon, the Government ordered the expansion of the TA. The 54th recruited enough volunteers to form a duplicate Regiment, and as such they were assimilated into 4th Division and served with it until the cessation of hostilities. At the start of the World War 2 the 4th Division Signals (formerly 54 Div Sigs) went to France and Belgium with the British Expeditionary Force, but was evacuated back to England from Dunkirk. It was subsequently sent to North Africa in 1943, and went on operations in Italy and Greece from 1944 until the end of the war. Then, as 4th Division Signals, the Regiment was disbanded. Meanwhile the 'duplicate' 54th Divisional Signals Regiment, referred to above, was allotted to the 54th Division, but not before this Regiment had, in turn, recruited sufficient volunteers to form a triplicate Regiment! In 1944 the Division, complete with the Signals Regiment, was placed in suspended animation.

In 1947, when the TA was reformed, the War Office decided to raise two Regiments in East Anglia. Many of the Officers and men who joined were from the original 54 (East Anglian) Signals, its duplicate and triplicate that had all been placed in suspension in 1945. The two Regiments formed were, during the next twenty years, to become 45th (Essex) and 54th (East Anglian). Following a re-organisation of the TA in 1957 (does that sound familiar?), 1st (Essex) Sig Regt TA was formed and given permission to wear the Essex Coat of Arms as a shoulder flash. This was in recognition of the long association that its former unit had formed with the County of Essex. In 1959 all Signal Regiments were renumbered and the unit became 45th (Essex) Sig Regt TA. This association was marked in 1951 by adoption as the Borough of Wanstead and Woodford's Regiment. In 1963 the Regiment was granted the Freedom of the Borough and this was passed to 36th Signal Regiment (Volunteers) in 1967 and confirmed by the new Borough of Redbridge in 1972. In 1967 45th (Essex) Regiment was reduced to a Squadron and re-titled 45th (Essex) Signal Squadron (Volunteers).

ANNUAL CAMP 2000 - GOLF REPORT

by our golfing correspondent, NRPS SSgt (SQMS) Ron Russell

It was Annual Camp, it was our day off, so it had to be golf! Fifteen sets of clubs appeared as if by magic, and off we pinged to South Pembrokeshire Golf Club. The field was varied, from **Maj Dave** 'Zorro' **Watson** to **WO2 (RQMS) Eddie** 'The Eagle' **Kikas**, and was composed of three balls, four balls (and at times five balls, when the Adjt, **Capt Russel Edwards**, twice put a ball through the front group whilst waving and shouting 'Cor Blimey, I didn't know I could hit the ball that hard!). On a strange course the incidents came thick and fast: 'Eddie the Eagle' scores five points on one hole - terrific; then loses three balls on a par three - terrible! **SSgt Gerry** 'Megaphone' **McGachy** records his very first par, and even without a scoreboard those players' three holes in front heard all about it. The RSM, **WO1 Dougie Eaglesham**, starts slowly but picks up on the back nine (normally after his eighth shot of the hole). **Capt Gordon Shelley** has two blobs on the last two holes, it couldn't possibly be handicap protection could it, and **Maj Pete Minshell** fills the whole course for four hours (Sorry, in joke). A bit of misty rain in the last hour did not manage to spoil a very good day of Stableford golf. The 24 handicap, and over winner, was **Sgt Kev East** with 24 points, and the overall winner with a creditable 35 points was **SSgt (YofS) Tony Martin**. Our thanks go to South Pembrokeshire Golf Course for allowing us Forces rate green fees.

REGIMENTAL FISHING TEAM

Five members of 36 Sig Regt(V), managed to qualify for the army angling festival week, held at Hallcroft fisheries near Retford. The five were **SSgt** 'Jim' **Pollitt, SSgt** 'Billy no fish' **Dale, Sgt** 'Kev' **East, LCpl** 'Martin' **Woolard** and finally **LCpl** 'J.R. Hartley' **Hazelton.** The first match of the festival was held on the Monday. This was the Clubman Competition. This event is aimed at anglers who have not fished for their respective Corps, or for the Army. The event was a success for **SSgt** 'Jim' **Pollitt** who finished first in his section, and fourth overall. The second day was the Inter Corps Championships. The Regimental anglers did well in this event with **SSgt** 'Jim' **Pollitt** representing the Corps for the first time and finishing fourth in his section. **Sgt** 'Kev' **East** did extremely well and won his section. This helped the Royal Signals to finish runners-up in the competition.. In third place came the REME, represented by **SSgt** 'Tony' **Dale.** The third day was the Inter Unit Championships. This was fished on the river Idle a few miles away from the Halcroft farm venue. The river didn't produce the catches that people were anticipating, so the match was quickly forgotten.

The Thursday match was the President's Shield. In this match three teams of five anglers represent each angling group within the Army, and our Regiment fished in group one. **Sgt** 'Kev' **East** was selected to represent the red team in our group and managed to finish third overall. While this match was going on the other four member of the Regiment were on another lake showing the Army Angling Federation President, **Maj Gen Irvine**, how to fish. **LCpl** 'Martin' **Woolard** introduced the President to the art of pole fishing. **SSgt** 'Tony' **Dale** even managed to give the President a few tips on float fishing.

The final two days of the festival are the Army Angling Individual championships. Day One was a success for **Sgt East** who finished first in his section. **SSgt Dale** also had a good result and managed to finish sixth in his section. With these results there was the possibility that a Regimental angler could manage a top ten finish. Day Two was an awful day. It was cold, windy and it didn't stop raining once. **Sgt** 'I could catch a fish in a puddle' **East** managed to finish sixth in his section. After an agonising wait, the final results were announced. **SSgt Dale** finished in the top 30, which is no mean feat as he only started match fishing this year. **Sgt East** finished third overall, picking up some very nice silverware, confirming his position as one of the best anglers in the Army.

A final note must be said for **LCpl** 'J.R. Hartley' **Hazelton,** who managed to finish third in Saturday's Open Shield. This is an event open to those anglers who did not qualify for the individual championships. Everyone was most impressed with his angling skill, until it was found out how he caught his fish. He later told us that he had gone three hours without a single bite. Due to boredom he fell asleep for the next hour and half. He managed to wake up with only ten minutes of the match remaining. On waking up, he noticed that the end of his rod was going round. A quick strike and two minutes later 'JR' had landed a nice Perch, which was to be his only fish of the day. This one fish managed to get **LCpl** 'John' **Hazelton** third in the match. Who said fishing was just luck!!!!

NEWS FROM 54 SIGNAL SQUADRON

On 2 September, 36 Sig Regt departed for Castlemartin Camp ATR in South Wales for Annual Camp. We moved away from the normal Brigade Exercise this year, and the fortnight revolved around trade training, driver training, adventurous training and a range package. 54 Sqn had a few promotions during camp, the deserving recipients being: the Ops Officer **Lt Glen Baker** (from SSgt), **Lt Roz Keegan** OC 757 Tp, **WO1 (SVWO) Les Scott, WO2 (FofS) Rogers, LCpl Mark Allen** and **LCpl Garfey Garfoot. Garfey** knew something was going on when **Brig Wilson** told him he was incorrectly dressed - the old ones are always the best!

The new SVWO, WO1 Les Scott,
proudly receives his new badge of rank
from Comd 11 Sig Bde, Brig J. R. B. Cook

LCpl Allen (the one in the cool sunglasses)
receiving his LCpl stripe from Comd 49 (East) Bde, Brig Wilson

Blackmail in action
Sig (now LCpl) Garfoot threatens to push the plunger and blow up
his wagon if promotion is not forthcoming (it worked!)

Sgt Jo Outlaw and **Cpl Neil Fuller** acted as driving instructors on camp (amongst others) and must be congratulated with the pass rate of 40 out of 43. 54 Sqn came second behind a talented RHQ team in the potted sports competition; the rest of the Regiment realised there could be only one winner, especially when the Regimental Yeoman, **SSgt (YofS) Tony Martin**, had programmed the Trade Training to finish at 2100hrs. Congratulations also go to **Cpl Don Beach** and **LCpl Kaz Carter** on gaining Top Student places on the Radio Relay and Electrician Driver courses (**Kaz** was the only female soldier on the ED course - a rose among thorns indeed). A special mention must go to **Sig** 'Geordie' **Watson** who was overall Top Student during the Trade Training phase - well done. **'Geordie'** is new to the Squadron, and had never been out on exercise before; he certainly gave **Cpl Don Beach** a good run for his money on the Radio Relay course.

(Continued from Page 574)

P	Dead bugs on windscreen	S	Live bugs on order
P	Autopilot in altitude holds mode produces a 200fpm descent	S	Cannot reproduce problem on the ground
P	IFF inoperative	S	IFF always inoperative in OFF mode
P	Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick	S	That's what they're there for
P	Number three engine missing	S	Engine found on right wing after brief search
P	Aircraft handles funny	S	Aircraft warned to straighten- up, 'fly right' and be serious
P	Target Radar hums	S	Reprogrammed Target Radar with the lyrics

A very surprised, and delighted, WO2 (FofS) Rogers receives his new rank slide from Brig J. R. B. Cook

The R & R day was preceded the evening before by a Karaoke competition, won, of course, by 54 Sqn. Consequently, there were more than a few hangovers present on the coach ride into Tenby. Inevitably, everyone went their own way in small groups, either to the beach, sightseeing or the pub (surprise, surprise!). It was in one of these hostelry's that a certain **LCpl Garfoot** decided to test the integrity of the local populace by superglueing a 50 pence piece to the pavement outside. His group then proceeded to have much fun at the expense of 40 or so members of the public who tried, unsuccessfully, to pick up said coin. And what of our dearly beloved, hard working PSI's? **SSgt Gaz Sullivan** and **Sgt Del Parkinson** spent the whole of camp organising and running the Regimental range package, and fortunately for them it didn't rain too much! The night shoot proved to be extremely enjoyable and worthwhile, and no expense was spared when it came to the Pyro, as the picture proves!

Meanwhile, **Sgt Ian Chappell** had apparently started his own Chapter of the Castlemartin Hells Angels, as he was seen to ride everywhere on one of the REME motorbikes (sorry, what fuel shortage?). All this, and instructing on the Electrician Driver course, what a busy soldier! Finally, **Sgt Del Parkinson** was awarded his Kosovo medal by Comd 49 (East) Bde, **Brig Wilson** in a joint presentation in the Sergeants' Mess - many

Sgt Parkinson, with SSgt Miller-Kite and Brig Wilson shortly after receiving his medal

congratulations go out to him from everyone in the Squadron. To round things off, a mention to our British friends from over the water; SHOW SPOONS!!!

754 & 756 TROOPS BEDFORD

Annual Camp 2000 was successful for the Troops at Bedford, resulting in three new recruits passing Regimental Recruits training (**Sig's Collins, Cowell** (AKA Mad Snail) & Harvey) and four people achieving primary or secondary trades (**LCpl Allen, Sig Holt, Sig Scholten** and **Sig Watson**). The centre also increased it's number of HGV drivers with **LCpl Mossop** getting his Category C license, and **LCpl's Chatters** and **Wilson** becoming 'big boy truckers' by gaining their C + E's. It was the first camp for **Sig's Collins, Cowell, Harvey, Holt** and **Watson** and was memorable for each in its own special way (**Sig Holt** will never live his experiences down! Contact **LCpl Mossop** for the full low down).

A TASTE FOR THE EAST!!

A personal account by our foreign correspondent, Lt Emma Hilyard (OC 755 Troop)

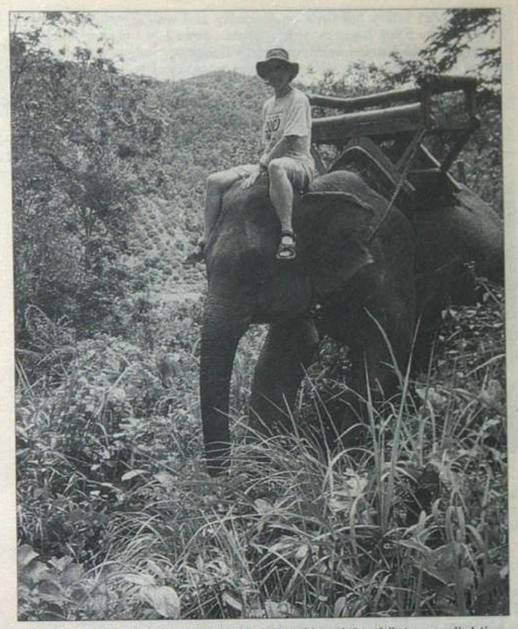
Between the periods of 23 July and 19 August 2000 I embarked on a lone adventure to Thailand (though some, unwisely, would call it a holiday!). I had booked nothing except my flights as I was going with several aims in mind. My main objective was to trek in the Northern

SSgt Gaz Sullivans own millennium fireworks display, courtesy of WO2 (RQMS) Steve Russell

mountains and rain forests, followed by diving off the South Eastern coast, with a final aim of investigating the border point with Burma and finding out, first hand, the feasibility of travelling/cycling through Vietnam!

I left the UK with the usual apprehensions of travelling alone in a country with a different language, let alone a different cultural and belief system, and was anxious about the heat and humidity, as it was monsoon season. On arrival in Bangkok, however, I was soon swept into the colour and sounds of Thai life, worries forgotten. My first impression of Thailand came in the form of Bankok hustle and bustle! Nothing stops still and the louder or brighter something is, the better! Here was a city (and country) where the old sits harmoniously with the new, with hundreds of temples intermixed with modern shopping malls and hotels, and where people lived and worked as comfortably on the river as they did on the streets, with all space being optimised. The Thai people proved to be resilient, efficient and extremely enterprising with immense grace, hospitality and cheerfulness rarely seen in the West. Their generosity was shown not only in the provision of food and necessities to the monks that walked the streets before the sun rose, begging for food (as part of their religious beliefs rather than as unfortunates, as in this country), but also in the provision of water and fruit to complete strangers such as myself (particularly welcome during my cycling rest stops!).

Throughout Thailand I was startled by the contrasts, and the ability of these contrasts to compliment rather than oppose each other. Whether it was in the architecture I saw, the food I ate, the landscapes - mountains in the North, beaches in the South, or the direct environment - the heat of the day against the cool of the waterfalls or waters I swam in, Thailand had something to offer everyone. Indeed, I did complete my aims, but I gained much more than the memories of my activities i.e. trekking in the rain forest, open water diving, riding on elephants and white water rafting, to name but a few. I developed a taste for the country, not only for the delicious food but also for the freedom of travel and the freedom to experience. Learning about the Royal projects, social system and Thai way of viewing life has helped me to refocus my aims and desires, and to live life appreciatively rather than pass through it. It has left me with a hunger to further my travels and experiences, which has led to my new ambition to spend between six months and one year cycling through Asia. I'm looking for a companion, so if anyone reading this has that spirit of adventure, is prepared to explore on humble means and is



Lt Emma Hilyard makes a trunk call to Norwich whilst moonlighting as a cabby (are they webbed sandals?)

38 (CITY OF SHEFFIELD) SIGNALS REGIMENT (VOLUNTEERS)

46 SIGNAL SQUADRON
LORD MAYOR'S MILITARY MISSION

Leicester's Lord Mayor signalled the start of her own military campaign when she visited county part-time soldiers in Scotland. **Cllr Mrs Barbara Chambers** said that she aimed to encourage more people to join the city's three Territorial Army (TA) Units. However, she first insisted on seeing first hand the sort of training organisations, like 46 Sig Sqn, were providing for the county's young men and women. Twelve members of the Unit based at Ulverscroft Road were on their annual two-week manoeuvres in the Scottish mountains.

Military Mission - Cllr Mrs Barbara Chambers, Lord Mayor of Leicester, and Maj Kelvin Young from Hugglescote

Cllr Chambers said, 'Our TA units are at the heart of the community. They are also first class training providers. The trade and management skills they teach benefit their members, the army and the soldiers' full-time civilian employers. Over the coming months I will be contacting all the TA units in Leicester to find out how they can increase even further the benefits that they bring to our city.'

Maj Kelvin Young from Harrogate said, 'The Lord Mayor's commitment to our Squadron has given us a real boost. In return we set out to show how the unit's powerful communications capability fitted into the national defence strategy. We also demonstrated how we were ready to serve and support the community. We are always on standby to help out with civil and natural emergencies.'

More and more of the Signallers are also proving their commitment to people facing crises overseas. Dozens of soldiers have already been on voluntary tours of duty alongside Regular Army peace keeping troops inplaces like the Balkans. This year members of 38 Sig regt have been on duty in a total of 19 countries including Russia, Mexico, America and Cyprus.

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

CO	**Lt Col Nigel Harrison MBE**
RSM	**WO1 (RSM) Colin Milne**

HEADQUARTERS SQUADRON

Sqn Comd	**Maj Bill Evans TD**
SSM	**WO2 (SSM) Clive Howland**

FIRST IMPRESSION OF A NEW SQUADRON 2IC

by Capt Ken Rustidge TD

On 1 September 2000 I transferred from 87 Sig Sqn to HQ Sqn, a culture shock to say the least. Following a pre-camp admin weekend when I met the OC, **Maj Bill Evans** and the PSAO, **Capt Gary Mason**, I prepared myself to attend the important Exercise phase at Camp, Ex Horseshoe 1, which was to be held in Scotland (a new Squadron and an overseas tour in one go). I had been instructed to travel direct to HMS *Gannet*, a Royal Navy camp near Prestwick Airport in Ayrshire, the initial location for the Squadron. My major worry while driving up from Spalding was the fuel crisis had just begun and would I have enough fuel to get me there. I had a full tank and started off at a constant 55mph and kept to it all the way to Gannet, to conserve fuel. It was just as well as all the garages on the way were either empty or closed.

I arrived safely but tired on Saturday and was shown my sleeping quarters by **SSgt Ingram**. Being a late comer I got the top bunk in a room of a condemned building (due to this pretty fungus that seemed to grow out of the walls), welcome to the Squadron. I was then acquainted with some of the unfamiliar Royal Navy customs like standing to attention and saluting the yardarm at sunrise and sunset. On Sunday I volunteered to go with **SSgt Melanie Widdows** to pick up our combat **Padre Sean Robertshaw** from Glasgow train station. On approaching the rear of the station **SSgt Widdows** became somewhat alarmed at the fight involving several men that was taking place on the pavement near our vehicle. I reassured her it was just a normal night in Glasgow and was relieved to see that our **Padre Sean** was not involved. The Padre safely collected it was back on shift in the CP, where there were various tasks and incidents to deal with. These included gathering the name of all Regimental personnel who were A Pos, due to an unknown disease affecting this blood group, just as well the disease didn't spread, as three-quarters of the Regiment are A Pos. We also had the normal logistic scenarios of reinforcements, clothing, extra rations for a prolonged period that we covered quite well. The next night we had a series of events, which proved interesting including a few 'no duff' situations, these always happen when you are on shift with **Maj** 'Taz' **Calvin Young**. We had an incident where some of the local yobs didn't like our Det being in their village. This was dealt with tactfully by sending our well known caring duo of **Sgt** 'Butch' **Butcher** and **Cpl** 'Break a leg' **Appleton**. After their arrival the situation changed remarkably and there was no more aggro from the locals.

We also had the fuel truck turn over, which proved to be quite an eventful night for the driver and his navigator. We also had the report of the RCP being flooded out over at Dechtmont Ranges. It appears that the RCP accommodation tent was located at the bottom of a small hill, next to what appeared to be a track (it turned out to be a dry riverbed). QM (V) **Capt Mick Piechota** now knows the difference and hopes not to wake up again to find all his worldly goods floating around him. He is quite unlucky because the next night the wind got up and blew his tent away, nice one **Mick**. A good first camp with the Squadron, lasting impressions of Horseshoe 1, a Squadron that works and plays hard as a team and gets the job done.

PS. HMS *Gannet* was a very rough location !!!

IT CAN ONLY HAPPEN ON CAMP

by Sgt Barry Baldwin - The Policeman's Friend

After the events of last camp (the motorist who followed **Sgt Baldwin** for 30 miles in a left hand drive vehicle while his passenger slumbered, had phoned the police to say a drunken soldier had fallen asleep at the wheel). Camp 2000 in Scotland was looking to be a more normal proposition, Exercise preparation the first week and deploy for most of the second week. Then the fuel crisis hit, and although going ahead the Exercise was changed slightly to accommodate. **Sgt Baldwin** and **Cpl** 'Eric' **Bristow** were dispatched to collect packed fuel from DLO Stirling. The pickup went smoothly and the return journey was going fine until an irate lorry driver pulled along side on the M 74 and yelled, 'What are you doing with that fuel?' (or words to that effect). This was a little unsettling and caused **Cpl Bristow** to miss our exit. No problem, **Sgt Baldwin** quickly planned an alternative route albeit through some of the smallest country lanes in the whole of Scotland. Luckily due to the nature of the route progress was at a more leisurely pace and as the vehicle left a bend the road narrowed, at this point our world turned upside down literally.

The edge of the road gave way just a few inches, but enough to send the near side wheels onto the verge and into a course of no return. The verge sucked the wagon in, in slow motion rolling onto its side and coming to rest about 3ft below the road in a small field. During the roll **Sgt Baldwin** had walked round the cab and was standing on the door looking up at **Cpl Bristow** who was still in the driver's seat battling with the steering wheel. When the vehicle stopped **Cpl Bristow** promptly fell onto **Sgt Baldwin**. How to exit the vehicle? The only available door was too high to reach without climbing, so the cupola was knocked out and a hasty retreat beaten, (remember the cargo was packed fuel approx. 6000 litres). **Sgt Baldwin** noticed **Cpl Bristow's** actions were not as they should be, maybe it was his dazed expression, talking like a raving lunatic or the involuntary urination that pointed to **Cpl Bristow** being in mild shock. What to do? **Sgt Baldwin** quickly checked the load to ensure no damage to the jerry cans or leaks. (We would have really had to leg it then!) Then make sure in his condition **Cpl Bristow** didn't cause a nuisance or get himself injured. Now where to get help?

Our intrepid duo were in luck as two cars were heading in their direction, in a flash the pair were up the verge and waving down the passing motorists. It was obviously the scene of an accident one of the motorists would stop wouldn't they? Wrong the passengers of both cars just returned waves while driving by. **Sgt Baldwin** set off walking in the direction of the nearest village and luckily was picked up by a passing motorist and taken to the local police station where he was put in an interview room and questioned. Meanwhile back at the accident a police patrol had arrived and two officers questioned **Cpl Bristow**, who the police obviously realised was still in shock. Both officers were taking notes from a person obviously acting like a raving lunatic, who suddenly realised that he was talking complete gibberish and stated, 'I'm gibbering now aren't I?' to which both officers nodded in unison. Little did **Cpl Bristow** know that the police were investigating the accident with the possibility of dangerous driving charges pending. Back in the interview room Sgt Baldwin was undergoing questioning along a similar theme. The happy out come was the accident was found to be a non-driver error, **Cpl Bristow** was in the clear if not making himself clear. Now for the recovery! Due to the nature of the load and the unavailability of military recovery a civilian firm with the local fire brigade to attend was arranged. **Sgt Baldwin** was returned to the accident scene non-the worse for his little chat at the police station. Whilst waiting for the recovery to arrive the two attending officers were chatting with our intrepid two (**Cpl Bristow** was coming round by now). There now appeared a fire engine on a clear open county road with all sirens blaring and lights flashing, the group looked up and one of the police officers said, 'Here comes Trumpton!' ' Why Trumpton?' asked **Cpl Bristow**. 'Because they are part timers,' was the reply. There seemed an uneasy stand off between the police and fire service after that.

Once recovered, the fire service did however help to reload the few cans of fuel to come loose. Then came a rather unusual request from the fire brigade, 'Could we get the hoses out and spray something because we haven't used them for a while?' **Sgt Baldwin** came up with an alternative for them .The Brigade ran out their hoses and did a cracking job of washing down the vehicle. Trumpton satisfied we were recovered to the local garage. The damage was minimal and thanks to our LAD the vehicle was back on the road by lunch the next day. They say things are sent to try us and that they usually come in three's, well here's looking forward to camp 2001 and the third and final brush with the law for **Sgt Baldwin**. OC HQ says, 'Thank God I won't be around for that one!'

87TH (CITY OF NOTTINGHAM) SIGNAL SQUADRON (V)

Sqn Comd **Maj David Tomlinson**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Vicky Hardy**

The Squadron has just returned from a very wet but enjoyable Annual Camp in sunny Scotland. We started off this years Camp 2000 in Edinburgh, where everyone enjoyed the local history and the culture! During the first week we took part in the various Regimental competitions, including the Regimental Sports Day and the TARA Cup (mil skills competition). Whilst we only won the Chain of Command race during the Sports Day, we nearly won the TARA Cup. Watch out 64 Sqn, 87 Sqn are going to win it next year! During the second week it was off on Ex Horse Shoe 1, although our Mould Tp went to Wales in support of 49 Bde. Although the lack of fuel did lead to a slow start we did extremely well on the exercise and everyone kept smiling. We were deployed to some very boggy areas around Glasgow although the SPSI, **SSgt Mark Richmond** managed to deny that he had carried out the recce. Well it was frozen then!

After the Exercise we returned to Nottingham to begin RSIT preparation. Before returning, however, we had the annual post camp presentations; winner of the stag-on award was **Cpl Steve** 'Rottwieler' **Keay**, who defended the site so aggressively that the people inside the perimeter were afraid! The driving skills award went to **Sgt Andrea** 'Bogger' **Pickles** who discovered that trying to take an 8ft wide Bedford down a 6ft track does not work. She was gallantly rescued by **Sgts Stu Nesbitt** and **Craig Toft**, who later presented her with a spade to get herself out next time (PICTURE NO 1).

Maj Tomlinson presenting Sgt Pickles with her prize

At PICTURE 2 we see one of our latest batch of recruits, **Sig John Wade**, learning new skills. He is fortunate to have the same name as our NRPS SQMS, **SSgt John** ' I'm not a Grumpy person' **Wade**, I think we have some interesting times ahead. Then we have our own Karoake Queen, **Cpl Heather** 'Indicate don't Point' **Blair** practicing her repertoire whilst doing maintenance. She said, 'It can be quite dull carrying out maintenance – so I always practice a few numbers whilst I work, the rest of the crew seem to enjoy it! No one from her crew was available for comment!

Sig John Wade learning new skills

EXAM QUESTIONS

The following is an actual question given on a Durham University chemistry exam , mid-term.

'Is Hell exothermic (gives iff heat) or endothermic (absorbs heat)? Support your answer with proof.'

Most students wrote proofs of their beliefs using Boyle's Law (gas cools off when it expands and heats up when compressed) or some variant. One student, however, wrote the following:

'First we need to know how the mass of Hell is changing in time. So we need to know the rate that souls are moving into Hell and the rate they are leaving. I think that we can safely assume that when a soul gets to Hell, it will not leave. Therefore no souls are leaving. As for how many souls are entering Hell, let's look at the different religions that exist in the world today. Some of these religions state that if you are not a member of their religion, you will go to Hell. Since there are more than one of these religions and since people do not belong to more than one religion, we can project that all people and all souls go to Hell. With birth and death rates as they are, we can expect the number of souls in Hell to increase exponentially.

Now we can look at the rate of change in the volume in Hell because Boyle's Law states that in order for the temperature and pressure in Hell to stay the same, the volume of Hell has to expand as souls are added. This gives two possibilities.

1) If Hell is expanding at a slower rate than the rate at which souls enter Hell, then the temperature and pressure in Hell will increase until all Hell breaks loose.

2) Of course, if Hell is expanding at a rate faster than the increase of souls in Hell, then the temperature and pressure will drop until Hell freezes over.

So which is it? If we accept the postulate given to me by Ms Therese Banyon, during my first year, 'That it will be a cold night in Hell before I go to bed with you,'and take into account the fact that I have still not succeeded in having sexual relations with her, then: 2) cannot be true, and thus I am sure that Hell is exothermic.'

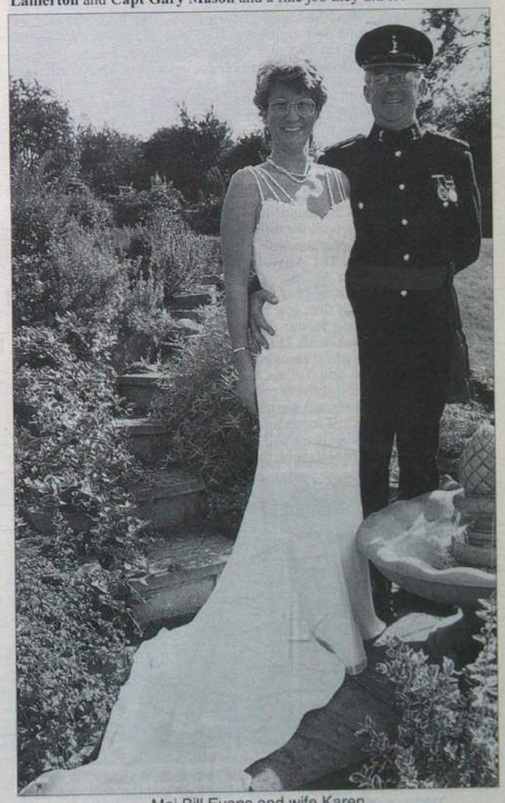
The student got the only A.

Cpl Blair the Karoake Queen

It's farewell to our 2IC, **Capt Fred** 'Medallion Man' **Nilsson** on promotion to Major for a FTRS tour in Gutersloh, we wish him bon voyage. Finally we welcome back as 2IC, **Capt Bev** 'Tigra' **Swift** and wish her well in her new appointment.

SQUADRON COMMANDER FINALLY TIES THE KNOT

Maj Bill Evans after many years of excuses and close shaves finally married **Karen** on 5 August 2000. Following the ceremony they flew off to the Caribbean for a well-deserved honeymoon. The service was held at their local village church and the Regimental Padre, **Capt Sean Robertshaw** conducted the service. The honour guard consisted of **Maj Gen Tony Boyle CB, Lt Col Ian Griffiths, Maj (Retd) Danny Lamerton** and **Capt Gary Mason** and a fine job they did to!



Maj Bill Evans and wife Karen

NEWS FROM THE SQUADRONS

2 (CITY OF DUNDEE) SIGNAL SQUADRON (VOLUNTEERS)

Sqn Comd **Maj E. Blyth**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) L. Thornton-Granville**

Two major events from the Squadron's busy calendar are detailed below, firstly the unit's annual adventure training expedition, then a few stories from around the Squadron during Exercise Horse Shoe I.

EXERCISE EBOR DOLOMITE 23 JULY - 1 AUGUST 2000
By 2Lt Alistair Galloway

Ex Ebor Dolomite was a 2 Sig Sqn mountaineering expedition to the Dolomite region of N. Italy. The expedition aim was to introduce members of the Squadron to Via Ferrata climbing in the Dolomite Mountains surrounding Cortina D' Ampezzo in N. Italy. A nine strong team left Newman House on 23 July heading for Stanstead and the GO flight to Venice. Various training exercises had been laid on throughout the Western Highlands during the months running up to the expedition, this allowed those members of the team less familiar with rugged exposed terrain a chance to come to terms with any fears or doubts over their ability.

The journey from Dundee to Stanstead and onwards to Cortina via Venice was uneventful, or should we say it was eventful and didn't quite go to plan, suffice it to say we all arrived safely at Camping Olympia 30hrs after leaving Newman house in Dundee. This was to be the second consecutive year the Squadron has visited the Dolomite region and **WO2 (YofS) George** 'Route 1' **Hume** aimed to make this a more physically challenging 7-day climbing package. The routes to be undertaken would range from the easiest of Dolomite Via Ferrata protected paths to the more physically and vertically challenging Grade F Via Ferrata routes. The YofS and **Cpl Joe** 'I only do rock climbing' **Wiggins** worked on a calming strategy, hopefully putting everyone's mind at ease regarding the severity of the routes to be climbed. Meanwhile, **Cpl Rod** 'Naked Chef' **Hamilton** and **LCpl Chris** 'Spielberg' **Kelbie** continued to explain that everything the YofS and **Joe** said regarding difficulty had to be taken with a pinch of salt. No pictures can ever convey reality, and on arrival at Camping Olympia, questions over route finding and quotes like, 'Surely you don't expect us to climb that!' were heard as the tents were pitched. **Rod** and **Chris** tried pointing out one of the week's routes to the Dolomite Virgins.

The plan for the week was start easy and progress to the more technically demanding routes, the weather forecast soon put a stop to this. With the team split into two groups, a successful ascent of the 2,229mtr NE Cadin Spitze by what can only be described as the most direct route up the North Face of the mountain was under taken on day 1. All team members coped easily with the difficulties encountered on this climb and in turn got plenty of practice with harness and self-arresting equipment used on such routes. **2Lt Alistair** 'How do I break these boots in?' **Galloway** and **Cpl Ian** 'Sponsored by Nike' **Stewart** proved to **Cpl Kev** 'I never used the wire, honest' **Mclean** that a 2ltr platypus (drinking system) had more uses than just hydrating the body. This was achieved by continually spraying Isostar down onto **Kev**, he was to get his own back later in the week with **2Lt Galloway** on the receiving end of a bucket of river water whilst enjoying the extremely hot camp showers.

Tofana Di Mezzo and Tofana Di Rozes both sitting at heights of 3244M and 3225M respectively provided the team with two days of calf throbbing, lung bursting and vertically challenging moments. The superb weather and magnificent mountain views experienced during both days coupled with a few heart pounding moments gave all concerned plenty to talk about at the campsite café on their return to the tent pitches.

Group 1 on the summit of Tofana Di Rozes
(L-R): Cpl Ian Stewart, Cpl Kev Mclean,
WO2 (YofS) George Hume and Sig Gary Kirkpatrick

True to form the storms forecasted earlier in the week arrived on the morning of Day 4, this in turn gave the team no choice but to head to uncharted territory in the hope that the further south they ventured the weather might improve. Looking at the road map, Lake Garda does not look that far away, and so after a Cappuccino moment in the campsite café personal kit was loaded up and a route chosen with a rendezvous being the mountain village of Arco situated at the Northern end of Lake Garda. 2 fi hrs and 63km later the decision to continue, (Lake Garda still 150km away) was abandoned and a more circuitous route chosen for the return to Cortina. **Cpl Joe Wiggins** and **Sig Garry** 'Bargain Chair hunter' **Kirkpatrick** having escaped ahead of the lunatic Italian drivers continued on whilst the remainder of the team headed back to Cortina. 30mins from Cortina the weather broke and allowed a quick three hour excursion onto the mountains. With large deposits of snow on the higher mountains the group concentrated on the lower more technically demanding routes for the rest of the week. The expedition will not be my last.

2Lt Alistair Galloway climbing on Tofana Di Mezzo

EXERCISE HORSE SHOE I 19 - 23 SEPTEMBER 2000

The Squadron deployed on Ex Horse Shoe I, a 2 (NC) Sig Bde exercise, as Annual Camp 2000. A Command and Echelon support element deployed, along with a number of radio dets and FRTs. The following articles highlight some of the highs and lows experienced during Ex Horse Shoe I.

CP MOMENTS - *By Capt Bob Davidson*

The CP and Ech initially deployed to Nescliffe and under the watchful eye of **WO2 (SSM) Andy Waterston** and **WO2 (RQMS)** 'Uncle Bertie' **Wright** set up a tented city and CP vehicle. Spirits were high in the CP as the customary tea and coffee was supplemented by a supply of choccy biccies, and chocolate eclairs. The antenna field happened to be in a cow field and Ops Officer, **Capt Bob Davidson** and **WO2 (YofS) George Hume** had to amend Sqn SOPs to ensure that cattle moving drills were carried out on a regular basis. **WO2 (YofS) Hume** was later heard to remark that, 'The little brown one with the big eyes was quite cute.' The graveyard shift team of **Capt Andy Bruce, SSgt Bob Tasker** and **Sgt Ronnie** 'I'm just going to defrag this hard drive' **Thomson** attempted a take-over. This was achieved initially by forming the secret squirrels society and introducing a new security classification 'Boys in Confidence' to keep what was going on from the rest of the team and Squadron. For those of you who are familiar with the term RCP, the Squadron Secret Squirrel Society has taken the abbreviation to another extreme 'RCP or Rumour Control Point'. For those in the know, **SSgt Tasker** accepts responsibility for Det 4 tasking during Week 2, but don't tell anyone as it's a well kept secret!

MILITARY TRAINING - *By Sgt Willie Smith*

It all started bright and early, on Monday 11 September, when the first Detachment arrived for Military Training. 'The Training Team', lead by **2Lt Alistair** 'Ally the Penguin' **Galloway**, the then **SSgt Lance** 'NBC' **Thornton-Granville** (Now SSM) and **Sgt Willie** 'I love the field' **Smith**. With the Det set up in location, training began, kicking off with theory lessons in a man made lecture room (12x12) better known as 'The House of Pain'. With that worrying look upon their faces, practical training began, covering Anti-Ambush Drills, F&M and Patrolling, then into the NBC training. Many of the 'Victims', I mean Soldiers, were finding out how hard it is working in full IPE. Over the duration of 24hours a lot of skills were tested to the limit. On the first week, the Dets came and went with a smile on their faces. A slight change on the second week with the promotion of **SSgt Thornton-Granville** who was replaced by the outgoing **SSM Andy** 'They're not Sweating Enough' **Waterston**. All and all a very enjoyable camp was had by all. Here's to next year, watch this space.

DET LIFE - *By Cpl Sally Purves*

Well, camp started off on 8 September in very much the fashion that we had expected. One of our 4-man crew had not turned up. Rumours abounded as to who we would get to replace the missing crewman, definitely the scariest of all was that it may be **Sgt Ronnie** 'I will do it myself' **Thomson**. Much to our relief, we were informed that it was instead to be **LCpl Davey** 'I am REME' **Lyall**. The rest of the team comprised **Sig Davey** 'It wasn't me it was Davey Lyall' **Scott, Cpl Billy** 'Can I be in charge for 5 minutes' **Morris** and **Cpl Sally** 'I don't know how to stop being in charge' **Purves**. The first week's exercise passed without hitch. Everyone knuckled down and got on with the job, but there were definitely a few laughs to be had, mostly when **Sig Scott** was often heard to cry, 'It wasn't me it was Davey Lyall,' even when he was in bed at the time that the questioned incident occurred. It should be noted that obviously the Gods were on the side of Cpl P as her stint of Det Commanding ran smoothly.

Much fun was had by all members of the Det during the R & R period. Unusually, considering the group contained **Cpl Morris**, there were no major incidents to report. It was with sadness that we said goodbye to **LCpl Lyall**, who was unable to cope with **Billy's** cutting humour for more than one week. However, we welcomed his replacement with open arms, **LCpl Carol** 'It can't be done' **McKelvie**. Was this to be a grave error? The second week of exercise started for us with the Military Skills exercise. Rumours were rife as to how tough it was and it was with mild fear, at least on Cpl P's part that it started. However, again all members of the Det had much fun and although drowned one minute and then suffering from heat exhaustion the next, the exercise finished with all in great spirits. This was all soon to change. **Cpl Morris**, now as Det Commander, was told that we were off to a new location, where we were to establish comms early the next day. 'Set up in the dark!' we all cried, 'Surely not.' If only it had been that easy. We arrived at the new location around midnight. The details on the recce sheet said contact the farmer - 'best not' we thought. The FRT who were to join us and apparently show us the exact location were at least an hour behind us. **Cpls Morris** and **Purves** set off to do the moonlight recce. Second gate, OK, big bull standing there making threatening noise, no portaloo. 'Let's just wait for the FRT' we thought. The fear showing on both our faces.

The FRT arrived and confirmed that we were at the right gate, the field however had been transformed with the uplifting of the portaloo and the reinstatement of the cattle (which by the way were all cows, **Cpl Morris** will never make a farmer). Due to the gradient and the rain, there was not a hope of the three vehicles and trailers ascending. As it was now about 2am, a quick phone call was made to the CP to advise them of the situation and the response was to find somewhere to sleep and they would let us know in the morning what we were to do. 0630hrs, Comms check to the CP, surely they would not send us back, says who. Back you go, we need you up there, the CP decreed, have the farmer tow you up with a tractor they cried. So back we went, where we were greeted by the extremely obliging farmer, who towed us up to the top of the field that he had now cleared of cows, but not all the really new, soft, smelly stuff. There was not one lead, mast box, base plate, person or item of clothing which was not subjected to the dousing of cow doings. During the night the weather was awful, with the tent practically blowing away, paddling pool forming inside and the kero heater sent on a journey of its own. However, we still kept smiling. The exercise ended without further incident, but the huge question has to be asked, 'Is **Cpl Morris** less favoured by the Gods or is **LCpl McKelvie** just a jinx?'

REME - *By Sgt Dave Heap*

Who are the men that work relentlessly day and night in all weather conditions to ensure that the squadron vehicles are maintained to the highest standards? These men who venture out beyond the FEBA risking life and limb with their only weapon, the toolbox. Living rough on meagre rations, sleeping stood up ready for anything, every man an emperor. Crap repairs consisted of a bulb, a fuse and a battery, so really nothing to write home about.

HANDOVER OF SSM

WO2 (SSM) Waterson handed over the reigns to **WO2 (SSM) Thornton - Granville** as Squadron Sergeant Major.

Finally congratulations to the SPSI, **SSgt George Cowan** and his wife **Rebecca** on the birth of their daughter **Bethany.**

16 AIR ASSAULT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (216)

Sqn Comd **Maj N. Fraser**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) C. Drew**

The Squadron has continued with its heetic exercise schedule in recent months. Ex Iron Hawk, which took place in Canada, has now drawn to a close but the Squadron is now preparing for Ex Eagle's Green Talon (3 Para's inauguration into the Brigade) and Ex Suman Warrior which is to take place in Malaysia in November. We've also had a change of command. Goodbye to **Maj Ivan Hooper** who is moving to Shrivenham with his wife **Helen** and his rapidly expanding family. **Maj Hooper** oversaw the birth of 16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn from its component elements of 5 Airborne Brigade and 24 Airmobile Brigade. The seamless transition is a testament to his success as Squadron Commander. Congratulations **Ivan** and all the very best for the future. A warm welcome to **Maj Neil Fraser** who fought his way out of a mountain of Army doctrine manuals at Staff College to take the Squadron's helm.

A TROOP - *by Sig Smith*

Tp Comd **Lt Jim Hawkins**
Tp SSgt **SSgt 'J J' Walker**

A few of the more fortunate members of Alpha Tp were lucky enough to have their summer leave early and immediately deploy on Ex Medes Meander, a diving expedition to Spain for ten days. The stories that made their way back to the Troop all told of much Mediterranean sun, and fantastic dives. All who went were able to gain their Sports Diver qualification.

With most of the Troop deployed on Ex Iron Hawk in Canada, the remainder deployed to Sennybridge for the Squadron's annual Battle-camp, Ex Dragon Warrior, organised by our Troop Comd, **Lt Hawkins**. We deployed on the Sunday, and to our delight we arrived to find ourselves staying in what can only be described as 'luxury' accommodation at a centrally heated farm.

The week was based around a live field-firing package, which gave the newer members of the Squadron their first chance to fire live ammunition in a field environment. By the end of the week all on the final live section attack achieved a high standard. This included the use of the 94mm LAW Outdoor Trainer. One day was dedicated to the teaching and revising of FIBUA skills, with the buzz phrase of the day being 'Just get medieval' which was said by **Lt Hamilton** (OC B Tp) with great pleasure at every opportunity. The week's training culminated in an FTX which was exhausting but was enjoyed by all, especially **Sig 'Trist' Ancell** who only stopped grinning once, which was to eat his Burger King on the return journey.

The Troop took on another new arrival from Blandford this month **Sig** Luke **Mitchell** who arrived just in time to avoid battle camp (we'll get you next year). Finally the Troop says a fond farewell to three long serving members, **Cpl John Wilson** and **LCpl** 'Del' **Driscoll** who have both left the Army, and **Cpl** 'Scott' **Robinson** who has been posted to The Royal School of Signals as an instructor at the much feared RADEX Tp (Give them hell 'Robbo'). All of the Troop wishes all three of you every success outside the Squadron.

BRAVO TROOP - *by LCpl Thorpe*

Tp Comd **Lt Rob Hamilton R SIGNALS**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Paul Bartliff**

Refreshed from Summer leave, the Bravo machine returned to Colchester ready to do battle in what promised to be a busy September period. Following the annual pilgrimage to Caythorpe, personnel were readying kit for deployment to Canada and Sennybridge as well as gearing up for a host of equipment inspections. Sennybridge can only mean one thing for a Royal Corps soldier – battlecamp. Whilst playing war in conditions not witnessed since the Somme, Bravo Tp cracked on with their spirits held above the water and refused to go under. Our own inspirational **Lt** 'Stressed Eric' **Hamilton** led the platoon into action and did an excellent job at keeping us gung-ho psychopaths at bay. Everyone worked hard, in particular **SSgt** 'I can't run but I can swim' **Bartliff** who skived off all week in Colchester and **LCpl Lawson** who went off to the sunnier climes on Ex Iron Hawk in Canada.

This month the Troop welcomes two new arrivals. Firstly **Sig** 'Scotty' **Slater** from the factory and **Cpl** 'Beep Beep Road Runner' **Clancy** from 228 Sig Sqn. We also welcome back **Sig Brayshaw** from Corsham Hub – **Sgt Thornton** hasn't stopped whinging about the standard of shoe shop assistants down town whilst she's been away.

There is very little other gossip to report in the Troop. Congratulations go to **Sig** 'ROPs King' **Fletcher** for being in trouble again and to **Sig** 'I can't do anything, I'm on a biff chit' **Frost** for crashing his car into a Staff Officer's Range Rover at the camp gates. Our compliments also go to **Sig** 'Smooth legs' **Drabwell** for passing P Coy and getting on his jumps course, and to **Cpl Barringer** who recently married **Claire** – all our best wishes. The Troop is now gearing itself up for adventure training in Bavaria and Ex Suman Warrior in Malaysia, both of which take place before Christmas. My word, it's tough at the top!

CHARLIE TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Toby Courage**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Pete Hatton**

Charlie Tp has been busy as ever with many Troop members, including the illustrious **SSgt** Pete **Hatton,** out in Canada on Ex Iron Hawk, involvement in the 215 and 216 Sig Sqn battlecamps, the Caythorpe weekend and with representatives out in Germany earning their German parachute wings. Hellos go to **Sig Steel** and **Sig Hackford** who arrived from Blandford and **Sig Walker** who arrived from 249 Sig Sqn. A sad goodbye goes to **Sgt** 'Al' **Combe** who leaves us on promotion and is destined for 30 Sig Regt and **LCpl** 'Ted' **O'Donnell** who is bound for 249 Sig Sqn.

SQUADRON BATTLECAMP - *by LCpl Richardson*

We set off for our squadron battlecamp at approximately 1300hrs Sunday 27 September, for the six-hour drive to Farm One on SENTA Training Area. I was driving for **Lt Courage** in the lead vehicle, all seemed to go well (it would never go unwell because **Lt Courage** was constantly checking if I had the other vehicles behind us). We made the trip down to Farm One in a mere six hours. We were fortunate to get Farm One, it's a nice little number, with hot showers, basins, flushing toilets and a drying room, plus the heated sleeps. The only thing we were missing was a fitted kitchen that would have been nice, but we had to make do with **Pte** 'Barny' **Barnicle's** delights. At this point, without a hint of sarcasm, I would like to thank 'Barny' for all his hard work and the care he took in the food he prepared.

We had three days of field firing and one day of FIBUA instruction before we progressed onto a Platoon FTX for the final phase of the week. Every evening we would have a series of lessons. We would be in our bashers for about 2200hrs, listening to Galaxy FM with all the 'banging, massive, awesome tunes' as our resident 'Mank' **Sig Chris Beddall** would say. During the first few days we progressed up from dry training, to blank training and then on to live firing. The build up phases were, as always, individual CQB, pairs, then fire team level and finally section level. **Sig Burgoyne** got somewhat carried away with his cam paint and soon discovered that if you paint above the eyes, it all runs into them and stings like crazy. Not to worry though he realised by about the second or third time he tried it. In between the shoots we were taken through a number of concurrent activities. We were instructed in the art of vehicle anti-ambush drills (from a L/R and a DAF), we were also refreshed on the workings of GPMG and LAW 94 and, for those who would fire it, the LAW ODT. On the whole it was a good set of lessons. Indeed they were sorely needed as we had a lot of new guys on the camp, many of who had never undertaken live firing before. Few had touched a GPMG or seen a LAW 94, and even those of us who had previously used them had had little hands on experience.

The FTX phase started with a simulated casevac (one of the night-time lessons) in which we had to deal with shock and various injuries. We seemed to handle it pretty well - nobody died anyway. After the Battle Field First Aid we got some hot scoff down us and headed for the exercising area in the back of a DAF. Following the map we realised that we were going the wrong way, or at least the long way to our destination so it was mutually agreed we should look out for a vehicle ambush. ('Sorry DS, if the long journey intended to give us time to mong it in the back, unlucky, we were ready for you, better luck next time'). After the inevitable ambush and after killing the enemy, the TAFF's (Total Armageddon Freedom Fighters), we searched their kit. From there we tabbed to a forestry block on top of a hill to do a wood clearance (another lesson) and made up a harbour area (again another lesson) then posted out our sentries (you guessed it).

The morning saw us conducting a dawn attack on a small village. We made our way to the FUP via the side of a slippy slope that soon collected its victims as everyone slipped onto their backsides. Fortunately, we managed to avoid making too much noise and arrived in the FUP in good order. As H Hr approached we had a simulated mortar attack with flash bangs and smoke then we were let loose to assault the first building (our final lesson). It was all over in just under two hours. By 0800hrs the enemy were dead. They had put up some good defences in the houses so the lads on the GPMG had a good few minutes of covering fire which induced the Vietnam film quotes such as, 'Mmmm I love the smell of carbon in the morning.' Once the clear up was completed we ate breakfast and were on the coaches by 1130hrs. All in all it was an excellent, and much needed, battlecamp.

GERMAN JUMPS COURSE - *by Sig Fyfe*

On 24 September three members of Charlie Tp and one Tech deployed to Altenstadt Germany for a week's parachuting in order to obtain their German Parachute wings. These were **Sgt Al Combe, Cpl Stoj Stojanovic, LCpl** 'Scotty' **Finn** and **Sig Russ Fyfe.** The week started on the Tuesday morning with some ground training which consisted of the DFC procedure, the HR and D , and aircraft drills. That afternoon we started the first of our four jumps, jumping from a CH 53 using the T-10 parachute from a jump height of 1500m. Before we enplaned the PJI's ran through the DZ hazards, which consisted of a track and an area of marsh. The Troop lads were in the first chalk. Al, Stojjy and Scotty were in the first stick and **Russ** was in the second. Bearing in mind the jump height was 1500m and the DZ was quite big you would think that there would have been plenty of time to steer away from any obstacles and make a good landing. However, once everyone had reached the RV it was apparent that it was not so easy for all the jumpers; **Al** had landed in the marsh and was soaked from the waist down. The rest of the week went well and on Thursday we were presented with our German wings. The next day we left Germany for the UK and arrived back in Colchester on the Saturday afternoon.

215 SIGNAL SQUADRON BATTLECAMP - *by LCpl Lancaster*

A section of C Tp went on the 215 Sig Sqn battle camp between 18 and 29 September. It consisted of **Cpl** 'Daz' **Barnes**, were **LCpl Blackmore, LCpl Lancaster, LCpl Salmon, LCpl Smith, Sig Sherrington, Sig Joynson**, and **Sig** 'Kitbag' **Donnelly**. The first week was comprised of PT, lessons, a range package (which included some very tasty foreign weapons), section attacks, and a lot of early starts. It culminated in an attack on a FIBUA village. The battle camp then moved up to Wales (where the weather was as bad as ever) for the start of the E+E phase. Our section was used as the hunter force and we soon found out how hard it is to find a needle in a haystack. All in all it was a good experience and everyone benefited in one way or another.

SUPPORT TROOP - *by Cpl Stuart*

QM **Maj Steve Clarke**
RQMS **WO2 (RQMS) Furnival**

Life in the Troop has been fairly eventful over the last couple of months. After a week's 'time-out' (otherwise known as Adventure Training!) we deployed on Ex Eagle's Strike. As usual, the Troop was split up all over the country on various tasks. The Exercise predominantly involved testing the Support Helicopter element of the Brigade which allowed the Squadron (and the Troop!) to consolidate its SOP's and to test out some new options. One point of note was the fast jet flyby (which takes photos of our HQ setup). Let's hope that they caught me on the dreaded 'pan-bash' which proves that Techs do take their turn! Anyway, after pushing the enemy into Scotland, we 'won the battle' and returned to Colchester victorious and were rewarded with three weeks leave!

After a very quick three-week lay off we returned to work and promptly set off for the Airborne Veterans Reunion Weekend at Caythorpe village in Lincolnshire. The Airborne lads were billeted at Caythorpe Court during the Second World War and it was from there that they mounted Operation Market Garden. The village has hosted a reunion ever since. Our QM (**Capt. Clarke**), organised the event, which this year was made even more special as it was to be the last official Old Comrades Dinner in Caythorpe Court. Unfortunately the 'jump' was a victim of the weather but we contributed to the village fete by setting up our Brigade HQ, ferrying kids back and forth on a Quad bike and playing football against the local team (we lost 5-2!). However, for most of us it was a case of drinking lots of beer and listening to the old boys recounting their experiences of Arnhem well into the small hours!

The accommodation for us an 18' by 24' tent in a field. This proved an inspirational idea as we struggled into No2's on a wet Sunday morning for church parade! Wait out for a best boots inspection lads! Since sobering up, we have settled back into the Monday-Friday routine with the dreaded PRE/RSIT inspections looming in the very near future. Hello's to **Sgt Dickinson, Sgt McAdam, Cpl Hughes, Cpl Mulholland** and **Sig Suter.** Cheerio to **Cpl Murray** who moves to Civ Div!

MOTOR TRANSPORT TROOP - *by Cpl Hoskins*

MTO **Capt Mark Schofield**
MT SSgt **SSgt Jason Goldsworthy**

MERSEA HALF MARATHON

On Friday 8 September two coaches departed Goojerat barracks overflowing with personnel from 16 Air Asslt Bde & Sig Sqn (216). The coaches were destined for Waldergraves caravan park in Mersea island. This was the start point for a run in aid of the Antony Nolan Bone Marrow Trust. This is a charity very close to the Squadron's heart following the loss of **Cpl Al Joy** to leukaemia earlier this year.

At just before 0800hrs all runners moved into the start position. Then it was down to **Miss Bronwen Nichols**, the Area Manager of the Trust, to start the run. It was clear from the start that there were a few people pushing to do a good time, **Cpl Paul Clancy** was leading from the front clearing the route for the remainder. The Troop Staff Sergeants undertook the honourable task of sweeping the route with buckets to collect even more money for the charity closely supervised by **WO1 (RSM) Chris** 'Dodgy knee' **Drew**. As the run progressed the admin team headed up by **Sgt Mark Makings** established the water and feeding stations around the route. However, they did not take into account the speed of **Cpl Clancy** and were still setting up when he arrived. He went on to finish in an excellent time of 1hr 23mins. On passing the finish line he was heard to say, 'Was that it?'

Sig Dave Donnelly was close behind in a time of 1hr 28mins, with the remaining runners also posting some good personal times. **WO2 (YoS) Craig Jones** was the last runner to finish. Perhaps this was due to him being deep in thought about future Ops and exercises. When all runners finished the coaches delivered everyone back to barracks for the prize giving which **Maj McMurtrie**, the new Brigade Chief of Staff, performed. All in all it was a very good day was had and we look forward to next year.

12 MECHANIZED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (228)

Sqn Comd **Maj John Charnock**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. G. Jackson**

The Squadron has been a frenzy of activity during the last few weeks. The preparations for the end of year exercise season are all but complete and a testing series of build up exercises will soon follow. No sooner have we returned from Op Palatine than Ex Iron Foray is upon us. Squadron Headquarters has said hello and goodbye to a number of personalities in the past two months. Welcome to the new OC, **Maj John Charnock** who arrived from MoD, London. The new Squadron Clerk, **Pte Cheryl** 'Catsuit' **Roberts** arrived in the Squadron to the sound of a 21 gun salute (less 20, allegedly). **LCpl** 'G10' **Jitendra** arrived last month to take over as the Postal Clerk and nobody has seen him since; just how many Gurkha holidays are there in a calendar year? In line with the copious amount of new arrivals, several personnel have also left the Department. A sad farewell to **SSgt Jack** 'Mech Warrior' **Hawkins** and **SSgt Richie** 'Airborne' **Harper** as both leave us to take up new careers in civvie street. Good luck to both of you, and thank you for all your hard work during the several years you served in the Squadron. You will both be missed.

The Administration Officer, **Capt Joe Cox** has finally got the 'Squadron Butty Bar' up and running. After initial teething problems while the food hygiene Nazis prevaricated over the issue of the 'Safe to Serve Certificate' the profits are now rolling in and inflating the PRI fund admirably. On the sporting front, **WO1 (RSM) Steve** 'Action' **Jackson** would like to thank all the members of the football team for their sterling efforts in the Royal Signals Plate Competition at Blandford. Next time, however, a few more actual goals and a lot less own goals are in order. The Chief Clerk, **SSgt Steve** 'Tommy Cooper' **Owen** is to be complimented on organising an excellent Brigade golf day, which saw members of the Brigade staff competing against the Signal Squadron. Needless to say, the Signal Squadron won.

Congratulations to the Yeoman, **WO2 (YofS)** 'Hodge' **Arthurs** and his team for achieving an EXCELLENT on the recent Crypto Inspection. **WO2 (FofS) Lance Marshall** led the Squadron March and Shoot Team in the Brigade Concentration Training this month proving that a distinct lack of hair does not affect your ability to march or shoot; well done!

ALPHA TROOP

Tp Comd **Lt Ed Dickson**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Dicky Dyer**

After a month post-Bosnia leave and three weeks summer leave, a highly motivated Troop, comprising mostly of 'armour virgins,' returned to work to get intimate with their Panzers. It was rapidly discovered that they are not very user friendly, mostly through pain-related learning (long live Panzer rash!). The workload has been very heavy as everyone prepares for the busy exercise period, which culminates in a divisional exercise. The Boss, **Lt Ed Dickson**, has been lost somewhere in his IN Tray with **SSgt Dicky** 'Town Crier' **Dyer** and **Sgt** 'Phlegm Gargler' **Davies** not far behind. The Troop has said goodbye to several members including the legendary **Sgt** 'Champagne Charlie' **James, Cpl** 'Clankers' **Clancy** and **Sigs John Marshall,** 'Percy' **Thrower**. There are also a few 'Hellos' to the lads fresh from the factory; **Sigs** 'Websters' **Webb**, 'Shaven Haven' **Grochowina**, 'Swead' **Sweet**, 'Heidi' **Hide** and 'Woz' **Evans** – WELCOME! (And get the brews on). Also congratulations to **Cpl** 'Dog' **Barker** for coming off the Sergeants' Board and being successful on the Yeoman Selection Board along with **Sgt** 'Phlegm' **Davies.** The Troop now looks forward to forthcoming events, including Ex Lion Sun in Cyprus and a Singlies Weekend Away – Location yet TBC!

BRAVO TROOP

Tp SSgt/OC **SSgt Pete Mullen**

The Troop has been busy recently, establishing the Step – Up HQ, and getting our degrees in tent erecting. It has been a steady build up to the exercise period in October, with lessons on particular items of equipment within an AFV 43 series armoured vehicle. We borrowed a switch from 3 (UK) Div for a week so we could iron out any faults with the Ptarmigan assets but instead we confused the YofS by getting two allegedly u/s LDAs working in different detachments. While this has been going on, there has been the driving course for the 432. Although most people passed their tests one individual, **Sig Paul Kennedy**, decided to re-write the emergency stop by sliding sideways down the manoeuvring area.

Since we returned from block leave, there has been the weekly drinks session, mainly for arrivals and leaving drinks and **LCpl** 'Fordy' **Ford** to recruit for his dancing school. The Troop would like to say farewell to the following people: **Lt** 'Doris' **Day,** who is off to Shrivenham for a three-year course in how to drink; **Sgt** 'Toyah' **Wilcox** who is off to 16 Sig Regt; **Cpl John Attwell** off to ATR Bassingbourn, so the standard of soldiers is bound to go down; **Cpl** 'Mac' **McMullen** is off to 19 Bde; **Cpl** 'Grif' **Griffiths** who, at the sprightly age of 42, is off to 16 Air Asslt Bde (via P Company); and last, but not least, **Sigs** 'Thomo' **Thomas** and **Steve Andrews** who are off to 264.

The Troop would like to welcome in to the fold: **SSgt Pete Mullen** from 261 Sig Sqn; **Sgt** 'Trev' **Allen** from 1 Div; **Cpl Sarah** 'I'm a star' **Guthrie** fresh from starring in the new recruitment campaign; **LCpls Clarke** and **Laws**; and **Sigs Bowen, Bunion** and **Williams** straight from the factory. Congratulations to **Cpls Keith Langan,** 'Si' **Barker** and 'Griff' **Griffiths** for coming off the promotion board and an extra well done to **Cpl** 'Si' **Barker** for being selected for YofS training.

SUPPORT TROOP

Tp Comd **Capt** 'Throw me a rubber ring' **Richards**
Tp SSgt **SSgt** 'I can't sir 'cos I'm sinking faster than you' **Greaves**

It surely cannot be three months since we last sat here with about ten minutes to a *WIRE* notes deadline and a blank page in front of us and a 'things more important than *WIRE* notes' to do list going out of the door. Support Tp, as we have now been named, have spent the last couple of months attempting to get ready for the succession of exercises that await us during the months of October and November. The QM's Department have found themselves on first name terms with just about every body that work in the Bicester and Donnington stores depot and have even thought about having there own rear link quartermaster detachments up there to cut out the middle man. Meanwhile nobody in the LAD has seen the sun for the last couple of weeks because when it's time to finish lying underneath a truck, it's been time to go and lie in your bed. Apart from the Tiffy, **SSgt Jim** 'I've won a holiday' **Lemon** who is now sat in his office looking like an over ripe tomato, damn that all inclusive beer in Tenerife followed by a wee snooze on the beach. As for the MT Department, we the few, abused by so many, for absolutely no reward, have nothing to complain about. In fact we are relishing the challenges that are being thrown our way. We are especially looking forward to spending the next month and a half either on the Aldershot or Salisbury Plain training areas where the worst that can happen to us is getting rained on. On a more serious note we have found life extremely busy at the moment but hopefully by the next issue we will have a few more interesting things to tell the rest of the Corps about. The obligatory hello's to **Cpl** 'Cozy' **Powell** , **Sigs** 'Shades' **Singh,** 'Strangeways' **Lynch** and 'Who am I' **Perry**. Sad Goodbyes go to **Cpl Ritchie** 'Ring' **Preece** and **SSgt Dean** 'Competitive Dad' **Whitworth**.

MIKE TROOP

Tp Comd **WO2 Marshall**
Tp Sgt **Sgt Hopkins**

Since we got back from Bosnia in June our feet have not touched the ground building the new signal squadron from scratch. An achievement in itself is seeing everyone in work. We shall see who has been grafting and who has be spending too much time around the 'Trailer of Knowledge' as the day of reckoning is almost upon us, the Brigade's first Mechanized exercise - if nothing else, it will be emotional. Amidst all the preparations going on the Troop would like to congratulate **Sgt Lee Coldwell** for the superb pole position he gained whilst driving in the Bulford to Aldershot grand prix. We would also like to welcome the two installation techs (lineys with GCSE certificates) **Sig Brewster** and **Sig Lavenu**. **Sig Brewster** impressed people very early on by trying to wire a 24V soldering iron with a 3-pin 240v plug. Well done, back to school (It wouldn't have happened in my day). We would also like to welcome **Cpl Jim** 'You're OFF!' **Berrey** to the Generator Bay to relieve **Sgt** 'Hoppy' **Hopkins** of some of his paper work so he can go and play golf. Well that's when **Jim** is here and not playing football. We would finally like to congratulate **LCpl Nick** 'The Admin Penguin' **Constable** for passing P Coy, **Nick** you left it too late, parachuting out of the back of a 436 doesn't count on your jumps card.

251 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj John Oakes**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Gary Smith**

HAIL AND FAREWELL

Departures and arrivals have picked up again over the last few months, with three new arrivals and four departures. Welcome to the Ops Room **Capt Keith Roach** who is posted in from DLO Andover, and into the Tech Wksp comes **Sgt Pam Mitchell** and **Sig Mark Igo** who have both been posted in from The Royal School of Signals, Blandford. A farewell goes to **Capt Mick Purves** who has been posted to 2 Sig Regt, York. **Cpl Sue Neate** is posted to 243 Sig Sqn, Salisbury, **Cpl Wendy Boardman** defects to the Adjutant General Corps and **Cpl Sarah Dyer** is posted to Civdiv (glutton for punishment, she is now working in the COMMCEN as a Civilian). **CONGRATULATIONS**

Our congratulations go to **WO2 (YofS) Billy Cardwell** and his wife **Karen** on the birth of their son **William** and to **Miss** 'Finchy' **Finch**, on the birth of her daughter, **Daisy**.

EXERCISE CHATURANGA - *By LCpl McIlduff*

For the fifth year running soldiers from 251 Sig Sqn foolishly set-off for the Chaturanga Assault Course Competition, held in Tournai, Belgium. The competition is based on four member teams competing over a 2km assault course where natural and artificial obstacles alternate with shooting tests using crossbows, sniper rifles, pistols and assault rifles. Team one consisted of **Sgt** 'I dance like a diva' **Clash, Sgt** 'I am funny' **Sanderson, Sgt** 'I eat more than ten men' **Gill** and myself **LCpl** 'Sprog' **McIlduff**. Team two was made up of **Sgt** 'What's the name of that gun?' **Moore, Sgt** 'Evil Knievel' **Webb, Cpl** 'nerves of steel' **Dyer** and **LCpl** 'I am a lady' **Harkness**. The man leading the exercise **WO2 YofS** 'Show me your war face' **Cardwell.**

The trip out to Belgium was uneventful, that is, if you call nine people and all their kit squashed into our sunshine coach of a minibus uneventful. Once there it was all off the bus and out for a quick look at the assault course and then off to get our heads down in preparation for the next day, (Not!). The first day on the assault course was spent in our individual teams going over the obstacles in slow time, all 38 of them. At the end of the day we were all feeling the effects of too much running, jumping and crawling through mud, (not to say the beer the night before!).

When race day arrived, we were all a little bit stiff; before any teams could compete in the competition all team members had to pass the confidence test, the first being a cat crawl over a valley and the second a death slide. If you're anything like me, heights tend to be a bit of a problem. **Sgt** 'Evil Knievel' **Webb**, appeared as if he was auditioning for the part in a travelling circus as a clown, which never the less kept everybody well entertained.

Rear row (L-R): Sgt Moore, Cpl Dyer, Sgt Webb, LCpl Harkness, WO2 (YofS) Cardwell
Front row (L-R): Sgt Gill, LCpl McIlduff, Sgt Clash, Sgt Sanderson, and Benson the dog

It was now drawing nearer to our turn and team one was up first, nerves were starting to get to everyone. Once we got the go ahead, the obstacles were easily completed and we made good time, then it was onto our first of three shoots. The first shoot was a 100m range, the second and third shoots were the 50m standing and the 25m pistol shoot, in-between shoots we completed circuits of the obstacle course, after the shooting was completed the only task left was the 100m carry to the finish. Once there, **Sgt** 'I eat more than ten men' **Gill** went on to do a sniper shoot. The torture was then over! We were later informed that Team One had completed the course in the fastest time ever for a British Team…Yeah!

The whole course was repeated for Team Two, who took slightly longer and it was said to be the funniest British team ever to have competed in the event. The final results were: Team One came first and walked away with the Gold, Team Two came seventh, where **Sgt** 'Evil Knievel' **Webb** was given his last shot of morphine. Finally, team members would like to thank all the Sponsors, without whom, the exercise would not of happened, and a special thank you to L' Ecole Logistique in Tournai, Belgium for hosting us all so admirably.

259 SIGNAL SQUADRON

Sqn Comd **Maj J. H. Fraser**
SSM **WO2 Tredwell**

The Squadron bid a sad farewell to a lot of SHQ and Ops this month. These being, **SSgt Barr, WO2** 'You horrible lot' **Ewing, Capt** 'It's way past my bed-time' **Shead, Capt** 'Batfink' **Handibode** and, last but not least, **Mr Stevie Boulton**. On the arrivals front we say a big hello to **WO2** 'Charlie don't surf!' **Tredwell, Capt McNally** and **Capt Knight**. We hope everyone settles into the Cyprus way of life well and that they thoroughly enjoy next months excitement in the form of Battlecamp!

AIRFIELD TROOP
Tp Comd **2Lt Kate Milner**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Bob Stenhouse**

Airfield Tp has been through quite a few changes recently, due to the change over of the detachment to Kosovo/Bosnia and the postings in and out. We welcome back **Sig** 'Mong Hoof' **Milevsky, Sig Andy** 'Damon Hill' **Wells** and our illustrious leader **SSgt** 'The Builder' **Stenhouse**. They were taken over from by our very own three wise monkeys, **Sig** 'Monobrow' **McGurk, Sig** 'Way-aye-man' **Goddard** and **Sig** 'Jackanory' **King**, who, we are sure will come back with loads of exciting stories about how he solved the Kosovo Conflict (obviously no one was around to see this). We are all looking forward to seeing **Cpl Danny** 'Randy-Dudd' **Rudd** who will be joining the Squadron once again from his 4-month sun shine tour of the south Atlantic. Word has it that he has fallen for a bird called Pingu. Speaking of sunshine, a big hello to **FofS** 'Have you got a fag?' **McGregor**, who is currently relaxing in the USA.

We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome in **2Lt Kate** 'L-Plates' **Milner, Cpl Dave** 'Bodge tape' **Atherton, Cpl Paul** 'Rock and Roller' **Creeley, Sig Gav** 'Mirror boy' **Prigmore, Sig Pete** 'Maccam' **Goddard** and **Sig** 'Colgate' **Griffiths**. Also, hurry back **LCpl** 'Midnight' **Barnett** from your Class 1 and welcome back to **LCpl Morris** from your Fibre Course. A big farewell goes to **Sig** 'Gummy Bear' **Joughin, Sig** 'What are you doing?' **Hobson** and **Sig Ronnie** 'Sweet Cheeks' **Fletcher**, who is looking forward to serving Big Macs and fries to the rest of us in 69 UK Civ Div.

Airfield Tp would like to say sorry to the rest of the Squadron and JSSU for winning every drinking competition on offer at the Telemech convention. Once we had scraped together enough people to take part in the BFBS 5-a-side Football Tournament, our team 'Athletico Sambuca' managed to come second (in every game) resulting in last place in the

Plate Competition. A considerable improvement on last year's effort in which we came second overall! It was still, however, a very enjoyable and (suprisingly for Cyprus) sunny day. Arabs beach club was the venue for the Akrotiri all-island volleyball tournament, in which we faired a lot better by winning the Plate competition. The team consisted of **Sgt Kev** 'Come on big boy' **Waring, Cpl** 'I earn more money than yaw' **Paterson, LCpl Rob** 'The Knee' **Hansen** and **Sig Gav** 'Three times around my chest. GO!' **Prigmore**. Well done for showing the RAF how to play the game.

LCpl 'Wide boy' **Bilby** and **Sig** 'Abdoula' **Stanley** attended a basic parachuting course at CJSATC, Dhekelia. They thoroughly enjoyed themselves, but their unscheduled 'night activities' contributed greatly to the challenging nature of the course! **Cpl** 'Goose' **Paterson** is currently on the same course probably wondering why he is throwing himself out of a perfectly good aircraft. Congratulations to **2Lt Milner** on her valiant attempt at the Cyprus Walkabout. She obviously didn't understand what she was letting herself in for... bet you won't make the same mistake again next year ma'am! Consolations were readily forthcoming, however, if only from her puppy pooch **Bob**. A further congratulations to **Sgt George** 'I'm on my mobile' **Henry** who has recently been awarded the 'Queen Mother's Certificate of Merit for Outstanding work in the Community'. Oh and a final call out to **Sig Adam Holley** ....Get the beers in mate!

EPISKOPI TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt Sarah Covey-Crump**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Gary Mathieson**

It has been a busy time for the Troop at the moment with various arrivals and departures. On the arrivals front we say a big hello to **SSgt Mathieson, Cpl** 'Piggy' **Lee-Davis, LCpl** 'I've not had too many!' **Foster, Sgt Musgrove** and **Sig Wardley**. We'd like to say goodbye and good luck to **Cpl** 'Caz' **Croft, Sig** 'Southern Fairy' **Creighton, Cpl** 'Granddaddy' **Quinn, SSgt Barr** and **Sig Emett**. For the fortunate ones left in the trod we have the Squadron Battle Camp to look forward to in November, as well as the Hodgson Shield Competition, which has started anew. A final mention has to be made of **Sgt Street** and **Sig Campbell** who against all odds defeated the mountain in the Cyprus Walkabout. As well as the fact that the temperature was over 30 degrees, the mountain 5700ft high and the course 90km long the heroic pair survived being beasted down Troodos by a Royal Marines Warrant Officer! All in all, it was definitely **Sgt** 'Third time lucky' Streets finest hour!

DHEKHALIA TROOP
Tp Comd. **Capt Alexander**
Tp SSgt **SSgt Bryant**

THE ARMY ANGLING FEDERATION CARP CHAMPIONSHIPS

After hearing tales of record breaking fish being caught throughout the whole of France, 'the team' from 295 Sig Sqn (myself **LCpl** 'Baggy' **Bagshaw** and **Sig** 'Gupta' **Bate**) were on a high when we finally reached the Abbey lakes complex near Compeigne. The Army Angling Federation Carp Championships consisted of a Pairs event being held over a 48-hour period, from the 18-20 August. After picking the 'best peg' on the lake, we set up our rod and bivvy to the gentle splash of pounders leaping clear of the water. The water looked good. The weather was right and the fish numerous and large. After a 12-hour wait, we finally got a screamer of a run and after a couple of seconds slipping around in the mud, **Sig Bate** managed to strike in to it. It was a monster of a fish that fought valiantly for about ten minutes until the hook flew out of its mouth, just as we were about to land it. Distraught at our loss, we retired for the night, only to be woken four hours later by the high pitched tone of my bite alarm, signaling another chance of a fish, a quick dive into the two inches of mud to grab my rod. Unfortunately it proved fruitless, one of many 'ghost runs', which plagued us for the rest of the competition. At the end of the 48 hours, only 21 fish had been landed, by only 6 of 17 teams. The lake had not fished as well as expected and had beaten most of the 34 disappointed anglers. Still, finishing seventh equal doesn't sound too bad! Special thanks goes to **Rob Hughes**, (carp fishing champion), for hosting the championships and for giving **Sig Bate** some casting lessons.

ANNUAL TELEMECH CONVENTION -6 SEPT 2000

On Saturday 9 September the annual Cyprus Telemech Convention was held at the Squadron's Jimmy Club bar in Episkopi. Telemech's from Ayia Nik, Dhekalia, Akrotiri and Episkopi met up for a few sociables and some fun and games. The day started off with a kick-around at the Happy Valley pitches. Afterwards it was back to the bar for a quiz courtesy of **Cpl** 'Piggy' **Lee-Davis**. There was a barbecue laid on to keep our energy levels up for the long day ahead. A good eight hours later (and a couple of beers) saw Limasol Wine Festival as the final watering hole before everyone headed into the main tourist area to dance the night away. A big thanks goes to **Sig** 'Big Gay Alf' **Gamett, Sig** 'Left Eye Lopez' **Moss** and **Sig** 'Monobrow' **Williams** for organising this event, a final thanks goes to **LCpl Tindall** for doing a good job handling the bar and the constant barrage of abuse!

THE CARDBOARD CRUISE-AIDER

On 3 September 2000, a team of elite soldiers from Dhekelia Tp, 259 Sig Sqn entered the 62 Royal Engineers Annual Charity Raft Race at Cessac Beach, Dhekelia. The intrepid team members were **LCpl** 'Doorwedge' **Dorward** (Skipper), **Cpl** 'Skin' **Readhead** (Navigator), **Sig** 'Gupta' **Bate** (Gunner) and **LCpl** 'Hefner' **Taylor** (Raft Design Engineer). Forty-six rafts in total were entered for the various races, and were given marks for construction, originality, methods of propulsion, for the teams' fancy dress and of course for their race performance.

Our team was feeling quietly confident of success, although the rest of the Troop (and the Garrison), were laughing at us and hurling torrents of abuse. On reflection, this was understandable, as our raft was constructed from cardboard MFO boxes. Undaunted, we made our last minute race preparations and loaded the raft up with ammo, mostly eggs. Our heat quickly came around and before we knew it, we were on the start line being showered with eggs and flour from enthusiastic spectators. The starting thunder-flash went off, and we ran along the beach to board our magnificent craft. Somehow, it didn't sink and, incredibly, we started to pull away from the pack. We rounded the two marker buoys and rocketed in to the finish, minutes ahead of everybody else. Unfortunately, two rafts in other heats were faster which pushed us back into third place overall. Still, not bad for a cardboard raft. We were heroes and the chicks loved us. I hope this proves that there is a viable future for cardboard shipbuilding.

ROYAL SIGNALS MUSEUM

Check Out the NEW STOCK
in the Museum Shop
For your Christmas Gift

THE MUSEUM AND SHOP WILL BE
CLOSED FROM FRI 15TH DEC (12.00)
UNTIL JAN 2ND

Presents & Gifts for all the family
New Childrens Toys & Gifts
Childrens Camouflage Uniform
Camouflage Pen and Pencil Sets
Tools and "Gadgets" for Dad
Uniform & Accessories
Books, Prints and Cards

Opening Times; Mon – Fri (All Year)10.00 – 5.00. Weekends (Feb-Oct)10.00 – 4.00.

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT FALKLAND ISLANDS

OUT WITH THE OLD AND IN WITH THE NEW
Sqn Comd **Maj W. E. H. Adsett**
USM **WO2 T. Smith**

The picture shows the outgoing USM, WO2 Tom Smith and incoming CPO Tim Isherwood (RN)

As 257 Sig Sqn's tour draws to a close, preparations for the hand-over are in their advanced stages. We offer our sincerest thanks to our RAF and Navy staff for making this tour memorable and enjoyable. Although we are shortly to depart these barren shores, we must say a farewell to **2Lt** 'Gentle Ben' **Davenport** who has cut away from his penguins to complete his Troop Commanders course at Blandford. Good-byes also to **Capt Phil Day**, **Capt Dave** 'Drummer Boy' **Ball** and **WO2 Tom** 'Karaoke King' **Smith**. The new USM, **CPO Tim Isherwood**, despite being in the Senior Service (as he never ceases to remind us), will have a hard act to follow. A warm welcome is also extended to **Capts Lee** 'Half Marathon before breakfast' **Kielly** and **Mark Edwards**.

'Hard Men'
(R-L): OC JCUFI, Sgt Pickering and Sig Potts show off their Winners Trophies for the MPA Ultra Fit Competition

257 SIGNAL SQUADRON (JCUFI)
SOUTH-WEST ATLANTIC MID-WINTER SWIM

On Saturday 24 June 2000, we were all given two options very different to our usual Squadron bonding 'Sports for All'. Any sane person, given the choice between a log-run or diving half-naked into the Atlantic Ocean in the middle of winter, would surely opt for the former? Are we up for a challenge, or perhaps four months isolation is having an effect? Reality sank in when we woke up on Saturday morning to find a carpet of snow lying on the ground. We arrived at Surf Bay to find more crazy people like ourselves, large waves and no sand - just snow. Lots of snow.

We all stripped down to our swimming costumes. Two minutes to go! **Leading Wren Shelly** 'Anyone for a wobbly coffee?' **Jones** kept our spirits up by repeatedly telling us, 'It's not as cold as last year.' Mmmmm ..... yes. We all lined up. Certain groups were psyching themselves up, joking and showing their war faces, trying to convince **Lt Ade** 'I've lost my heart rate monitor' **Johnson** they really weren't scared. It helped to take their minds off the fact that all sensation was now lost from the ankles down. Looking at the faces around me, I realised that others might share my view that my heart would stop, and I would actually die from the ice cold water. The flare fired – this is it! - a hoard of screaming bodies went sprinting into the most uninviting ocean.

I've never seen knees lifted so high. Enough to make any PTI proud! The brave ones amongst us managed to run to head height, but most were dragged under by the icy waves. **Cpl Lesley** 'The BV's driven off with my clothes' **Beck**, successfully managed to drag half a dozen others under with her fall. Once we'd been completely wetted through ('to the head' was the agreement), we didn't hang around and we were swiftly ashore. I'm sure everyone (even **Sigs Keith** 'I like to shimf' **Malait** and **Charlotte** 'I don't care what my deputy dog hat looks like - I'm warm' **Driscol**) would agree it was an exhilarating experience - and a good giggle. Two Tornadoes congratulated us all by performing a 'fly-by'. This, the huge bonfire on the beach plus the hot toddies - and of course raising money for a good cause - made it all worthwhile.

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS UNIT FALKLAND ISLANDS
By Lt Jon 'No Mates' Mayne
OC **Maj Ian** 'Ned Flanders' **Hunter**
USM **WO2 Karl** 'Gon Fishin' **Weaver**

The final additions to the new Army element of JCUFI arrived at Mount Pleasant International Airport on 8 August to the welcoming signs from 3 (UK) DSR reading 'Welcome to Hell 7 Sigs – Merry Xmas'. It had, however, taken a long time to get there. 231 Sig Sqn, officially became detached from 7 Sig Regt after Easter in order to complete all the training required to deploy into a working environment where there is a plethora of equipment never seen before by the soldiers within the Squadron. JCUFI is a tri service unit, and although it is headed up by the Army. 45 percent of those serving within the Unit are either Royal Air Force, or Royal Navy. There are three Troops, Alpha Tp is headed up by **Flt Lt Dave** 'Foxy' **Robertson**, and is responsible for all radio communications. Bravo Tp is the Responsibility of **WO Ian Brown** of the Royal Navy and runs Syscon and the COMMCEN. Charlie Tp is led by 231's very own **Lt Harriet Hebblethwaite**, and is responsible for the trunk communications systems and all the IT equipment and support around the Islands, and more importantly, everyone's telephones.

Once the handover from 3 (UK) DSR was complete, everyone started to find out what the Falklands has to offer. The result was that there is definitely something for everyone, as long as it didn't involve being outside for too long, as the austral summer is not yet with us, and temperatures have been as low as -20°c with wind-chill. Activities range from 10 pin bowling and a cinema to Go-Karting and golf. There is also a superbly equipped Gym, a swimming pool, sauna and solarium, and for when the weather does warm up, a water sports lake, as well as the chance to take a guided Battlefield tour. This means that everyone can experience something new while they are here.

A final word must go to **Maj Paul Bosher** who finished his command of 231 Sig Sqn with the shortest Falklands tour ever before **Maj Ian Hunter** took over. He will be missed by all of the Squadron (well some of them at any rate), and we all wish **Paul** and **Helen** well in Shrivenham.

Sgt 'Mick the Mullet' Yendell showing off his catch

ALPHA TROOP - *By Sig Simon 'Uncle Fester' Garrett*
Tp Comd **Flt Lt Dave Robertson**

The JCUFI advance party arrived on 1 August 2000 consisting of myself and **Sgt Wilson** to RADCON and the rebro-dogs **LCpl J. J.** 'Rambo' **Roberts**, **LCpl** 'Itchy' **Richie Harris**, **Sig** 'Oldman' **Porter** and **Sig** 'Manylegs' **Qualtrough**. We started our take over and waited for the main body to arrive. After a fond farewell to 3 Div and the simultaneous disappearance of three cats, we started to get on with making ourselves at home and getting on with the job. The South Georgia boys- **Sgt** 'Nessie' **Nesbit**, **Cpl Charlie Hart** and **Sig** 'Random' **Tasker** deployed with much chatter about how hard they have it and how they were set up. Two days after they arrived, we were receiving signals asking to come back. **Sig Iain** 'Shermanator' **Bibby** was amazed that the water went the other way down the plug-hole and spent many a happy hour flushing toilets. **Cpl Winston Whyte** has busied himself with his latest 'get-rich-quick' scheme by charging for kit from RADCON stores, managing to amaze everyone with his 'now you see it now you don't' trick.

LCpl Neil Dinsdale decided to make new pen friends, writing several introduction letters to adverts, only to have them arrive to fellow RADCON crew **LCpl Helen** 'Warrior' **Winterson** and **LCpl** 'Thelma' **Roberts**. Back on the rebros, **LCpl Harris** and his crew consisting of **Sigs** 'Pukie' **Wilkie** and **Qualtrough** on Mt Adam have been trying to outdo **LCpl Roberts**, **Sigs Porter** and 'Virg' **Parkin** on Campito with exciting telephone chess matches and karaoke nights. **Sgt Dean Wilson**, **Sig Bibby** and **Sig Garrett** attended the battlefield tour of Mt Tumbledown, hosted by the Roulement Infantry Company. This proved to be both an informative and emotional day with the Gurkha piper playing at the memorial site on the rocky outcrop overlooking Stanley. We now look forward to future explorations of the Islands' fascinating flora and fauna. (Finally the Troop wish **Sgt** 'Jaffa' **Wilson** a speedy recovery!)

BRAVO TROOP - *By LCpl Matt Childs*
Tp Comd **WO (CY) Ian Brown RN**

On 7 August 2000, the main body of 231 Sig Sqn, 7 Sig Regt, landed at Mount Pleasant Airport in the not so sunny Falkland Islands to begin the year's main deployment, a six-month tour as JCUFI, the communications squadron in support of HQ BFFI. We were to take over from 257 Sig Sqn, and the advance party had already deployed a couple of weeks beforehand to get things squared away in preparation for our arrival. Once we had landed we were met by the OC, **Maj Paul Bosher**, (thought you were safe now didn't you Sir!), with the rest of the advance party and then whisked off to the accommodation. (Much better than Krefeld). The next couple of days was death by Powerpoint as we sat through the interminable round of GDT and FNG briefs and presentations, Island do's and don'ts, and all the other arrivals niff naff that goes with a new tour in a new location.

After all this it was pretty much straight into work, after a couple of hardcore social nights to say goodbye to the outgoing Squadron. A Tri Service COMMCEN is a strange beast indeed, and it took us all a few days to get used to it and to get settled in on our respective shifts. (A watch is something you wear on your wrist). **Cpl Richie Applegarth** went onto A shift, **Cpl John Mcgee** and **Sig Sam Clarke** onto C Shift and Myself onto B Shift. There were no major teething problems, although the RAF and the Navy element are still not quite sure what to make of **Sig Sam Clarke**. (But then again…who is?) We are all well into the routine now. Work, play and PT. Organised by our beloved Badge, **WO2 (USM) Karl Weaver**.

One of the main attractions in the coming months is going to be the first ever gig of South Atlantic mega stars 'The Lost Resort', a collection of JCUFI musically challenged individuals headed up by **Sgt Dave** 'Skins' **Burke**. The jury is still out on this one, but we will be sure to let you know how they get on! Should be a laugh anyway! The Troop would like to say a big Falklands Hi! To **PORS Chris Kierstenson RN** the new Systems Manager and Farewell to **PORS George Swalwell** RN the outgoing Systems manager. No one has that long to do. C Shift has also changed at the top 'bye to **Sgt Jud Pringle** RAF and hi to **Sgt Bob Ash** RAF. Enjoy your tour **Bob**. Finally congrats to two more of our Naval element. **LRO Shelly Jones** on getting her LS and GC for 15 years of undetected crime, nice one mate! Also to **LOM Paul Dimmock**, on receiving his NATO medal for a tour of Kosovo. Both medals were presented by CBFFI, **Brig Sheldon** at a small ceremony in the HQ building. That's about the lot for this instalment, but watch this space for future developments in the happy world of COMMCEN Falklands.

CHARLIE TROOP - *By Lt Harriet Hebblethwaite*
Tp Comd **Lt Harriet Hebblethwaite**

231 Sig Sqn based in Krefeld have, since early August, been fortunate enough to take over the responsibility of JCUFI. Charlie Tp is primarily responsible for maintaining the digiFITS bearer system throughout the Islands and the telephones and PCs around the complex, a full time job as the Tele Mechs found out in the first few weeks. The first month has been predominantly a settling in period, but we have had a visit by **Maj Gen Pringle**. There are of course many activities in which to indulge, depending upon your inclination (although what **Sgt Crompton's** is I can only guess). We have planned many trips in the forthcoming months including a very cold and wet trip in a rigid raider that I have cunningly managed to keep quiet so far, as well as further battlefield tours. Yes, I will remember to fill my flask this time and take spare camera film.

LINE SECTION - *by LCpl Healy*
IC **Sgt Dave Cascarino**

Farewell to 3 (UK) DSR! Gone but definitely not forgotten! 7 Sig Regt have arrived bringing with them their very own Tele Mechs. The mechs from 16 Sig Regt are all breathing a sigh of relief, for at least the next six months anyway! There's a new man in the hot seat in the shape of **Sgt Dave** 'Fatboy' **Cascarino**, welcome to him and congratulations on his recent promotion. Suffice to say his reputation has preceded him! We have all settled well into our new working environment, for the lads and lasses from 231 Sig Sqn it has been a steep learning curve, but they are coping admirably. The variety of work that Line Sect undertakes is vast, and never seems to let up. 'Fatboy' keeps telling us that it will soon seem like second nature- sorry boss, we don't believe you! On the social front we have all gelled really well- did you expect anything less from telemechs? However, we do have a problem with **LCpl Phil** 'I Love Sharon' **Brown** and **Sig Mo** 'I Love Sharon Too' **Morris**- Guys, be cool, sooner or later **LCpl Sharon** 'I can't Decide' **McCreaddie** will let you know one way or the other! Special mentions must go to **Sig Jim** 'The Stutter' **Brampton** and **Sig Simon** 'Dumb' **Woodworth**- without you two morale would not be as high! Meanwhile back at the ranch the sensation seekers of the Maintenance and Project crews led by **Cpl Danny** 'Devo' **Rudd** are having so much fun in the rain- get those cables tested lads! If **Cpl Glen** 'When I was a Radio Relay Det Commander' **Sunderland** carries on wingeing he will find himself on the receiving end of some good old Line Sect discipline!

FITTEST (Falkland Island Trunk and Telephone Support Team)
By LCpl 'Denzil' Depport
IC **Sgt Chris Crompton**

Keeping it short and sweet this month. I will kick off the article with a big thank you to all 3 (UK) DSR personnel for a smooth and very helpful handover/ takeover, and without whose help we'd be doing a lot more head scratching. Work down here is hectic, with over 2000 telephone subscribers to keep happy and a radio trunk system that seems to enjoy breaking down on the coldest of nights. However, all is not lost as there are a fair amount of recreational facilities available on MPA. For instance, I enjoy visiting the bar and, oh yes the errr…bar.) **Sgt** 'Ginger Wizard' **Crompton** is now resident DJ for the ever popular JCUFI bar 'Sharkies'. He has recently been approached by an unknown source who wishes to use him in implementing a new project called 'NAAFOT' (Noise As A Form Of Torture). **Cpl** 'Screecher' **Simpson** has joined a band, but will sadly be out of action for a while as he was severely blinded by the last rotten tomato launched in his direction. **Cpl** 'Sweepy' **Baulch** is doing sterling work as section MT rep', while **LCpl** 'Smokey' **Ross** is currently under psychiatric evaluation due to an unhealthy fixation with jumper wire and chrono-blocks. On a final note, **LCpl** 'Skid' **Jordan** may soon be leaving us to begin a career as a crash test dummy. He has considerable experience in the field and is hoping for an interview with the relocation officer as soon as he has completed his invigorating week with the Roulement Infantry Company.

POWER SECTION
IC **Sgt Gaz Topps**

The JCUFI powermen arrived into theatre headed by **Sgt Gaz Topps** on 31 July with the main body ariving on 8 August. After a week's hand over from 3 (UK) DSR we started to get into the swing of things. **Sgt Gaz Topps** was immediately met with a big MT problem as Line Sect cannot get to grips with starting Rovers. **Cpl** 'Kaz' **Casswell** has sorted out the servicings for the next six months. He is also keeping spirits high with his stories of spears, sandles and sling shots from when he joined the army in 1682. We would also like to congratulate newly promoted **Sgt Andy** 'The coiled cobra' **McMullan** who has been posted to 1 (UK) ADSR. We will miss him in the bar giving it both barrels of 'Love on the Rocks'. Alarm clocks are now safe (well, down this neck of the woods anyway). We would also like to wish him, **Cindy**, and the kids the best of luck for the future.

Other personnel in the team include newly promoted **LCpl** 'Monty' **Learmonth** who is pulling his hair out with heliops. **Sig** 'Monica' (I promise to be ready in under two hours) **Marshall**, in charge of docs, has finally finished six months work in one day and is now to be found with a duster cleaning something. **Sig** 'Scotty' (I'll just get me head down for a couple of minutes) **Maskell** although in charge of Troop funds has more of a likeness to Lenny Mclean for his debt collecting skills. Finally **LCpl** ' Kev' (which ferry company can I use now) **Cranney** who is IC stores, 2IC heliops, and gene fixer extraordinaire and all round good egg. We are still waiting for the contract with Turners to be signed so that we can hand over responsibility for first and second line servicing and repair of the generators at the remote hilltop sites. Until then the routine of visiting all the sites every 10 days goes on (just to help **Gaz Topps** fulfil his

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR - FROM THE EDITOR AND HIS STAFF

Mt Longdon Battlefield Tour
Clockwise from left: Sgt Gaz Topps, WO2 (USM) Weaver, SSgt Tony Black, Sgt Andy McMullen, Sgt Chris Crompton, Lt Harriet Hebblethwaite, Sgt Robbie Richardson, Sgt Mick Yendell

challenge of getting naked on every hilltop in the Falkland Islands).

The Section have various trips and outings planned for the future, as well as making best use of the facilities and all the various opportunities that the Islands have to offer. These include battlefield tours to Goose Green and Darwin, and out to Mount Longdon. These, as well as the odd sight seeing trip to smaller islands to see the varied wild life, should make for a very interesting tour.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CELL - *By Cpl Johnston*
IC **SSgt Andy Roberts**

From the sunny plains of Germany we moved eight thousand miles to the land of hope and opportunity. It was here that Cpl 'Johno' Johnston straight in from 39 Inf Bde HQ & Sig Sqn and Cpl 'Dunc' Beacher were assigned to the 'TRI-SERVICE IT CELL'. Being the FNGs we were welcomed to the cell with an interesting first evening out, dressed in what was to be known as the FNG suits. This involved getting dressed up in a collection of computer equipment and being paraded around the many bars on MPA. Now having worked in the IT Cell for three weeks we have settled into doing things the half Army, half RAF way. Working really hard with no rest (Army way); eating and drinking lots which compensates rest (RAF way). It is a highly demanding job as there are no computer or software companies here to repair any equipment, so it is down to the professionalism of the personnel working in the IT Cell. We enjoy many social and sporting outings, having a team in the local bowling league, which get us out of the work place and creates teamwork and good morale. It just goes to show that the Army and RAF can work together.

1 (ROYAL BUCKINGHAMSHIRE YEOMANRY) SIGNAL SQUADRON (SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS)

Sqn Comd **Maj Simon Gregory**
SSM **WO2 Dave Scott**

As these Notes go to press, the Squadron is gearing up to go to Denmark on Annual Camp, and the Ex Runnel Stone. This should have been the opportunity for the Squadron to train on the newly procured Project LOCK, but the inevitable delays have meant that this is not happening, and **WO2 (YofS) Dave Hughes** has had to put in some long nights re-working the plan. We have recently welcomed **Maj Simon Gregory**, who has taken over the Squadron and finds he has to work a little harder than he did at the sleepy hollow that is the LISA. One of his first duties was to bid farewell to **LCpl James** 'Smudge' **Smith** and **Cpl Simon** 'Hodge' **Hodgson**. We bid them Au Revoir, if not goodbye. We have also said farewell to **Sgt Aaron** 'Doobs' **Rodgers**, after a brief career in Special Communications. Congratulations to **SSgt (FofS) Ted Heath**, for passing EFP2 without too much complaining, and **Lt Andy Peploe** for passing JOTES. And last but by no means least, a big thank-you to **Sigs Clare Maslin** and **Karen Clarke** for organising a highly successful Squadron Barbeque at Bletchley Park in August.

SSgt Dean Poole tries to reassure the new Squadron Commander about his Command

ASSESSMENT COURSE

A number of willing Regular Tele Op (Tg) volunteers were put through their paces on the second Special Communications Assessment Course of the year. **Cpl Jase Broome** oversaw a slightly revised course with great success, and all the students worked, and played, very hard. We look forward to seeing six of them back very soon on the Special Comms Course. The Squadron is still recruiting, and the number of posts available is about to rise substantially in all trades. There are even going to be two IS Operator slots. Anyone interested in volunteering for the February Course should contact their YofS immediately, and get a copy of SOinC PD 206 in the post to the Squadron before the end of January.

OBUA TRAINING WEEKEND

In September the Squadron embarked on its now annual pilgrimage to Eastmere Village at STANTA for Urban Operations (as we understand it is now called) training. In spite of the fuel crisis all the vehicles made it up to Norfolk, aided by the ability of a MOD 90 to extract fuel from otherwise fuel-less petrol stations. The rain arrived as ordered at reveille the next morning but spirits remained high as everyone was put through their paces on a series of stands.

LCpl Gareth Clarke demonstrated 101 ways to cross barbed wire and **Cpl Pete Litchfield** caused havoc by 'wounding' Section Commanders at the critical moment on patrols. **WO2 (SSM) Dave Scott** and **LCpl Jim Holgate** reminded everyone of how to do a Section attack properly. Meanwhile, the airborne combo of **Cpl Sylvester Hack** and **LCpl Simon Roberts** conducted a guided tour of the sewers and rooftops on the confidence course. In the afternoon the training moved on to the real business of practising assaulting buildings, while the Squadron's patrols for Ex Runnel Stone were taken aside by **Lt Angus Evers** and **WO2 (SSM) Dave Scott** and sent out on CTRs of the village. **Sgt** 'Wes' **Wesseldine** and **Cpl Mark Gott** both managed to infiltrate the enemy positions, which were ably organised by **SSgt Dean Poole,** complete with his two boxer dogs.

After the patrols had reported back with their findings the Squadron formed up for an attack on Eastmere Village in the early hours of Sunday morning. After a simulated artillery bombardment and through a thick fog the Squadron stormed through the wire and took all their objectives within 90 minutes. Tea, medals and war stories followed before the only sleep of the weekend on the coach back to Bletchley. After this performance, the Danish Home Guard is in for a shock next month when the Squadron ventures out to Denmark!

LCpl Jeet Madoolal aims for the stars

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANISATION SATELLITE GROUND TERMINAL F17

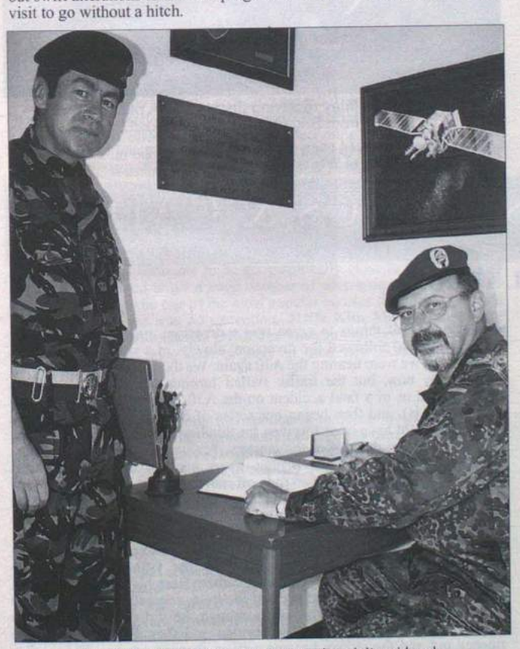
Station Comd **Maj (TOT) Paul Gaffney**

The past year at Balado Bridge has seen considerable change with a 60% turnover in station personnel. Nevertheless, with all hands to the pumps and a concerted effort by the techs on 'OJT', we have been able to keep our heads above water and maintain consistently good satellite communications for NATO - well done the lads!

The station bids farewell to **WO2 (FofS) Kevin Moir** who has been posted on promotion to 243 Sig Sqn to find out what hard work really is - we hope he doesn't miss his role as the resident 'Balado Bridge Social Worker'. We know how much he loved counselling our sometimes wayward lads - hope the hair grows back FOS! We also welcome his successor, **WO2 (FofS) Mick Cowie** who has hit the ground running and is already showing signs that he is keen to make his mark. Also congratulations to **Sgt Ian** 'pecs' **Fincham** on his recent promotion and to **Cpl Ian Kirkland** on his selection for promotion to Sergeant.

VISIT OF BRIGADIER GENERAL H. H. SCHULZ (Ge A) - DEPUTY CONTROLLER NACOSA

The relentless onslaught of visits to Balado Bridge continues. However, one of particular note that took place on 4 August, 2000 was the visit of **Brig Gen H. H. Schulz**, the current Deputy Controller of NACOSA. The General, accompanied by his 12 year old son **Fabian** and **Lt Col Bill White** R SIGNALS, arrived at the station 30 minutes earlier than expected, perhaps in an attempt to catch the unit on the hop. In normal Royal Signals tradition, however, the station was well prepared for such an eventuality and the Station Commander, **Maj Paul Gaffney**, was immediately on hand to greet our distinguished visitors. **Maj Gaffney** then adopted diversion tactics by escorting the General to the ceremonial signing of the visitors book while **SSgt Shaun May** carried out swift alterations to the visit programme to enable the remainder of the visit to go without a hitch.



Brig Gen Schulz (Ge A) signing the visitors' book, watched by Maj Paul Gaffney

After an administrative and technical presentation by **Maj Gaffney** and the Station Civilian Engineer **Mr Brian Johnson**, the General was given a guided tour of the station where he was able to meet the soldiers at their place of work. First on the list was **Sgt** 'Taff (multi tasking)' **Tanner** who, due to manning shortfalls, has been running the stores section in recent months. He impressed the General with his knowledge of the NATO Stores Accounting System but made it clear that he was glad that **Cpl Ian Kirkland**, a real stores accountant, had been posted in to take up the reins. The next species to be encountered by the General was IC Power Section, 'Cornish but from Gloucester' **Cpl Richie Kear**, who proudly showed off his two Makron 280KW Generators - 'They're great if you want to power up the village sir, but a bit of over the top if we use them only to power up the station.' The next port of call was the RADOME or 'white golf ball' to the uninitiated. Besides the 14metre dish, the RADOME also houses the station fitness equipment. Quite often the lads can be seen here enjoying a relaxing row or even a gentle climb on the stepper. However, their main aim is usually to get rid of those excess pounds or more importantly to make room for more pies and crisps - especially **Sgt Mark Robinson** who, despite being a fitness guru, still enjoys a good pasty or three. Next it was off to the control room where the General met 'bald is beautiful' **Sgt Craig McGowan, Sgt** 'Smudge' **Smith** and **Sgt Ewan Kinnear** who despite being a ginger assures us he's still loved by the ladies - who are you kidding **Ewan**? Then it was on the bus off the bus for the usual photo call where **Cpl Phil Gavan** impressed everyone with his expertise as a photographer.

Brig Gen H. H. Schulz and Lt Col Bill White pictured with Maj Paul Gaffney and Balado Bridge personnel

The MOD Police complete with guard dog, civilian staff and Fabian Schulz get in on the act for the Station photo

He even got away with man handling the General to get the best poses - lucky man **Phil**, by the glares you were getting form **Maj Gaffney** we thought you were going to end up in a cell for the weekend.

After a wonderful Mediterranean Lunch professionally prepared by our very own multi-talented **Jean Smith,** whose main role is the 'station domestic engineer', the General was presented with a framed print of 'Balado at Dusk' to commemorate his visit to the unit.

Maj Gaffney presenting a picture of Balado Bridge to Brig Gen Shulz as a memento of his visit

The visit of **Gen Schulz** was an ideal opportunity for the presentation of the LS&GC Medal to **Sgt** 'Taff' **Tanner** who, despite being amazed that he got away with 15 years of undetected crime, was thrilled at the prospect of having his medal presented to him by a senior German General.

Sgt 'Taff' Tanner receives his LS&GC medal from Brig Gen Schulz (Ge A)

Sgt Tanner's wife **Jo** deserves much of the credit for keeping him in line.

Sgt Tanner and his wife Jo after he had received his LS&GC medal from Brig Gen Schulz (Ge A)

Finally the General gave the unit a short brief on the future of NATO Communications after which he presented the station with the NACOSA plaque.

Maj Gaffney receiving the NACOSA plaque from Brig Gen Schulz (Ge A)

The General thanked everyone for an informative and interesting visit and then he and **Lt Col White** said their farewell.

NEWS FROM TROOPS, UOTCS & CADETS

600 SIGNAL TROOP

Tp OC **Maj Ron Kirkwood**

Life has been busy at 600 Sig Tp as of late, well apart from PCGC, CDPT and CDA, with members of RSSST deploying to theatre every five minutes to assist with the apparent 'Non Onerous' commercialisation project. Congratulations go to **Sgt Dave Doody** who seems to have acquired dual Kosovan nationality. Congratulations also need to go to two other members of the Troop, **WO1 (Yofs) Steve Holt** who managed to hide his Macam accent and come off the commissioning board and also to **WO2 (FofS) Bob Wymer** who has achieved his life long ambition and gained his NVQ level 5 in diplomacy. We also wish **Bob** good luck in his forth-coming marriage (third time lucky), and also best wishes go to **SSgt Chris Gouldson** (second time lucky). They are both tying the knot in 2001. **Bob** is getting married in Norway and has kindly offered to charter a plane to fly his friends over.

EXERCISE STEEL DRAGON

Ex Steel Dragon was an adventurous training exercise for members of 600 Sig Tp, and affiliated members in the Hub taking place around the rich training areas of Penhale near Newquay, Cornwall. Nine people participated with more people from the Troop promising to try and get down some time during the week (It was amazing that those that did eventually turn up, managed to miss the more physical events and turn up for the Brewery Trip). The group was accommodated at Penhale Training Camp, three miles west of Newquay. The week's events consisted of walking, biking, orienteering, clay pigeon shooting and team building events (all taking place in various drinking establishments).

MOUNTAIN BIKING - *by Cpl Jase Wells.*

Monday morning we set out for the start point, about an hour away from Penhale at Poley's Bridge. Little did we know what the Dept of Transport had in store for us.

The first sign of things to come was a diversion sign on the A30. We turned right and followed the diversion, slowly, in a very long queue of traffic, until we were nearing the A30 again. We thought we had passed the problem by now, but the traffic started turning around and a passing motorist told us of a fatal accident on the A30. We followed suit (turned around that is), and then began our series of brushes with Road Closed signs. We could have been forgiven for thinking that Cornwall was being blocked off from the rest of the country. Anyway, two and a half hours later, we arrived at Poley's Bridge. Tyres pumped up and with seats adjusted the Magnificent Seven rode off into the forest. The first hour and a half was very picturesque, with verdant woodland on both sides of the 'Camel Trail', and a meandering stream on the right. We stopped for a brief lunch break at a trailside cafe, buying drinks and sneaking down our packed meals under the beady eyes of the waitress. A steam train momentarily distracted our attention, with the GSM, **WO1 Charlie** 'Flash' **Dubique** rushing to extract his camera from his bag. He managed to get a glorious photo of the back of the train, somewhat more than 200 metres away (but, rather worryingly though, he did manage to get the number). As we approached Wadebridge and then Padstow, the Trail opened out and the stream became a river, then an estuary. The tourists were out in force, getting in our way as only tourists do. Half an hour later we were sitting outside a pub in Padstow, supping ale, then home for tea, biscuits and more ale.

WALKING - *by Cpl Tony Booth*

On the second day of the adventure training, we set off on our little coastal jaunt from Portreath. **Cpl Tony Booth** suffering from a hangover whined for the first hour, until the fresh air helped him remove the contents of his stomach. **SSgt Gaz Walton, SSgt Kev Wosika** and **Cpl Phil Eaves** stormed off, as if on an SAS training mission. The GSM, **WO1 Charlie** 'David Bailey' **Dubique** snapped away on his camera at

everything that moved, which didn't include **Ian Munford** whose leisurely pace seemed to entail him going backwards. What started as a gentle coastal stroll turned into a mountaineering expedition. The gentle winding paths turned into steep gradients, where even the mountain goats struggled! Still, morale was high as we accidentally bumped into a public house. **SSgt Ian Munford** enjoyed a light and healthy meal of chips, choccy bar, two pints of cider and a cigar. Fuelled up we set off again, **Cpl Tony Booth** suffering from blisters was 'forced' to stop at another pub, gallantly supported by **SSgt Ian Munford** and **WO1 (GSM) Charlie Dubique. SSgt Kev Wosika, SSgt (FofS) Gaz Walton** and **Cpl Phil Eaves** enthusiastically sped off for the final three-mile dash. It isn't sure if they actually saw any of the coastal beauty, but did manage to set a new land speed record.

ORIENTEERING - *by Cpl Phil Eaves.*

On the third day, the morning dawned dark and misty. From within this mist **SSgt Kev Wosika** emerged having set out the orienteering course, soaking wet and laughing ominously to himself. As things turned out he had decided that the training area wasn't challenging enough, so hiding the markers would just add to the fun. Luckily though the mist cleared just before the event started, although this made absolutely no difference to some of the participants. First out of the blocks was **Cpl Phil Eaves** who shot away from the start point like a startled rabbit, next to go was **Cpl Jase Wells**, who sauntered away with back pack on looking less than enthusiastic. It was expected to run past one of the check points and find **Jase** casually seated reading his book, whilst enjoying a fine wine, but these fears were alleviated as instead of doing this **Jase** thought he would get lost instead. The remaining contestants went, some running, others walking leaving **Kev Wosika** at the finish point still chuckling to himself. About an hour later, **Phil Eaves** stumbled over the line, ten markers to the good, in a reasonably quick-time, closely followed by **SSgt (FofS) Kev (GPS) Peters**, again ten markers to the good. The rest then stumbled in with **SSgt Ian Munford**, the only other entrant to find all ten. **SSgt (FofS) Gaz** 'I'm a Corp Orienteerer' **Walton** managed to only find four, whilst the GSM, **WO1 Charlie Dubique** and **Sgt Paul Green** both came in together having managed to only find two, chuntering to anyone who would listen (which wasn't many) about how the markers had obviously been moved! The results of this little competition was: **SSgt (FofS) Kev Peters, SSgt Ian** 'I'll follow Kev around' **Munford, Cpl Phil Eaves**. The only thing remaining was to partake in the après orienteering BBQ, the only surprising thing that happened here was the fact that the GSM found it!

CLAY PIGEON SHOOTING

It was decided to take advantage of the Clay Pigeon range at Penhale and see who was the exercise hot shot. The event is a lot harder than it looks, each person had 10 clays to try and hit, with most people having 10 rounds apart from **SSgt Ian** 'Win at all costs' **Munford** who with pride at stake, thought he would use eleven. He eventually tied for first place with **Cpl Phil Eaves, Phil** actually hit one more than **Ian**, but **Ian** managed to talk (or should that be bore!) him round to a tie. The most notable shooter was **SSgt Kev Wosika** who after much bragging and promises came in with a pretty credible 0 out of 10, but managed to get 10 out of 10 for the excuses round, the best one being 'My fingers were cold!' Results were:

1st	SSgt Ian Munford & Cpl Phil Eaves	7/10
3rd	WO1 (GSM) Charlie Dubique	6/10
4th	SSgt Kev Peters, Cpl Tony Booth & Cpl Jase Wells	5/10
7th	SSgt Gaz (I'm a Corp Clay Pigeon Shooter) Walton	4/10
8th	Sgt Paul Green	2/10
Last	SSgt Kev Wosika	0/10

All in all a good week was had by all, with those that attended already looking forward to next years event, which I believe **SSgt (FofS) Gaz Walton** has volunteered to organise.

SOUTHAMPTON UNIVERSITY OFFICER TRAINING CORPS

CO **Lt Col A. M. Abraham 9/12 L MBE**
PSI Signals **WO2 (SSM) R. J. Pye**
Tp Comd Sarawak Tp **JUO Ross Anderson**

Formed originally in 1902 with 20 students from Hartley University College who joined the 2nd Volunteer Battalion of the Hampshire Regiment as the College Company, finally becoming a unit in its own right in 1937. The Unit currently recruits from a number of Universities in the Southampton, Winchester, Bournemouth and Portsmouth areas with a very healthy strength of nearly 200. Within the Unit a Signals Troop has been formed which provides Special to Arm Training to its members, enabling it to support the Unit during its exercises.

UOTC SIGNALS COURSE BLANDFORD SUMMER 2000

Southampton is fortunate to be geographically close to Blandford and has always managed to get a good number of people on the OTC Signals Course. This has to be one of the most popular courses that Officer Cadets attend and this year was no exception. **JUOs Kim Mc Murray, Kate Maher, John Debenham** and **OCdt Jez Vaughan** all thoroughly enjoyed their time and are now keen to pass on their new skills to others at Southampton.

SUMMER CAMP 2000

This year's Summer Camp was conducted in South Wales with a wide range of military and adventurous activities. At this time the Troop was commanded by **2Lt Victoria Deakin** (now at Sandhurst) with **JUO Will Taylor** (due to go to Sandhurst in January 2001) as Troop Sergeant and **JUO Gemma Sayer** as Tp JUO. Starting with Platoon Level tactics on Templeton Training Area then building up to Company Level Tactics. A good supply of blanks ensured that all had an enjoyable time with everyone getting a chance to take part in the HQ and Platoon roles. For the Troop it was the first time that they had been both signalling and part of fighting patrols. It was soon apparent to all that comms are vital especially in a fast moving battle.

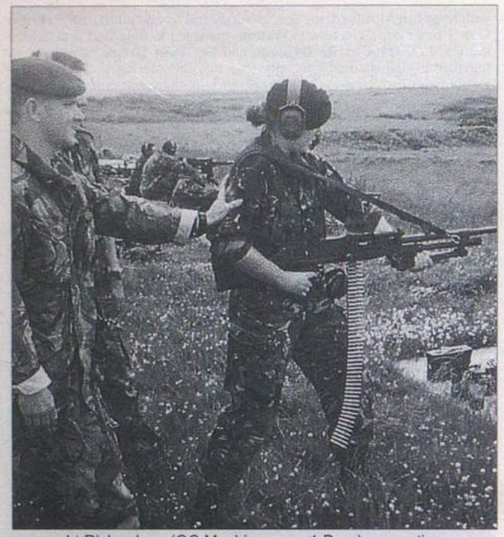
The next phase was cloaked in secrecy, however, some managed to work out that something out of the ordinary was going to happen. We were not disappointed: the next few days were an escape and evasion exercise starting off at Dixies Corner on Sennybridge Training Area, the usual tactics of hoods, plastic cuffs and loads of noise soon had everyone in the spirit of the day. As comms were a key element of the exercise many of the Troop were quickly released to allow them to take up comms roles. I knew there was an advantage to being in Sarawak. We were dispersed in small teams all over the Sennybridge Area and the Black Mountains. This included RRBs on the top of the Pen y Fan and other peaks to provide the safety net to cover over 200 square kilometres of mountainous ground. The comms worked well, and morale in the Troop had risen to an all-time high, we were possibly the only Special to Arm Troop who were actually employed in their role.

The camp then moved to a Range package in Castlemartin, Pembrokeshire. This year most of the Troop had managed to qualify for field firing; Castlemartin Ranges were an ideal location offering opportunities for Stages 4 and 5. 1 Para Heavy Machine Gun PI had arrived with a couple of 50 Cals and SF GPMGs and enough ammo to fight a large war. For many this was one of the highlights of the camp. Everyone had what could only be described as a blast with both types of weapons. **OCdt Pete Mitchener** just could not get enough of firing the support weapons.

OCdt Pete (get me more ammo) Mitchener firing the 50 Cal and OCdt Jez (up a bit) Vaughan keeping him on target

OCdts Katie Mayer, Kim McMurray and **Pippa Havard-Davies** really enjoyed it and some of them had the chance to fire the GPMG from the hip, carefully assisted by the 1 Para guys who had never seen women firing from the hip before.

Should you make a purchase as the result of seeing an advert in *The WIRE*
please let them know that you saw their advert in your Corps Magazine



Lt Richardson (OC Machine guns 1 Para) supporting
OCdt Jess Lewin in firing GMPG from the hip

This was quickly followed by live section attacks, which were probably more nerve-racking for the staff than the Officer Cadets. With adrenaline pumping and what was for some total exhilaration and for others almost complete terror, sections were sent down the range. In ten minutes many had found a whole new level of trust in those around them. There is nothing like having your mate's muzzle a few feet from your head with a live round up the spout, to focus the mind. The camp ended with several days' adventure training, including paint balling, horse riding, cart racing and mountain walking all of which was great despite the weather trying to spoil it. However, the Range days were still the topic of conversation with who nearly shot who including a civilian white van that wandered onto the Range, and how many rounds each managed to get down the Range.

The summer months were filled with expeditions these were: walking in the Canadian Rockies & Nepal, SCUBA diving in Jordan and sailing around UK waters. Sarawak took on the Canada expedition, which with some assistance from the Corps was a great success. **JUO Will Taylor** qualified as the JSMEL with less than a month to departure and **WO2 (SSM) Bob Pye** as the ML. .

JUO Gemma Sayer and OCdt Merry Ison, descending from the 9000ft peak of Mt Edith Alberta Canada

Are you a satisfied soldier?
If you want to know more about the Satisfied Soldier Scheme get in contact with your Squadron Office for more details.

JUO Gemma Sayer, OCdt Helen Farmer, Georgina Loader and Danny Robinson on lower slopes of Sulphur Mountain discovering that if you go down to the woods today you had better beware for every bear etc

Canadian Expedition in Healy Pass
on the boarder with Alberta and British Columbia.
Back Row (L-R): OCdt's Ed Jagger, Helen Farmer, Danny Robinson, Tom Usher, 2Lt Andy Grimditch, OCdt Georgina Loader, JUO (JSMEL) Will Taylor, OCdt Merry Ison, JUO Gemma Sayer
Front Row (L-R): OCdt Neil Stone W02 (SSM) Bob Pye, OCdt James Bossi

The 12 strong team spent nearly three weeks in the Rockies conquering many of the peaks and trails around Banff, culminating in a 5-day unsupported trek 80-miles up to Lake Louise. This trek was great and dramatic enough for even the most seasoned of our mountain people, made all the more impressive when on the third night there was an unexpected snowfall and this created a whole new set of challenges. The new Academic Year has started well with a larger Troop than last year and plans to visit Signals units in the South and mount expeditions to even more challenging locations next Summer. Good luck to those who recently joined Sandhurst from SUOTC: **Vicky Deakin, Mike Brennan, Andy Chisholm, Chris Head, Georgina Loader, Adam Wakeham**, and **Jeremy Osborne**, and to **Will Taylor, Chris Jones** and **Jim Stuart** who join in January 2001.

ARMY CADET FORCE

CLIMBING THE ARMY LADDER

Nottingham Territorials on maneuvers in Scotland had support from the very top as they climbed the military ladder. Fifty members of the Triumph Road-based 87 Sig Sqn are currently on annual exercise, in Edinburgh. The high-tech communications troops began their two weeks of training with a grueling battery of military tests and assault courses.

Climbing the Ladder
Signal Officer in Chief Brig Cedric Burton with
Cpl Heather Blair (a student nurse from Bulwell,
and Sgt Amanda Jones (a civil servant from Thorneywood)

There to cheer them over the final rope ladder hurdle was the Signal Officer in Chief of Britain's 13,000 Regular and Territorial Army (TA) Royal Signals. **Brig Cedric Burton** said his job included encouraging young men and women to climb the army career ladder too. He said that many of the city's Territorials worked for civilian firms at the cutting edge of communications technology and that the expertise they brought was vital. He also said, 'The TA gave them a unique chance to develop their technological skills and ideas. That, along with the army's management and leadership training, made them even more valuable to their full-time employers.' **Brig Burton** added, 'We are still only on the brink of the information technology (IT) revolution - the future of military communications is going to be extraordinary. Nottingham's Signallers are playing a crucial role in helping us develop systems for the army of the future. I need each one of the them to reach their full potential and get the very most out of their TA service.'

Cpl Heather Blair (27), from Bulwell said, 'Our Squadron is a part of the UK's defence. We are also on call to help the civil authorities during emergencies like major flooding. We also increase people's skills levels in things ranging from IT and HGV driving, to catering and stores management. Local business and the army both benefit.'

CADET SIGNALLING - VERY MUCH ALIVE AND KICKING! REPORT ON ACF/CCF SIGNALLING ACTIVITY - SUMMER 2000

ACF & CCF Signalling remains alive and healthy at the end of the 2000 Summer Camp season. Several ACF counties included signalling cadres amongst their camp activities. Cornwall, Cumbria, Essex, Hertfordshire, Hampshire & The Isle of Wight and South West London have run signalling courses. Cornwall ACF ran a Radio Users course at Okehampton at which eighteen Cadets were successful, Cumbria ACF at Swynnerton held a 'crossed flags' course with 13 successes and a Cadet who passed the Instructor's test. Essex ACF at Ripon also passed out Cadets at the 'crossed flags' level. Hertfordshire ACF at Leek had 20 'Crossed flags' passes. Hampshire & The Isle of Wight ACF at Wretham, Norfolk ran two courses on successive weeks with a total of 41 Cadets gaining 'Crossed flags' and two Cadets Radio Users badges. All Cadet units have commented on the very good level of support received in running these courses, assistance with testing and the loan of kit received from the Regular Army sponsor units, Royal School of Signals, University OTC and the Territorial Army.

The level of Cadets attending all the Signals courses held both during the Easter and Summer school holidays at the Royal School of Signals (RSS) and the enthusiasm of these Cadets remained high. For the first time, the Advanced Course held during the ACF summer camp season, included a four-hour HF radio competition on 17 August. Using the ACF I CCF National Radio Network (NRN) frequencies, five teams of Cadets at the RSS competed against Cadets at the camp from Devon ACF, Hampshire & Isle of Wight ACF, Warwickshire ACF and S Yorks & Humberside operated from their Strafford and Hull bases respectively. Several adults assisted in making up the number of contactable locations. Ironically the winner, declared by **Maj Mike Vokes** the organiser, was a sole Cadet operating from Dollar Academy CCF in Scotland with an amazing 37 contacts. In the runners-up position was the team of two Cadets from 'Z' Company, Hampshire & The Isle of Wight ACF with 33 contacts. In addition to the competition held on the NRN, daily activity during this period occurred from dawn until after dusk with units using the allotted frequencies for safety nets, rear links and Company exercises, in addition to giving demonstrations to passing dignitaries visiting the camps. For the first time the Net Monitors produced a schedule of ACF signalling units with their locations and dates at camp. A daily schedule of listening watches by the Net Monitors or their cadets was maintained, which guaranteed that when cadets from other units were available to try out the NRN, it was most likely that they would make a contact without having to make prior arrangements. This worked extremely well and the listening watches maintained especially by Essex ACF and Hertfordshire ACF were much appreciated by other units.

ACF Unit SignalsOfficers on an upgrading course at Blandford

New Recruit?
The first visitor to Project Millicom with Maj Mike Vokes

It is hoped to repeat these exercises again next year, when it is anticipated that more ACF units can be persuaded to drive the cobwebs out of their Unit or camp locations, and put the PRC 320 radio to use.

For the immediate future, regular schedules are maintained by some stations on Monday and Thursday evenings at 2000hrs on the calling frequency. (Regular/TA Units contact the Cadet Forces Signals Advisor 0208 654 2582 for details) It is hoped to extend this arrangement to each weekday at 2000hrs, if sufficient interest is forthcoming to make it viable. Saturdays between 1200 and 1500hrs is another good time to make contacts. The Christmas 24 hour competition 'Exercise Christmas Cracker' is great fun for cadets and will take place on 2/3 December this year. Participation over the full 24 hour period is not a prerequirement and units might prefer just to take part for part of the period if they have insufficient trained cadets to operate for the full 24 hours. More details about all these activities and assistance are always available from the NRN monitors: **Capt Mike Buckley** 0208 654 2582, **2Lt John Wresdell** 01377 254441 or **Maj Mike Vokes** 02380 262551.

SPORT

BADMINTON

The Annual Royal Signals Badminton Tournament took place during the period 11-13 October 2000, at Azimghur Barracks, Colerne. The attendance at this year's tournament was up on last year but not at the numbers expected in previous years due to operational commitments. A total of eight units were represented of which two managed to bring an all-female team in addition to an all-male team. Those individuals that attended the tournament thoroughly enjoyed the highly competitive spirit that was evident throughout the various competitions. The players presented a gift to the Corps Secretary, **Capt Terry Inman,** who ran the tournament for his last time before leaving the services. His successor, **Capt Dave Duggan**, invited him to return as a guest player in the veteran's tournament next year in order to ensure that the trophy is returned, (just in case he thinks that it his is personal property, having won it for the last four years). Badminton in the Corps has been very successful over the last few years, the numbers playing in various units has trebled and reached a peak last year with over 200 players. The Corps was represented in the Army Finals by no less than six units out of the ten finalists and the Corps Team won the Inter-Corps Championships for the first time in 17 years. Any individuals in the Corps who play badminton and have not yet made themselves known, please contact **Capt Duggan.** Tel: 949142666.The results of the Corps Tournament were as follows:

Men's Singles Winner	**Sgt Merchant**	DSSS, Chicksands
Women's Singles Winner	**Cpl McTurk**	7 Armd Bde
Unit Team Winners		11 Sig Regt

Visit the museum website:
www.royalsignals.army.org.uk/museum/

CRICKET

ROYAL SIGNALS CC 2000 SEASON REPORT

Following a rather up and down season in 1999 the Corps side approached the 2000 season with determination and a resolve to improve on the 3rd place gained in the Grouse Merit table. Unfortunately the early signs did not bode well as the planned early season mini-tour to Somerset was cancelled due to lack of availability. Lack of availability had been our problem in the 1999 season and it was disappointing to see it raise its head again so quickly. However, the pre-season indoor nets sessions had gone well and with warm-up matches against the Chairman's XI, RMAS CC and RM CC providing early tests the first Merit Table match away to the AGC CC was upon us. A very poor wicket at Worthy Down saw the AGC in early trouble **Cpl** 'Judge' **Smith** taking 4 for 13 and **2Lt Alex Senneck** 3 for 16. All out for 72 the AGC never looked like wresting the initiative back although the difficult and unpredictable pitch required patience and **SSgt Daz Winfield** with 21 and **LCpl Steve Fox** with 13 n.o. saw us home to a five wicket victory. One down seven to go!

The Infantry CC are difficult opposition, and can field almost a full side of Army and CS players. Often as not however, they will have difficulties in getting 11 players to the ground and this proved to be the case when only ten men appeared. Put in to bat the Corps made steady progress to 182 all out in breezy, overcast conditions. **LCpl Ford** with 61,**WO2 Gardner** with 33 and **2Lt Senneck** with 35 made the main contributions. The Infantry had roped in a spectator by the time it came for them to bat, but to no avail with **Sgt Glean** 3 for 38 and **2Lt Senneck** 3 for 35 tearing in from either end. Although several players made a start none got beyond 25 and they were reduced to 132 all out in 39 overs, another solid performance and a win by 50 runs. The RAC CC also failed to field a full side on their visit to the Blandford Oval, which had recently been equipped with a new £5000 electronic scoreboard. The board did not require the third digit on the total as they were bowled out for 98, **LCpl Fox** 3 for 18. **WO2 Gardner** and **SSgt Winfield** made short work of the target reaching 99 without loss, a win by ten wickets.

Our forth match in the merit table was the best of the season. The RE CC came to Blandford on a sunny, hot day. They won the toss and elected to bat on an excellent wicket. Batting was to dominate the match as they raced to 241 for 4 in their 50 overs. This could have been more but for some excellent fielding by the Corps side. Following their undefeated opening stand against the RAC CC **WO2 Gardner** and **SSgt Winfield** made a positive start and grew in confidence as stroke play became the order of the day. The first wicket fell in the 42nd over with the score on 211. As so often happens the second member of the pair fell soon after but the side was seen home by **LCpl Ford** with nine balls to spare, **WO2 Gardner** 130, **SSgt Winfield** 62, a win by eight wickets. Then came the crunch match away against last year's winners the REME CC. Put in to bat the REME CC made slow progress early on and as they attempted to increase the rate wickets began to tumble. **Sgt Glean**, held back by the Skipper and brought on as sixth bowler, tore through the REME side finishing with career best figures of 7 for 36. Nevertheless the REME took the field confident that the overcast thundery and humid conditions would help them whittle through our line up. Yet again the Corps openers got of to a good start putting on 56 for the first wicket. **SSgt Winfield** went on to make 62 and was joined by **2Lt Alex Senneck** who made 58 n.o. The now modest looking target was achieved with 15 overs to spare with seven wickets in hand. Although some excellent individual performances had contributed to the result the dynamic team fielding and high morale in the changing room had also played its part. Five down, three to go.

The Corps side had been blessed with fine weather all season and it continued as we entered the final week of fixtures. Three home games on the 18, 20 and 21 of July were all played in fine weather and hanging baskets and ice-cream salesmen could be found on the pavilion. The RA CC arrived with ten men and was put into bat, and was seen off for 119. A rare failure from **WO2 Gardner** (14) allowed **LCpl Ford** (44 n.o.) to build a partnership with **SSgt Winfield** (56 n.o.) and saw us home to a nine-wicket victory. With the RLC CC and the AMS CC sides left, the Corps was in a strong position to take the title for the first time in six years. When news broke of the REME CC defeat by the Infantry, morale shot sky high as we realised that only one win from the two fixtures was required. The skipper proved lucky again when he won the flip of the coin and put the RLC in to bat. Bowling was tight and fielding tighter and they were restricted to 154 for 8 in their 50 overs. **Sgt Glean** 4 for 24. Solid contributions from the top of the batting order saw the Signals reach their target in 32 overs for three wickets. **WO2 Gardner** 38, **LCpl Ford** 53 n.o., **2Lt Senneck** 31. The last match was against the AMS CC probably the weakest side in the competition. They elected to bat and slumped to 82 all out. Perhaps it was fate but the top three in our order were all to fail together for the first time, all three out for a combined total of 12. At 24 for 3 we suffered a slight wobble but **2Lt Senneck** (44 n.o.) and Sig Houghton (23 n.o.) steadied things up and we reached the target of 83 without further loss. Eight from eight.

What a season! New Chairman in the form of **Lt Col R. G. Nicholson**, new Vice-Chairman - **Maj Dave Whimpenny**, new skipper **WO2 (Supervisor Radio) Paul Gardner** and shiny new trophy in the pavilion. Bowler of the season, which is awarded on averages, went to **2Lt Alex Senneck**. Batsman of the season also on averages to **LCpl Keith Ford** and Player of the year to **SSgt Daz Winfield** who, along with the skipper, gave us such a great start in each innings and whose fielding was exemplary. 'On on' to 2001, defending the Grouse Trophy and the prospect of a tour in November to Australia!

The Royal Signals Cricket Squad
Season 2000

DON'T BE DISSAPPOINTED, COPY FOR THE FEBRUARY ISSUE MUST REACH THIS OFFICE BY 10 DECEMBER 2000

GOLF

R SIGNALS (GERMANY) AUTUMN GOLF MEETING – *by Maj N. H. Colville*

The R SIGNALS (Germany) Autumn Golf Meeting was held at RAFG Bruggen Golf Course on 7-8 September 2000, attracting 45 players from BFG. The course was in excellent condition, the weather pleasant and some excellent golf was played over the two days. The major competitions contested were primarily by members of the Corps Squad and it was fitting that the competition's best golfer, **Sgt Brian Turner**, won the 36-Hole Stableford Competition. The other major individual competitions, the 18 hole Scratch and Handicap were won by **LCpl Kerr Greenham** and **WO2 (Fo S) Da e** 'Bandit' **Perr** , who scored a remarkable net 63; consequently, he was reduced to a man's handicap.

The Captain's Cup, donated by the **Sgt Turner**, is competed for by players over the handicap of 18 and was won comfortably by **Cpl Jason Cla ton**. The Corps Chairman, **Brig Da id McDo all** and **Mr Terr Marsh** ('Boggy' to his friends) won the final competition, the Regimental Greensome. Eyebrows were raised at their score of 40 points but 'Boggy' assured everyone that the Brigadier had played half of the shots. Sounds like a job for the Handicap Committee.

The Meeting produced a number of high quality rounds, notably from **Cpls Craig Bo man** and **Ian** 'Hartley' **Hare** and **LCpls Nige Brennan** and **Kerr Greenham** Other individual performances highlighted a number of players who may enter the Corps Squad next year and the future of Corps golf in Germany looks bright.

Back row (L-R): LCpl Nige Brennan, Maj Gus Colville (Secretary), Mr Terry Marsh
Front row (L-R): LCpl Kerry Greenham, Sgt Brian Turner, Brig David McDowall (Chairman), SSgt (FofS) Dave Perry

HOCKEY

THE BIG APPLE INTERNATIONAL HOCKEY TOURNAMENT - NEW YORK

by Capt Ruth MacGill, 654 Sqn, 4 Regt AAC, Wattisham.

Despite having represented the Army side for several seasons, this was the first chance for me to go on tour with the Army Ladies Hockey Team. New York seemed a highly appealing location especially in the Summer and with a few inviting days of R & R at the end, it was not an opportunity that I was going to miss.

With only one day to acclimatise to the stifling heat and humidity, we opened the Ladies competition with a resounding 5-0 victory against the Dutch team KLM However, our afternoon game proved to be a little tougher against a young and fit side from the University of Toronto. We conceded a couple of goals by half -time, but a spirited fight back gave us a deserved draw and a point. Our next game was scheduled for a 0700hrs start the next morning (a cool time of day) but breakfast was at 0530hrs! We lost 2 -1 to the Washington Shredders (the eventual winners) and our performance definitely confirmed that we are a not a morning side. Our second game of the day was versus Second Effort whom we beat 2-1 in a hard fought contest in 94% humidity and 88 0C. Post match rehydration certainly brings on a new meaning, with full water bottles being drunk in seconds. Rejuvenated from almost a day's rest, our fifth game was against the host side, the New York Islanders. They were not as strong as the other American teams and an easy 4-0 victory was earned. Our last opponents were the University of Alberta and a win would see us into the final play off. It was a disappointing game for us despite drawing 1-1 with only five minutes to play, they scored two outstanding goals which left us in third position overall.

R&R consisted of a visit to the US Tennis Open and the famous tourist attractions - Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building and Broadway. A fantastic tour with some great games and tournament atmosphere. We will now hit the new season a better and stronger side - lookout the RAF and Royal Navy?

ROYAL SIGNALS YACHT CLUB

Admiral	Brig C. J. Burton OBE
Commodore	Brig H. H. Ham CBE
Vice Commodore	Maj D. C. A. Ellis (94371 5299)
Rear Commodores:	
Offshore	Maj K. Whitehead (Mil: 94381 2531)
Dinghy and Day boats	Maj J. F. Calvert (94777 2204)
Windsurfing	Maj D. I. Gilchrist (94631 4219
Yachtmaster (UK)	Maj J. S. Stuart (Mob: 0796 7043868)
(Germany)	Maj I. C. Gray (94371 2261)
Retired Members Representative	Lt Col (Retd) M. J. P. Collins
Secretaries:	
General	Maj R. Gibson (94371 5577)
Windsurfing	Capt A. J. Mould (94344 5111)
Soldier Members:	
Offshore	Sgt D. Sangster
Dinghy	LCpl S. Southan
Windsurfing	Cpl A. Varney

WEB SITE

The club now owns a web site that will become a new medium for club members. The Web site already features the Offshore Section and dates for next year. The URL is http://www.bigfoot.com/~royalsignalssyc (The ~ (tilda character) is above the # key). This shortcut will take you to the corps web site that is hosted at the Corps and Museum location on the web. Once there, you will see the full details of the current committee, see the calendar for 2001, and you will be able to E-mail any member of the committee.

OFFSHORE SAILING 2000 REVIEW

There have been many events in the calendar this year, which have led to the qualification of two coastal skippers, one day skipper, and in the region of 40 Competent Crew. The most notable event was the Corps Sail Training week in Germany/Denmark, in which eight teams raced from Kiel, around Denmark, and back to Kiel. Most of those taking part had never sailed before, and all walked away with the Competent Crew certificate, racing experience, and fantastic, but occasionally cloudy memories of late nights in Denmark.

Winners of the STW 2000 – "The loaded Crew"
(L-R): Brig Cook, Maj Gray, Maj Whitehead, Capt Graham, Capt Thirsk, Maj Stringer, Lt Col Ewell

OFFSHORE MEETS 2001

NEW NAJAD DELIVERY MARCH 2001 - BKYC (Kiel, Germany), will be accepting their new fleet of ten Najad 331 in March 2001. Contact **Ian Gray** on Blandford Mil 2261 (Civil 01258 48 2261, Fax 2668) to be part of the crew of six for this delivery.

SAIL TRAINING WEEK UK – Monday 23- Sunday 29 April 2001. The calendar is now pretty much fixed. The year will start with a Sail Training Week between the 23-29 April 2001. It is expected that six JSASTC Victoria 34's will be allocated from Joint Services, and both Corps Yachts will also be present. The week will provide a build up to the year's events, and will move from Gosport to Cowes, Weymouth to Dartmouth, back to Yarmouth and Southampton, before returning to Gosport on the Sunday. The cost per yacht for entering the event is likely to be £350 per boat, which will include all berthing, food, a meal on the Friday night at Royal Solent Yacht Club. Contact **Ian Gray** on Blandford Mil 2261 (Civil 01258 48 2261, Fax 2668). It is likely that this event will be used as a selection for next year's Corps Offshore Racing Team.

SAIL TRAINING WEEK GERMANY – Sunday 15 – Wednesday 25 July 2001. The well renowned Germany and Denmark sail training week will comprise of a normal sail from Kiel through Sondeborg to Horsens and will provide five days of Competent Crew Course and five days of racing. Ten of the new Najad 331s will be available for the event, and the committee boat *Quicksilver* will also be sailed. Contact **Ian Blower** on Herford Mil 3212 (Civil 0049 5221 995 3212)

TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION - If you want to either improve your sailing, or become more qualified, then contact the Offshore Training Secretary, **Maj Ian Gray**. If you have a qualification, and want to put it onto the Corps Database, then either E-mail **Ian Gray**, Fax, or speak.

CORPS YACHTS - The Corps still owns three Corps Yachts; *Quicksilver* which is based in Kiel, Germany, *Skywave* and *Petasus* which are in Gosport. Any currently serving or Ex-R SIGNALS person may charter the yacht as long as they have a minimum qualification of Day Skipper. More details about booking are on the Internet, but contact either of the Yacht Masters for more information.

DINGHY

ROYAL SIGNALS KEELBOAT REGATTA
SEA VIEW 30/31 MAY 2000

This year's Sea View Regatta attracted 13 entries, much better than in recent years. Two of the entries were from retired members with a mix of serving and retired crew. A pleasing number of newcomers to the Mermaids were in evidence and those from the offshore discipline were especially welcome to join the real sailors. It soon became obvious that as usual the battle for first place would be between **Maj David Ellis** and **Mr (ex-Maj) George Odling**, with **David** initially having the upper hand and carrying a slight lead into the second day. **George** continued to sail consistently well on Day Two, whereas **David** was more erratic. At the end of the day **George** took the series with 12 points to **David's** 14. A similar close battle was being fought for third place between **Sgt Craig Avey-Hebditch** and **Mr (ex Cpl) Phil Lever, Craig** eventually winning the contest with 20 points to **Phil's** 21. **Maj Fred Calvert** on 34 points was fifth and **LCpl Stu Southan** with a very inexperienced crew was sixth with 40 points. The weather was not too unkind and the sailing was enjoyable throughout. A pleasant dinner was held in the clubhouse at the end of the first day. The prizes were presented by **Debbie Whitehead,** wife of our Hon Sec.

GLOVER CUP - SEAVIEW 1/2 JUNE 2000

The following crews were selected to represent the Corps in the annual triangular contest against the RA and RE Yacht clubs for the Glover Cup: **Maj David Ellis** with **Maj Tim Wadey** and **Cpl John Lee; Maj Fred Calvert** with **Maj Mark Butler** and **Sgt Martin Kendall; Sgt Craig Avey-Hebditch** with **Cpl Hans Neilson** and **Cpl Windy Gale; LCpl Stu Southan** with **Maj Trevor Bradley** and **Maj Keith Whitehead**

The competition turned out to be the closest ever, with four of the six races in the series being tied on points and decided on the new rule which gives victory to the team that does not have the leading boat! The first race between the Corps and RA produced a protest against **Maj Fred Culvert** which was heard after racing and long into the evening. **Fred** put up a strong defence and the protest was not upheld, leaving the Corps in a good position overnight with three wins to the RA's 1 and RE's none. Race 5 between the Corps and the RA was the cause of much controversy as the RE committee changed the course during the start sequence resulting in chaos and heated argument over which way one of the marks should be rounded! Protest and counter protest was the order of the day. Race 6 saw a win for RE over RA but with a protest against RE. The Race 6 protest was heard first as its outcome would decide whether the Race 5 protests needed to be heard, with the likely outcome that Race 5 would have to be re-sailed. After another marathon protest committee session the decision was that the result of Race 6 should stand, meaning that our three wins, could not be matched by either of the other teams. We therefore retained the Glover Cup for the eighth year.

ASA KEELBOAT REGATTA

The Corps representatives in this event were: **Maj David Ellis** with **Maj Tim Wadey** and **Maj Mark Butler; Sgt Craig Avey-Hebditch** with **SSgt Gary Steel** and **Cpl** 'Windy' **Gale**. **Col Bruce Burnett,** Rear Commodore ASA Dinghies, sailed a very consistent series to win the event overall with 7 points, **Lt Col Pat Clarke** RE was second with 8 points and **David Ellis** third with 12 points. **Craig** was sixth overall, and pleased to go out on a high note, having won the last race of the series which was also the last race of his service career.

INTER CORPS DINGHY LEAGUE

Only three matches have been possible in this competition, and those all held at Netley on one day in variable conditions. The first match against the Infantry was won easily by the Corps team of **David Ellis/Phil Cooper, Fred Calvert/John Lee** and **Trevor Bradley/Windy Gale.** The second match against REME was sailed in very light winds and was somewhat of a lottery. We won the first leg and lost the second but managed enough points to take the match. The final match against the AGC was a disaster from the Corps' point of view losing both legs dismally. It is becoming increasingly difficult to field the team of choice, indeed at times to field any team, and equally difficult to see how the outstanding fixtures are to be fitted in.

J24 - HITCH-HIKER

2000 has been a comparatively quiet year for 'Hitch-Hiker', owing to a lack of key crew and an inability to source a good boat in the States for the Worlds. This season has also seen us move back to our old and trusted sail-maker, ULLMANs, with the hoped for result of a return to our old boat speed. The season started at Easter, with our customary trip down to La Trinite in southern Brittany, for the Spi Ouest Regatta. This was, as ever, an excellent and well supported event and we finished a close second to **Stuart Jardine** in Stouche. We were slightly handicapped by the fact that one of our crew was 'bumped' from his flight on the Maundy Thursday evening, and we subsequently had to sail with one crew member picked up off the quay side, until our man arrived a day late. Our next outing was at Hamble for the Spring Cup, in a poorly attended regatta, and another second place to Stouche. The Millennium regatta, hosted by Parkstone YC over the May Bank holiday, was an excellent event, with a large turnout. There was very close racing throughout the weekend between the top six boats, and we came in with a third overall.

The next event in the calendar was the Europeans, hosted in Germany, but we were desperately short of good crew for this event, and therefore opted not to spend large sums attending a regatta where we were not going to be on pace. The UK Nationals were hosted by the Combined Yacht Clubs of Weymouth, with an entry of 42 boats, and was one of the best organised and sponsored regattas we have attended. It was very noticeable here that the whole of the UK fleet has improved greatly over the past two years, and that the whole fleet was finishing very close together. We had planned to have a guest appearance by **Phil Lever** in the vital cockpit position, but owing to his tragic death (see Last Post) shortly before this event, we had to have a late replacement. We were thus sailing with, effectively, two crew members who were not practiced in J24 sailing, and hence without the automatic feel for where to place a J24 on the race course relative to other boats.

By the final race of the regatta we had turned into a practiced, competent J24 crew, but this was slightly too late. Our overall position of fifth is the lowest that we have come in a Nationals since first launching 'Hitch-Hiker' in 1992, bit we were never lacking for boat speed against other boats, only good crew work and tactics, and they can be regained. The Worlds were held in the States in late September, and with no guarantee of sourcing a good boat, we declined our place. Our next event is the winter series at Parkstone, which runs from mid October to early December. We are expecting a turnout of some 20 boats, which will give us good racing and practice, to tune up for 2001.

INTER SERVICES TEAM RACING - 2000
A PERSONAL VIEW - *by WOI (YofS) 'Taff' Owens*

While taking part in the Army Sailing Association Individual Racing

Event on Saturday 9 September 2000 at the Land Forces Sail Training Centre, Netley, I was asked if I could attend Army Team Training for the Inter Services Team Racing Training to be held over the 18 - 20 September at Netley. Well, I thought, if it's anything to do with sailing, I'll give it a go! After arranging some time off from an exercise at Sennybridge (I was so upset!) I reported to Netley on the Monday and met the rest of the team. It became obvious straight away that due to the experience of many of the team members that I would be crewing during the training and not helming. I did not realise at this stage that I would end up crewing for the British Team Racing Coach! Still, after some calculations to do with weight distribution, I started training with **Maj (TOT) David Ellis** (what a combination a TOT and YofS is the same boat). He subsequently put me through the wringer - roll tacking and roll gybing are quite a trick to master, and I'm still not sure if I have the hang of it. Still, it gave a chance for a TOT to shout at a YofS - they have to get their own back some time! After a couple of hours of tacking and gybing, we had a few small races, but due to the lack of some of the team members at this stage, they were short and sharp.

Tuesday was soon upon us, and after some re-assessments of weight distribution, I was paired with **Col Nick Ross** REME. This was a bit of a daunting prospect, and much 'encouragement' followed until I was throwing myself all over the boat, trying to remember in which order to move, sit, move, release, look, move, pull, move etc. After the day's training had finished with some more races, final crew positions were confirmed and arrangements made to meet at HMS *Excellent* at Portsmouth on the Wednesday. This was the final chance to go through team tactics and training in the area that the competition was to take place. The training was conducted in Bosun dinghies belonging to the Royal Navy Sailing Club. After some more team racing training - which is completely different to individual racing, the emphasis is on ensuring that all team members complete the course with fewer points than the opposition and not just finishing first - the first day of the event was upon us.

The day started with the Race Briefing and a Force 4 wind. The Army Team was to race against the Royal Navy. The Force 4 wind meant a lot of hard work and a lot of sitting out. The wind strength was slowly rising until by the end of the race it was blowing a Force 5 gusting to Force 6. The Navy won the race, but following a protest, the decision was reversed and the Army won. The next race against the RAF was postponed until after lunch due to the weather conditions. Several crews had already been for a bit of a swim, including **Maj Ellis** and **Cpl 'Windy'Gale,** and time was required ashore to recover. The wind conditions improved after lunch to manageable levels and the Army went on to win the next three races, two against the RAF and a further race against the Navy. This meant that with half a day to go, the Army had already won the competition thanks to some excellent sailing by the Army 'A' Team helms - **Col Burnett, Col Ross** and **Maj Ellis.** Not ones to sit on our laurels, when Friday dawned we started with another win in a Force 3 against the Navy and a final win against the RAF - we had won all of our races. Unfortunately the 'B' Team had narrowly lost to the Navy.

Admiral West duly presented the prizes and speeches were made. Of the 12 Army personnel who competed, three were members of the Royal Corps of Signals and perhaps, given enough interest, this number can be increased next year. My impressions of the event will stay with me for a long time, that far from being a sedate sport, team racing is highly competitive, physical sport. There are many opportunities for all personnel in the Corps to participate in all types of sailing including dinghy, offshore and windsurfing. I would recommend that these opportunities be taken, not only to increase the strength of the Corps and Army teams, but also to provide a worthwhile and rewarding sport in which to participate.

THE ROYAL SIGNALS ASSOCIATION

Patron: HRH The Princess Royal

President: The Master of Signals

Chairman: Major General A. Yeoman CB

Vice Chairman: Brig N. F. Wood Area1; Brig W. H. Backhouse Area 2; Brig S. G. M. Gordon Area 3; Big K. H. Olds Area 4; Brig P. J. Evans CBE Area 5; Lt Col J. G. Billingham Wales; Maj R. Sampson CBE Scotland; Lt Col C. N. Lightfoot N Ireland

General Secretary and Treasurer: Col A. R. Carter MBE
Welfare Secretary: Mrs J. Cornick

Assistant General Secretary: Lt Col I. J. Hamilton
Administrative Officer: Mr P. J. Cuckow (Membership & Records)

Association Office, RHQ Royal Signals, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8RH. Telephone: Military System (9) 4371 2090 or 01258 48 2090. Welfare Secretary Telephone: Military System (9) 4371 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.
Internet: www.royalsignals.army.org.uk/museum/rsa.htm

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 to 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.*

NOTES FROM THE AO'S DESK

May I begin by wishing all members of the RSA, and their families, a very happy Christmas and a healthy, prosperous New Year. My personal thanks go to all Branch Committee members for their continued support during 2000.

Branch news - Holders of the Branch Secretaries List should amend the Guernsey Branch Secretary's telephone number to; 01481-257497and add Hon Sec Liverpool Branch's E-Mail address: j.carruthers@tinyworld.co.uk

CALLING ALL BRANCH SECRETARIES

Membership lists - All those Branches who have replied to my letter have indicated that they would prefer to receive a database printout of their membership from this office for checking and amendment as necessary - as opposed to them sending in their list annually in March. Accordingly the directive in Rule 8, paragraph 29, should be ignored, as Secretaries will be sent their printout. The Association Rule will be amended at the next reprint.

Millennium Badges - Any outstanding payment for the RSA Millennium Badges should now be sent to this office. Cheques, as usual, to 'Royal Signals Benevolent Fund'. The Chairman of the RSA sends his gratitude to Branches for their part in making the badge a resounding success. In total well over 2,300 badges have been sold and all profits have gone into the Benevolent Fund.

Annual General Meeting 2001 - The Royal Signals Association's AGM for 2001 will again be combined with the Branch Representatives' Meeting and be held, by kind permission of OC 238 Sig Sqn, in Chelsea Barracks, Chelsea Bridge Road, London SW1 8RF, on Saturday 7 April, starting at 1030hrs. All Life Members of the RSA are eligible and most welcome to attend. Association Headquarters must receive points for the agenda by 1 March 2001. All those planning to attend are asked to inform Association Headquarters in order to assist with catering and seating requirements. The Barracks are a five-minute walk from Sloan Square underground Station, on the District and Circle Lines. Parking is available within the Barracks, but vehicle details must be given to Association HQ at least three days prior to the day.

Association stick pins - Life Members may like to know that the Museum Shop at Blandford still has a stock of Association stick pins for sale at £2.50 each + 25p p&p. Orders to the Shop, not Assn HQ please.

New Life Members - A warm welcome is extended to the following who have become Life Members of the Association since the last issue of the *WIRE*. Our best wishes go to all those who are starting a 'second career'. Please keep Assn HQ informed of any address change in order that we may stay in touch with you.

Name and former rank	*Branch*	*Service*
LCpl Kev Brown	RHQ	1990-00
LCpl Miranda Dalton	RHQ	1993-00
WO1 Stephen Carr	RHQ	1977-00
SSgt Graham Grey	RHQ	1976-00
SSgt Keith Wilkinson	RHQ	1976-00
Sig Stuart Bruce	Sale	1946-?
Sig Ron Sale	East London	1954-56
Sgt David Almond	RHQ	1976-00
WO1 Michael(Jason) Wood	RHQ	1972-94
SSgt Simon Coburn	RHQ	1976-00
LCpl M. J. Pring	Bath	1953-55
WO2 Robin Windows	RHQ	1976-00
SSgt Des Rees	RHQ	1965-88
Maj Greg Grist	RHQ	1960-89
Sgt Kevin Prince	RHQ	1985-00
Sgt Keith Hearn	RHQ	1976-93
Cpl Alun Hayhurst	RHQ	1987-99
WO1 F. T. Morris	RHQ	1969-92
Cpl Dana Grills	East London	1991-date
WO2 Tony Gaston	RHQ	1978-00
Cpl Russell Featherstonehaugh	RHQ	1994-00
LCpl D. H. Latham	East Kent	1947-49
Capt Keith Huntley	RHQ (USA)	1942-47
Maj Charles Anderson	RHQ	1939-46
SSgt David Feirn	Rotherham	1958-66
WO2 Garry Reid	Preston/Blackburn	1986-date
Cpl Chris Read	RHQ	1995-00
Cpl Grayham Forshaw	RHQ	1985-00
WO2 Bill Clarke	Birmingham	1967-89
WO1 Stan Gamble	Birmingham	1971-96
LCpl Barbara Maguire	Preston & Blackburn	1972-75
LCpl A. Bennett	Peterborough	1982-90
WO1 Derek Wilkinson	Sheffield	1967-98
Sig Jack Edge	RHQ	1945-48
Sgt Ted Walker	RHQ	1942-54
SSgt William Pritchard	RHQ	1975-91
Sgt Scott Margison	RHQ	1987-00
Cpl Mike Turner	RHQ	1988-00
Maj Ken Jones	RHQ	1989-00
Maj Trevor Bradley	RHQ	1979-00
Maj Calum Clark	RHQ	1982-00
Maj Steve Felton	RHQ	1984-00
Maj Andy Walker	RHQ	1984-00
Capt Jim Clare	RHQ	1988-00
Lt Col Justin Johnson	RHQ	1981-00
Cpl Dave Allen	RHQ	1976-99
Sig Lyndsey Russell	RHQ	1991-00
Sgt Fergus Anderson	RHQ	1977-00
Col Bill Kennedy	Dorset	1956-94
Cpl Glen Mallows	RHQ	1990-00
Cpl L. F. Dicker	East Kent	1955-70
Capt Gordon Newell	RHQ	1986-00
Lt Col Chris Shuker	RHQ	1966-00
WO2 Andy Craig	RHQ	1976-00
Sig John Flack	RHQ	1944-48
Sig Ernie Robertson	Eastbourne	1959-61
Sgt Robert Egerton	RHQ	1978-91
LCpl Derek Douglas	RHQ	1990-00
Cpl Moiz Alibhai	RHQ	1995-98
Cpl George Cairncross	RHQ	1956-58
Cpl Rebecca Johnston	Glasgow	1983-89
LCpl Liz Graham	Glasgow	1981-90
Cpl Elizabeth Clark	Glasgow	1981-91

ALDERSHOT BRANCH

In September we spent a most enjoyable evening at the Tower of London. Her Majesty's Palace and Fortress looked its best at dusk on a very fine evening, the first after an ominous period of rainy days. We missed seeing the famous ravens, who had been put to bed for the night by **Chief Yeoman Warder Thomas Sharp BA (Hons) MIL**, who conducted us on a tour. He took us into the Chapel of St Peter ad Vincula and giving us a most colourful picture of the history of the famous edifice. After the Ceremony of the Keys we adjourned to the Yeomen's Club where **Lynne Butler** had prepared for us an excellent buffet supper. **Noel Moss**, our Chairman, organised the visit and our thanks go to him and to **Tom Sharp**, who served in the Corps, and to our hosts at the Yeomen's Club.

CATTERICK BRANCH

Normally the Catterick and District Branch meet on the third Friday of each month but, in July, the meeting was held on 7 July which happened to be exactly 50 years to the day since the Branch was re-formed. (NB. The Branch was in fact first formed in the early 1920's but it disbanded in 1940 and was reformed in 1950). To commemorate the anniversary, an informal supper night was held in The Catterick Garrison and 19 Mechanised Brigade HQ and Signal Squadron Sergeants' Mess to which a number of guests were invited. The official guest list included **Brig (Retd) Nigel Wood** Vice-Chairman Area 1, **Capt (Retd) Terry Cushin** Chairman of the Darlington Branch with his wife **Margaret** and our recently appointed President, **Maj Paul Peel** Officer Commanding 19 Mechanised Brigade and Signal Squadron.

From within the Branch we had two members whose names appeared on the minutes of the first meeting in 1950, **Mr Ted Close** and **Mr Alfie Wilks** both of whom, as can be seen in the photograph, are still hale and hearty and enjoying life. We also invited several widows whose husbands had been members of the Branch. No official business was transacted but as a record of the anniversary everyone was invited to 'sign in', and the minutes of this meeting will list the names of all those who attended.

Two of our longest serving members, Alfie Wilks and Ted Close, enjoy a joke with one of our newest members, Jack Thorpe

After the buffet supper and before the entertainment began, courtesy of our regular troubadour **Freddie Briggs, Brig Wood** presented our recently retired chairman **Maj (Retd) Bill Barnes** with a well deserved Honour Membership Certificate.

Guest of Honour, Brig (Retd) Nigel Wood presents a deserved Honour Membership Certificate to Maj (Retd) Bill Barnes

In his 13 years as Branch Chairman, **Bill** has worked extremely hard both on behalf of our members and The Royal Signals Association. To mark his retirement and also that of **Maj Ray Webb**, Treasurer for the past 17 years, prints of the well known painting' The Last Transmission' were presented to both members. The prints were signed by a familiar figure in the Branch **Capt (Retd) Henry Jennings**, who is shown in the painting as a young NCO while serving in Korea.

Everyone enjoyed the evening, the success of which was due mainly to the hard work of our Social Secretary, **Stan Perkin** and his team and the staff of the Sergeants Mess. We would also wish to record our thanks to the GSM and members of the Mess for their hospitality in allowing us to use the Mess for our monthly meetings and look forward to continuing the association over the next 50 years.

EAST KENT BRANCH

On Wednesday 9 August, nine members attended the Commandant's Rehearsal for the Sovereign's Parade at RMA Sandhurst through the kindness of **Jo Barrett** who hired us her Parkinson's disease Minibus. We arrived at 1030hrs in time to see the 780 immaculately dressed cadets (men and girls) on parade. It is always an invigorating experience to see these young aspirants vying to be the best on parade with its intricate drill movements where a mistake stands out for all to see. To us it was faultless but the Commandant had a word or two to say and no doubt whatever was wrong will be perfect on the day. Our hosts, of the Aldershot Branch, had kindly arranged for us to join them in the Quabus Pavillion afterwards for our picnic lunch. If you have not seen one of these parades, do keep a look out for next year's outing.

Sunday 13 August was our ever popular Branch BBQ at Antrum Lodge, (the Hon Sec's Shack) despite a dubious weather forecast. There would have been eighty members present had **Doug** and **Sheila Dickason** not suffered a catastrophic flood, from a burst water cistern early that morning and **Peter Hellier** not lost his voice overnight. The Chairman who had not been previously noted for his Latin connections, had decreed that the Committee would put on a display of Roman Drill (what is Roman drill we asked?) and that everyone would come in fancy dress. That would normally be a turn-off from the start but not so. We watched with admiration as various colourful characters came through the gate. The Committee had done their homework (on the www) and had practiced the intricate drills and came to understand the stentorian orders delivered in Latin by the Decurio (Junior Officer). With considerable help and improvisation from Ballantinius Curtainus, our weapons and accoutrements were authentic in appearance anyway. At 1230hrs, **Mike Barrett**, the MC, suitably attired in a Bowler, introduced the show and on marched the motley group who then performed a guard mounting drill (defending the bar!). **David** and **Sheila Geary** dressed as Camera crew and Producer made a video, which will be produced in due course. That

Orientis Cantabria Centurio or East Kent Committee
(L-R): Donald Crisp (Chairman), John Ballantyne (Vice Chairman), Roy Andrews (Area Rep), John Badcock (Hon. Secretary), Bill Lovett (Hon.Treasurer), Trevor Allison (Social Sec)

over, the delectable smell from the BBQ attracted the host and some even returned for seconds. This was followed by **Marion's** raffle, always a great success. Then **Crispus Follicus** and **Ballantinius Curtainus** inspired by their previous efforts and the resources of the bar, burst into song describing the characters with whom they are associated in Committee to the haunting tune of Greensleeves (at least we think it was). **Jo Barrett** then awarded the best man's outfit to **Consul General Lovetttus** and the best Lady's outfit to **Marion Ballantyne**. Finally, the Bat & Trap Cup was won yet again by the Ballantyne Team. A very good day had by all.

Sunday 10 September saw, as many of you might recall, a photograph taken of the DOME. It was taken as we traveled up the Thames in September 1998 - two years ago. So Lord Falconer had every reason to be relieved when he heard that the East Kent Branch were to return to increase the number of visitors to his Dome by 32 and we felt the extra £140 he spent on each of us was well worth while! It all went like clockwork (is that a term which is still relevant these days?) With the bus arriving and departing Antrum Lodge with a full consignment of expectant members and friends. **Mike Barrett** immediately embarked on a quick raffle and by holding up the vintage bottle of Malt whisky money was quickly in the bag! **Bill Lovett, Tom & Doris Bewsey** joined us at the Black Prince and after a short and successful plea to the bewildered security guard that the bus contained nothing but walking wounded, we decanted on the forecourt and were soon satisfying our curiosity inside the gigantic structure. Five hours is usually judged to be the amount of time that the average person can spend without being punch drunk though it is not time enough to visit all the exhibits. **Mike Barrett** who had been before gave us all a priority list and from time to time we ran into each other as we made the rounds. Somewhere along the line, we felt, the public had been misinformed. All who went were adamant that it is well worth the visit and above all, if one sees nothing else the floor show which lasts nearly an hour is a must and excellent value for the entrance fee. No description (and no photos are allowed) can do justice to an incredible performance by nearly a hundred young performers, for most of the time, airborne, and the stage management skills. So at 4.30pm we set out on the homeward run, those who have not been, really must gird up your loins and go. It was one of the Branch's success days.

News of Members: We are delighted that despite moving to Bournemouth, **John Raymond** has decided to remain a member of the Branch. He has joined the Bournemouth Branch but says that it is by no means as active as the EKB. He is however fully immersed in running the HQ of the RSARS that is in Blandford Camp. In welcoming **Charles Young** to the Branch, we did not realise that he is Chairman of the Thanet District Council that may mean that we see him less often. **Tom Bewsey** apologized for not being at the BBQ because there was a great family gathering for an 80th Birthday (not his!) at Eastbourne. It was nice to see **Jimmy Hand** who has been in and out of hospital recently and **Dennis Murphy** has also just come out of Hospital. We wish both of them continued good health. **Jean Saunders** was skipping around on her new hip. **Marie Crisp** has also undergone a hip replacement and we are glad to say is progressing well. The indestructible **Jack Dienst** has overcome the effects of a nasty fall and is still riding his Matchless M/C at Veteran Vehicle shows around the county. Great news to come of **David & Sheila Geary** who have decided that the delights of living in a Suffolk village do not compensate them for the loss of friendships which they enjoyed in Kent are moving back. Could this have been the effect of being at the BBQ to film the Praetorian Guard. We shall look forward to seeing them again.

New Members: We are delighted to welcome **Mr Alan & Mrs Doreen Austin** of Faversham. **Alan** was a Regular from 1953 to 1960 serving in 1 Corps Sig Regt and 23 Corps Sig Regt (Suez) as a Corporal Line Det. Commander and ended up with three years on Class 1 Reserve. Welcome also to **Mr Dennis Latham** of Maidstone. **Dennis** was a National Serviceman from 1947-49 and as a LCpl Line Mech spent all his time at Catterick in 6 and 1 Training Regiments and then the School of Signals.

GLASGOW BRANCH

The Branch was offered tickets for the Royal British Legion Scotland ceremony of Beating Retreat, to celebrate the millennium. It was a spectacle of many tartans and RBLS standards from all over Scotland. The massed bands, pipes and drums performing the Beating of the Retreat on the esplanade of Edinburgh Castle, on Sunday 13 August, whilst the Edinburgh Tattoo performers were having a day off. **Ivana** our secretary, arranged a meal at an hotel in Edinburgh before the ceremony, where the 32 members and friends in the coach party, met up with the Branch President, **Maj Gen A. A. G. Anderson** and **Mrs Margaret Anderson**. A raffle was held on the coach to help offset the expenses.

Bill McNamara the Branch Standard Bearer, has been a busy bee over the last few months, having been invited to attend millennium ceremonies paying homage, where the Branch Standard was 'dipped' for the National Anthem. Arranged by the Royal British Legion Scotland. **Bill** was in George Square Glasgow on 1 July, Law, Carluke, and Lanark on 15 July, Larkhall on 16 August, Oban on 23 July, Rutherglen on 29 July, Strathaven, Hamilton and East Kilbride on 30 July, Wishaw on 5 August and Millport on 6 August. That is the count to date, when there are more to come I will be advised, but in any case it must be a good public relations exercise to show the Branch exists, and **Bill** is one of the best Standard Bearers in the country.

The meeting on 15 August was very well attended with three new members being introduced to the members by the Branch Chairman, **Joe Keegan**. It was announced that 32 Sig Regt was holding a Bar-B-Q, and had entered runners for the Glasgow Marathon on 20 August. The Banch members were invited to attend and support the cause, which was in aid of the Erskine Hospital 2000 appeal. It was decided that the members should sponsor the members of 32 Sig Regt taking part in the marathon. The proceeds that evening would be passed to **WO2 Keith Anderson** of 32 Sig Regt HQ to swell the fund. A sum of £25 was collected and a further £25 was added from the Branch funds to make a donation of £50. **Keith** also ran a raffle at the Bar-B-Q that I understand raised £223. Over and above this there will be the individual sponsorship amounts of the competitors in the Regiment. With the rapport we have with the Regiment it gives our members a great deal of pleasure to join in their activities. An invitation was received by the members from The Commanding Officer and all ranks of the Regiment to attend The 'Jimmy' Dinner to be held in the Officers Mess on 25 August. This function was arranged for the evening allowing more Branch members to attend, and a very enjoyable time was had by all those attending. A splendid meal produced by **WO2 Master Chef John Wren** and his staff. After dinner the company adjourned to the WOs & Sgts. Mess, and in the relaxed atmosphere we managed to recruit another four members to the Branch, both ex-members and serving members of the Regiment. No we didn't need to get them 'sozzeld' to sign up.

Arrangements had been made for 13 members to attend the Freedom of Richmond parade with accommodation booked, but due to the old saying we know so well in our service time, due to 'The exigencies of the service' it had to be cancelled, a great disappointment. The arrangements for the annual St. Andrew's Dinner/Dance are well on their way to be held on Saturday the 25 November, and for the Remembrance Parade in George Square in Glasgow on Sunday 12 November.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

In our last article I had mentioned that we hoped to have a speaker for the September meeting. Unfortunately there was a communications problem with the result that we had no speaker (not quite Royal Signals standard?). We hope, however, to make amends at our October meeting. Most unusually the three main Branch Officers, Chairman **John Brown**, Secretary **Ian Wolfe** and Treasurer **Debbie Wolfe**, were on holiday on the date of our September meeting but Vice-Chairman **Jim Reilly**, Asst. Secretary **Kim Greer** and Asst. Treasurer **Edgar McCall** very ably stood in for them.

George Cook put a lot of work into producing a very acceptable series of web pages for Branch approval, with a view to the Branch having its own website on the Internet. The members were enthusiastic but it was decided to seek approval of RSA HQ before proceeding. The decision was that we should hold off for the moment as there was, in planning, a proposal to have a web page, off the main Museum website, for each individual Branch. Although understandable it is very disappointing for **George** but at least we were forward looking.

If you are reading *The WIRE* and are in Northern Ireland, then if you are not already a Branch Member or indeed are still serving, you are welcome to join us any third Wednesday of each month in Clonaver TAVR Centre, Belfast.

READING BRANCH

Our 30th Annual Reunion Dinner was held on 7 October and it seems that the previous 29 were all part of the build-up to this one. What happens next year? Who knows, so we hope lots of people will come and find out. Our principal guests this year were **Col Andrew Carter MBE** and **Lt Col Charles Turner,** both of whom gave excellent talks after the Dinner. Aldershot, Brighton, Salisbury, Southampton and Winchester Branches were represented and brought their Branch Standards. We also welcomed visitors from the France and Germany Star Veterans Association, The Royal British Legion and the Middlesex and NW London Army Cadet Force. This illustrates our long-held view that visiting one another's events helps to bond our part of the Corps family even closer together. Pride of place in the hall was given to the Standard Bearer's Cup where it was much admired. Just one more occasion for us to feel very proud if not down right smug! With the excitement (and hard work) of the Dinner behind us we now look forward to at least four Remembrance Observances, our Christmas Party on 1 December and, of course, the Corps Carol Service. All this interspersed with other Branches' dinners and luncheons.

70 Ex-Members of
249 SIGNAL SQUADRON (FARELF)
still keep in touch with their old friends

For further details contact
Graham Jolly on 01233 637792
or visit the 249 website at

www.249signalsquadron.freeserve.co.uk

WEST LONDON BRANCH

(from Ron Miller, Chairman)

Early in September we hosted Sheffield Branch to a Fish & Chip Supper at the Cavalry Barracks in Hounslow. A very social evening included a hilarious forty five minutes from **Maurice Green** with his monologues. Having put too much vinegar on his chips he had forgotten most of the words. The following morning saw us all on parade at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. The Royal Signals contingent was lead by **Col Donald Crawford**, ably assisted by **Cols John Eversfield, Ken Taylor** and **David Grocott**. Parading with us were Members of Sheffield, Reading, Bath, East and South London Branches and of 31st Signals Association. A special feature of the service was the contribution from the Choir of Leeds Parish Church that was touring the South of England. Following the Service and a few beers with the In-Pensioners, eight Association Members and guests wined and dined together at the Duke of York's Headquarters, the whole event having been organised by our Chairman, **Dusty Miller** and Secretary, **Howard Loates**.

Ed Murphy (Vice-Chairman), and Cliff Wood (Treasurer) trying to borrow berets from two Sheffield Branch Members

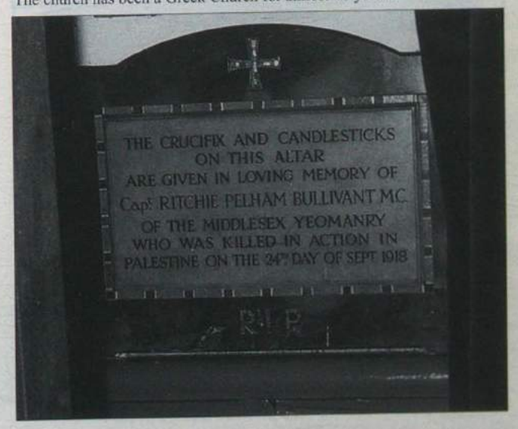
(from Jane Knight, West London Branch)

We spent a most enjoyable evening at the Tower of London in September. This has become an annual event since **Cliff Wood** was the one largely instrumental in organising our first visit in the Eighties. Our tour was conducted by **Chief Yeoman Warder John Kenny**, who served in the Corps, and at the end of the evening one of the ladies had prepared for us an excellent buffet supper. On a sadder note, we learnt of the death of **Yeoman Gaoler Alan Copestake BEM** who had conducted all our tours in the early days. The day before going to press **Cliff Wood** and **Jane Knight** attended the Memorial Service to him held at the Chapel of St Peter ad Vicula within the Tower. **Cliff** served with **Alan** in the Corps and we extend the sympathy of the Branch to **Joan** and the family.

THE MIDDLESEX YEOMANRY ASSOCIATION

By the time you read this our 73rd Annual Dinner will have taken place, at the Duke of York's Headquarters. It is anticipated that a good attendance will, once again, have made it an evening to remember. Our President, **Col Simon Beazley** and Chairman, **George Key** will be heading the festivities. The Dinner Committee, **Maj** 'Dusty' **Miller** and **Len Smith** look forward to seeing you all enjoying yourselves.

Whilt sitting at a Greek christening (which can go on a bit), at St Stephen's Church, Shepherds Bush, London, a member of the Association spotted a wall plaque. It was in memory of **Capt Ritchie Pelham Bullivant MC.** He was killed in action on 24 September 1918. The church has been a Greek Church for almost 40 years.



The Band have had to move on, owing to difficulties at Uxbridge TA Centre. They are now based at Hampton in Middlesex. They wish to record their thanks to everyone who responded to the appeal for funds. They continue to perform in concert and as a Marching Band. They led the parade from Horseguards to the Cenataph on Sunday 8 October, for the Palastine Police Association and very good they were too.

A few dates for your diaries:

12 December 2000	The Pearson Shoot (Uxbridge TA Centre)
7 March 2001	Ordinary Meeting (Sgts' Mess - Knightsbridge Bks)

Finally do keep in touch, our Secretary **Andrew Bridges** (01276 33345) is only too pleased to hear from you.

31 SIGNAL REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

A Busy couple of months saw us charging around, doing lots of things, being led by **Col Donald Crawford**. The Royal Military Tattoo 2000, The Royal Star and Garter Home Military Band Concert, The Sovereign's Final Parade Dress Rehearsal and the Duchess of Gloucester Cup at Longmoor Camp. The visit to Denbies Vineyard was cancelled, due to a lack of support, or as the Doctor put it, 'Multiple visit fatigue'. Anyway the committee are now out of the darkened room and pointing **Henry Holman** in the direction of a Cheese and Wine Party. 'Dusty' **Miller** is looking at a Christmas Lunch on the Watercress Line and plans are well underway for our European Trip in May 2001. Details on both of them will follow later. Our Annual Dinner will be at the Duke of York's Headquarters on 31 March 2001, make a note in your diary now.

Thanks to *The WIRE* several ex-31 members have made contact with the Association, much to the joy of our Memebership Secretary, **Chrissy Mills**, who can be contacted on 0208 578 2715 for an application form.

The Committee would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

19 SIGNAL REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

From Scotland and Wales, from the furthest parts of Norfolk and Cornwall, from Durham, Kent and all points in between, **Col Colin Gilbert's** family travelled to the Household Cavalry Sergeants' Mess at Knightsbridge for the Association's eighth reunion on 28 September. This new venue was suggested by **Keith Stafford**, editor of the Association Journal, 'The 19th', who made all the arrangements and it was ironic that pressure of work did not permit him to attend!

After the meetings and greetings, a short business session (when all the committee members were unanimously re-elected) was followed by lunch which was agreed by many to have been the best yet: good food and wine well prepared and served, a venue with an ambience worthy of the occasion and beer at a reasonable price.

Ed Nicol arrived by mini-cab, his forearm held together with titanium scaffolding, was delighted to have made the effort.

'What happened to you?'

'I fell off a Routemaster bus. It didn't stop where I wanted to get off but I did!'

Geoff Pinder, down from Stockton-on-Tees, finally took delivery of his sweatshirt emblazoned with the Red Beaufighter and others took advantage of the opportunity to get themselves a Regimental Tie.

The committee members, under **George Brew's** Chairmanship, grappled with the choice of next year's meeting place. Will we go back to Stoke-on Trent or should we try somewhere else in the midlands? Certainly we expect to return to Knightsbridge in 2002, if they can accommodate us again. All those known to have served in the Regiment will be informed after Christmas. Any who are not on our mailing list and would like details can make contact through **Peter Cuckow** at RHQ.

REUNIONS

'F' (BOYS) COMPANY ROYAL SIGNALS 1920-1941 - 9TH REUNION

The 9th Reunion took place on 20 September 2000 at the Union Jack Club, Waterloo, London, and 27 members out of 97 attended. Not a bad turnout as we are all well over 70 and a significant proportion of our members live overseas. From Canada, we warmly welcomed **Tom Edgerton** (39/42) and **Walter Richardson** (39/42) from California.

Our chairman, **John Dadswell**, addressed the assembly and especially mentioned the two new members, **G. Salmon** and **Frank Pike** both from (30/33), and also warmly welcomed the presence of **D. Machin** who lives in France and joined in 1929. He also welcomed the presence of **Maj Gen Peter Baldwin** who is an honorary member, and although still working hard, found time to leave his office to join us. He then mentioned our president **Bruce Beattie** who has unfortunately suffered a stroke and whilst he has regained most of his speech is fighting hard to become more mobile. We wish him and his dear wife **Jeanne**, swift progress towards his recovery. He also gave us the sad news of deaths of **Capt Jock Mullen** who died on 4 January, and 'Stormy' **Fairweather** who died suddenly in his sleep on 26 June this year. Both were pleasant and amusing men, always with broad smiles whom we shall sorely miss. Coincidentally, both were involved with very dangerous SOE exploits during the war. (Note: If anyone has any information about their service in the SOE or Commandos would they please send it to **Vic Dugdale**).

The Chairman continued with a thank you to the committee for their continued loyalty and input to the success of the reunion. He also particularly mentioned ex-Chairman, **Alan** 'Podge' **Ridgeon** who is fighting hard against illness and who was originally responsible for all of us getting together. 'Podge' received very loud applause from all present.

The following members attended: **P. Baldwin, S. Band** (PRO), **W. Callegari, D. Chetwynd**, (Treasurer), **P. Clowson, J. Dadswell** (Chmn), **V. Dugdale** (Sec), **A. C. Earl, T. Edgerton, H. Galloway, M. Ham, G. Harrison, L. Knight, R. Knight, J. Le Hardy, D. Machin, T. O'Connor, W. Offord, F. Pavey MBE, S. Pavey, G.** 'Frank' **Pike, A. Ridgeon, W. Richardson, G. Salmon, J. W. Sinclair, R. Todd, P. Craig** (ex staff). **Alan Searle** a 1942 entrant came as our guest as he wanted to meet **Lt Col Stanley Pavey** and any others of our company who were NCO Boys at that time. Apologies for absence were received from **Robin Laing**, who has severe bronchitis, 'Bunny' **Lord, Tom Swales**, 'Ossie' **Fletcher** and **Frank Betts** who are unwell, **D. W. Smith, Jack Harding** who is mourning the loss of his beloved wife, **Jim Davidson** (Australia), **Ken Selmes, Stan Smith**, (who incidentally I am told has a nice house to let on Victoria Island, Vancouver, for six months, probably on a swap basis. Address: 409,75 Gorge Road. W. Victoria. B.C. V9A 7A9. Canada), 'Paddy' **Ford, Leo Lees** who is unwell, and last but by no means least, **Bill Weatherly MM**, who has remarried and has moved to New Zealand. He had a tough war with SOE and Commando units, and was a constant and very welcome member at our reunions, a very brave and modest man who will be missed. I hope that when **Lt Col Victor Martin MC** (ex Sgt Boy who lives very near to **Bill's** new home) reads these notes, he will use his authority to persuade **Bill** to visit us again 'soon'.

BEVERLEY EX-BOYS ASSOCIATION RE-UNION WEEKEND

50 YEARS BOY AND MAN - *by David James-Bailey*

The year 1950 saw the emergence of 6 (Boys) Training Regiment from its grassroots as No 1 Selection Squadron and its change of location from Gallowgate near Richmond, to Victoria Barracks in the sleepy East Yorkshire town of Beverley. For the next five years the town played host to the motley crowd of lads that made up the Regiment. So it was that during the weekend 7-8 October 2000 a good number of those 'lads', who came from all walks of life and all corners of the UK, collected once again in Beverley to mark the 50th Anniversary of that 'happening'.

The Museum of Army Transport in Beverley played host for the day to greet and feed the 90 or so members of the Beverley Ex-boys Association who with wives or partners (the writer hesitates to say, or both!) were gathered to celebrate a little bit of their lives. Of course some had already renewed old acquaintances last year at the Victory Club in London, but many who were unable to join us then were able to make contact with old friends this year and it was an equally moving experience. After meeting in the museum during the afternoon of Saturday 7 October a dinner was held in the Montgomery Room in the evening which was attended by the Right Worshipful Mayor of Beverley, **Mr N. Holgate** and his lady wife. **Mr Holgate** informed us during his address that prior to the current refurbishment of the Guildhall, some items belonging to the period of the Regiment's time in Beverley were removed and stored. However, on completion of the work on the Guildhall these will be reinstated in their rightful place. He produced an original plaque presented to the town in 1955 when the Regiment departed.

The Mayor of Beverley,Cllr Neville Holgate, showing the original plaque to Tony Hull, Branch Secretary, in the Military Chapel of Beverley Minster

The meal was excellent and grateful thanks go to the museum catering and table staff for their faultless attention to us during the evening. It was of course, a typically damp, drizzly Yorkshire evening of the sort which would have, and probably did, bring back many happy memories of illicit nocturnal activities/expeditions to the Westwoods during those heady days of youth. However, the bar did a brisk trade and even before the wine started to flow an increasingly convivial atmosphere was becoming very evident. What only very few will know is that the meal was prepared under combat conditions in a 'field kitchen' set up in the museum. How about that, then!? Mind you those few only knew because they entered by the wrong entrance. The Loyal Toast to Her Majesty The Queen was proposed by **John Ient** in the absence of our Chairman who was unable to attend, vice-Chairman **Mike Teague** proposed a toast to the Colonel-in-Chief, The Princess Royal, and our President **Lt Col (Rtd) John Beasley** gave a welcoming address. **John** also presented bouquets to both **Mrs Holgate** and **Beryl Hull**.

The following day, Sunday, everyone attended a service in Beverley Minster at which Holy Communion was celebrated. This was probably quite a moving experience for some, since the Minster saw many of the boys taking their first communion in that place after being confirmed by the Archbishop of York all those years ago, and here they were 50 years later doing the same thing. Prior to the service **John Ient** organised us all for a photo-call on the Minster steps with the **Mayor** and **Mrs Holgate** in attendance - he stopped short of forming us up into three ranks, fearing perhaps we were unable to keep in step.

Following the main service and a private gathering in the East Yorkshire Regiment's military chapel everyone said their farewells, promised faithfully to keep in touch, and went their separate ways. It was an extremely successful weekend and once again we have those stalwarts of the Association, **Beryl** and **Tony Hull**, to thank for all the hard work they put in organising the event. It was a huge task and must have been very exhausting for them. They should be justly proud thatall their efforts proved so worthwhile. Thank you both very much!.

Assembly outside the church before the service celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the formation of 6 Boys Training Regiment

LANGELEBEN REUNION BRANCH 7th AGM AND REUNION

Ernie Callaghen (Secretary)

The 7th AGM and Reunion was held at Burleigh Court, Loughborough, over the weekend 8-10 September. Some 114 Members and guests attended and a very enjoyable three days ensued. VIP guests included **Cllr Neville Bird** - the Mayor of Charnwood, **Arnulf Baumann** - the Burgermeister of Konigslutter Germany and **Rev Canon Derek Buxton** - who dedicated the new memorial standard, which had been paid for by membership donations.

Our President, **Maj Gen P. A. C. Baldwin,** presented a Royal Signals plaque to the Mayor of Charnwood, an engraved glass mug to the Burgermeister and **Rev Canon Derek Buxton** was the proud recipient of a Langeleben Reunion Branch Tie. The weekend was rounded off with a reception and buffet dance on the Saturday night. This went on until the early hours of Sunday morning.

Our next reunion will be held in Konigslutter, Germany, during the Shutzenfeste in May, 2001. This will also be the 50th Anniversary of our unique Association with Langeleben and our friends in Konigslutter and the surrounding area.

LOST COMMS

Calling anyone who remembers **Sgt Bill Rhymes**. **Bill** served in the War Office Signals and landed at Normandy and fought up through France. He was in the Oxford/Bucks until transferring to the Signals. He transferred to the REME in 1945. Anyone who remembers **Bill** is asked to call his son-in-law, **Brian Lawson**, on 01865 715113. Alternatively write to 8 Kennedy Close, Oxford, OX4 2UH

Mr R. A. Potts is seeking two of his old pals: **Lemaitre Ross** - one time Foreman of Signals who served with **Mr Potts** in LRDG Signals early in WW2 as an Instrument Mechanic. He had previously served in India. **Lt MacAvish** - commissioned from the Middle East OCTU (Cairo) in 1942. He was badly wounded in the Western Desert in 1942, and he came from Liverpool. Anyone who can help should contact **Mr Potts** at: Springfield, Millbrook Way, Orleton, Ludlow, Salop SY8 4HW.

Mr Mike Lewis is researching his late Uncle's Wartime Service with the Royal Signals and would be most interested to hear from anyone who may have served with him. **Sig 2330480 Jack F. Newport** 95/L from Bath. According to a Newspaper article at the time he was posted missing as from 28 April presumably in 1941 on the Libya and the Egyptian border where his unit was in action. We have many photographs taken of him and his pals in Egypt and in Athens, Greece all in 1941. The enclosed photo was probably taken somewhere in North Africa. Top row from left **Jack Newport, Ron Mitchell, Ron Norstrand, Alf Edwards** and **Alf Andrews** from Sydney Australia.

Jack was eventually captured and taken prisoner, we are not sure where and would like to know? We do know that he was a prisoner for about four and a half years, and that he was in Stalag XVIIIA. Wolfsberg. Austria. No. 4849. Mentioned many times in the photgraphs is the phrase 'The Boys' 95/L Gambling.' Thanking you, Anybody with any information please send it to: **Mr Mike Lewis** (Former The King's Shropshire Light Infantry), Ferndale, 76 Mount Road, Southdown, Bath, BA2 1LH.
Yours faithfully.....

From: **Tom McGowran**
5 Parkhead Road
Linlithgow
EH49 7BS

Dear Editor,

While serving in Singapore just before the Japanese started their monkey business, I met briefly an uncle of mine, **Sgt George L. McGowran** , 2313758, Royal Corps of Signals.

When next I tried to call on him he had vanished and I could not get further information on him. I got the impression that he had been posted on special service elsewhere. I was taken prisoner at Singapore and on my return home was told that it was believed he had escaped. However, I learned recently that he is in fact buried in Sai Wan War Cemetery, Hong Kong.

I can't get further information on him unless I can contact his next of kin. I believe he was married to **Olive** (?) of Witham, Essex. Can any of your readers help?

Yours……..

John and **Lyn Chamberlain** are seeking ex-**Sig Paul Power**, who served with them in 30 Sig Regt in 1965/66. **Paul** was best-man at their wedding and came from Stevenage. Anyone who can help is asked to call 01202 723443.

Mr Harry Jones is seeking anyone who served with him in11 Armd Div Signals in Herford, Germany, in 1950/52. **Harry** can be contacted on 020 8958 1640.

Mr J. S. Goddard is seeking the whereabouts of the former **Capt G. S. Fenton**, with whom he served between 1941-43 in 223 (Ind) Inf Bde in East Anglia and subsequently with the 1st and 6th Airborne Div at Bulford. Anyone who can help is asked to contact **Mr Goddard** at: 44 Cleveland, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 3NG.

Dennis Woolard is trying to trace his former pals in Palestine Command Sig Regt, 1 Sqn, Lines Troop, 1946-48. Anyone who remembers him is asked to write to: 3 Silver Birch Avenue, St. Ives, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE27 6TJ.

Mr A. V. Ashmore is seeking the whereabouts of anyone who served with him in J Section, 56 Div Sigs, between 1940 and 1944. In particular he is looking for **S. C. Stone, R. Lowe** and **Alex Bruce**. Anyone who can help is asked to call **Mr Ashmore** on 020 8993 2358.

Ken 'Errol' **Flint**, OW/L with 2 War Office Signals, Dover: 37 Med W/T in France and Indian Airborne Div, is alive and kicking and listening out on 01304 369538.

Jim Lambert would like to contact anyone who served with him in 244 Sig Sqn (The Red Hand Gang), in Herford and Lippstadt, W. Germany during 1959-1961. He is already in touch with **Terry Fuller, Rob kirk, Ken Meekin** and **Pete** 'Taff' **Langford.** Either telephone him on :0114 288 5493 or E-mail: jlamoc@lamb53.freeserve.co.uk

CORRESPONDENCE

From: **W. G. Saffin**
61 Hilly Park
TAUNTON
Somerset
TA2 6RJ

Dear Sir,

With reference to the photograph and short article on the Korean War by **(Ex-WO2)** 'Taff' **Davis**, may I be permitted to point out that he very modestly omits that he is the author of a very good book. It is called 'Red Winds from the North'and gives the account of an ordinary soldier's experiences. Another one well worth readingby another ordinary BKVA is called 'Signals on the Left, Armoured Corps on the right by **Ron Larby**. Both of them are very cheap for hardback books and are well worth the effort made in obtaining them.

Yours Sincerely.....

From: **Mrs A. S. Wilson**
143 Enfield Chase
GUISBOROUGH
Cleveland
TS14 7LQ
Tel: 01287 631879

Dear Sir,

My uncle was one of those captured by the Japanese at Singapore. He had been in India for five years and was about to come home when war broke out and he was sent to Singapore.

He took a bullet in the buttock and was placed in the Queen Alexandra Hospital. When the Japanese began shooting throughout the hospital my uncle disarmed an officer, who was preparing to shoot the first Japanese to walk into the room where they were. He had only the one revolver and certain death would have been the outcome. My uncle hid the gun beneath his mattress. By the time the Japanese reached their room they had just about spent themselves with shooting. As the men were wounded anyway all they did was give them a thorough beating! This information was given to my father forty years after the war by a **Mr Hopps** from Shortley Bridge, Durham when they had a chance meeting. **Mr Hopps** had not expected my uncle to survive the beating when he met him in Changi compound. My uncle, who was in the Royal Signals Dance Band, just longed to play his music.

My uncle was sent off to the Burma Railway and **Mr Hopps** was sent to work in a factory in Japan. My uncle survived until 10 September, 1943. Miraculous, after what he had been through. His details are:

Cpl Thomas William Deighton No: 2321855
Died 10 Spetember 1943 aged 29 years
Buried Plot B1, Row G, Grave 11
Thanbyuzayat War Cemetary, Burma

He was exhumed from Tambaya Camp on the Burma Railway Line, and he was the son of **John** and **Isabella Deighton.**

On a recent visit to our daughter, in New Zealand, we had a stop-over in Singapore and took photos of the Queen Alexandra Hospital. We knew nothing of the war memorial in Krangi Park until very recently.

If anybody has any information I would be most grateful. Did anyone survive Tambaya?

We have lost family members in every war since the Boer War and quite possibly before that. Even as a child I could see what the loss of my **Uncle Tom** did to a close and loving family.

Yours Sincerely.....

From: **Trevor Binks**
Trevlyn
7 Woodsford Road
Crossways
DORCHESTER
Dorset
DT2 8UU
Tel: 01305 852 969
Mob: 07788 100 020

Dear Sir,

I am a member of the National Committee of the Far East Veterans Association. The Association is planning a holiday/reunion for Far Eastern veterans in June 2001. This is not confined to our members and we would welcome any of your members who would like to take advantage of the offer. Full details can be obtained from me at the above address on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope.

Yours Sincerely……

DONATIONS

From the Will of Joseph Francis Conroy		£5,000.00
Lt Col (Retd) P. H. Johnstone	£	25.00
RSA Southampton	£	85.00
Certa Cito Lodge	£	10.00
Middlesex Imperial Yeomanry Lodge	£	75.32
Capt (Retd) G. R. Patient	£	10.00
Mrs A. S. Wilson	£	10.00
Mr M. H. H. Pilkington	£	25.00
Mr D. G. E. Hopkins	£	100.00
Mr James Cumming	£	20.00
3 Div Signals Reunion Club in memory of Mr N. T. Snow	£	10.00
RSA Glasgow in memory of Mr Monty Brydon	£	35.50
Frank Chadwick in memory of Ken Hart	£	25.00
Peter Barlow in memory of Col Peter Goldney	£	25.00
Collected at his funeral in memory of Brig D. White	£	222.00
Maj (Retd) G. K. Rothwell in memory of Mr M. F. B. Garland	£	5.00

LAST POST

Aitken - Cpl R. M. Aitken	Served 1959/65	Died 19/09/00
Allsop - Sig A. L. Allsop	Served 1958/61	Died 23/08/00
Apthorpe - Sig R. Apthorpe	Served 1939/45	Died 2000
Bartlett - SSgt C. S. N. Bartlett	Served 1954/79	Died 02/09/00
Batten - D. Batten	Served	Died 2000
Blackstock - Sgt T. C. Blackstock	Served 1939/46	Died Aprl '96
Brebble - LCpl R. Brebble	Served WW2	Died 30/08/00
Britt - Sgt G. P. Britt	Served 1950/71	Died 14/09/00
Brydon - Dvr M. Brydon	Served 1949/51	Died 04/03/00
Burgess - SSgt P. G. Burgess	Served 1946-68	Died 19/09/00
Conroy - Sig D. C. A. Conroy	Served 1950/59	Died 20/07/00
Coombs - Capt P. E. Coombs	Served 1942/47	Died 1998
Cooper - Maj H. W. G. Cooper	Served 1924/47	Died 12/10/00
Cushen - WO1 T. J. Cushen	Served 1951/75	Died 10/10/00
Dix - LCpl H. Dix	Served 1931/39	Died July '00
Dorling - Sig M. J. D. Dorling	Served 1992/00	Died 05/09/00
Douglas-Beveridge -		
Maj J. O. Douglas-Beveridge	Served 1933/63	Died 20/06/00
Farrier - Mr J. Farrier	Served	Died Sep '00
Frost - Mr A. C. Frost	Served	Died 19/08/00
Garland - WO1 (RSM) M. F. Garland	Served 1947/69	Died 07/10/00
Griffiths - WO2 A. H. Griffiths	Served 1924/64	Died 1999
Grundy - Sig G. H. W. Grundy	Served 1939/45	Died 26/09/00
Holland - Mah E. Holland	Served 1952/93	Died 12/09/00
Humpleby - Mr C. Humpleby	Served 1974/93	Died 22/08/00
King - Sgt B. T. King	Served 1940/46	Died Sep '00
Leslie - Cpl H. M. Leslie	Served 24 years	Died 03/09/00
Marshall - Cpl J. A. Marshall	Served 1932/46	Died Feb '00
Matzen - Sgt C. D. Matzen	Served 1951/68	Died Oct '00
McCormick - Sig J. D. McCormick	Served 1941/46	Died 30/05/00
McKay - Lt Col S. H. McKay	Served 1939-63	Died 2000
McKenzie - Dvr J. McKenzie	Served 1943/49	Died Sep '00
Milborne - Sgt D. S. Milborne	Served 1945/48	Died 1999
Milton - Dvr H. R. Milton	Served 1940-46	Died 06/10/00
Nash - Cpl A. T. Nash	Served 1924/45	Died 31/08/00
Overton - Mr A. Overton	Served	Died
Parris - LCpl R. H. Parris	Served 1939/45	Died 06/06/00
Paterson - LCpl A. J. T. Paterson	Served 1942/46	Died 1990
Pritchard - Sig R. T. Pritchard	Served 1943/47	Died 22/04/00
Pullman - Sig C. F. Pullman	Served 1939/46	Died Oct '99
Radmore - Maj G. Radmore	Served WWII	Died 28/08/00
Ratcliffe - Sig W. Ratcliffe	Served 1944-47	Died 14/09/00
Reedman - LCpl E. E. Reedman	Served 1930/39	Died 2000
Sawle - Sig A. C. Sawle	Served 1939/46	Died 09/10/00
Semper - SSgt H. E. Semper	Served 1939/46	Died 30/10/00
Snow - Sgt N. T. Snow	Served 1939/46	Died Sep '00
Sutton - Sig P. R. Sutton	Served 1939/45	Died 1997
Thomas - Cpl R. W. Thomas	Served 1959/79	Died 26/09/00
Tyler - Mr J. Tyler	Served 1936/46	Died July '00
Waller - Maj J. L. Waller	Served 1939/67	Died 29/09/00
Warner - Sig P. Warner	Served 1941/45	Died 23/09/00
White - Brig D. White	Served 1930/63	Died 17/08/00
White - Cpl P. C. White	Served 1946/48	Died 16/08/00
Williams - LCpl B. J. Williams	Served 1951/53	Died 21/09/00
Williams - WO1 W. I. Williams	Served 1939/62	Died Oct '00
Withey - LCpl M. S. W. Withey	Served 1939/46	Died 08/04/00

Radmore – Maj Guy Radmore the death has occurred of **Maj G. T. Radmore. Guy Radmore** served during World War II in the Royal Signals and later the SAS. He served in Belgium and France in 1940, and was one of the last soldiers to be evacuated at Dunkirk. He became a member of the Airborne Forces and parachuted into Normandy on 6 June 1944 as a Captain commanding the 5th Parachute Brigade Signal Section. The Brigade's first task was to hold Pegasus Bridge, a vital crossing for the advancing allied forces, and an action depicted in the well known Corps painting 'Go To It'. After further actions in France and Belgium, he ended the war in Norway where, with the population of Bergen, the joint celebrations of the final victory were, in his own words, 'considerable, and of some length'. **Guy** returned to civilian life after the war, and pursued a career for 30 years in Durban, South Africa, becoming a Director of a company involved in shipping, travel, and other commercial ventures. He returned to England on retirement, settling in SW Surrey, to be with his much loved family of three children and grandchildren. He died on 28 August 2000, aged 80.

White - Brig Denis White OBE was commissioned from the Shop in January 1930 and posted to Catterick to attend No. 21 Q Course. On completion he joined 3rd Divisional Signals. He spent almost three years there before setting off on the first of his several appointments outside the Corps - a three year secondment to the Southern Brigade of the KAR in Tanganyika. One of his most memorable experiences happened as he was on his way to meet his new Commanding Officer. He was greeted by two wild cats bounding towards him to eat him, or so he thought - they turned out to be the Colonel's two tame cheetahs!

Shortly after returning to the UK he was promoted to Captain (under the Hore-Belisha Scheme) and in 1938 went to Nottingham, as TA Adjutant, to raise the 3rd Anti- Aircraft Signal Regiment. On mobilisation, he relinquished that post and after a short period with the newly formed 3rd Signal Training Centre in Whitby, was posted firstly to the East African Signals to establish the Signal School in Nairobi; then to Khartoum as Temporary Lieutenant Colonel to command Sudan Defence Force Signals.

In 1941, he qualified at the Middle East Staff School and was appointed GSO1 Signal Plans at GHQ Middle East. He was subsequently posted to the staff of CAFSO, Middle East as GSO1 Signals. In 1944, shortly after moving with CAFSO to Italy, he was posted to command 5th (London) Corps Signals, with whom he saw the campaign in Italy almost to its close. During this time he was awarded the OBE.

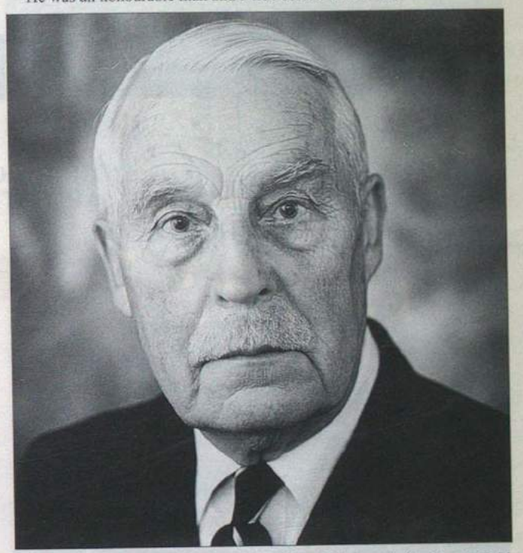
The war over, on return to the UK, he spent a short time with STC in Catterick before being posted as CR Signals to the Guards Division in Germany - but not for long. In 1946 he was selected to attend the first course at the newly formed Joint Services Staff College and in 1947 he took up the post of AAG at GHQ FARELF. During that time he was presented with a Kukri by the Brigade of Gurkhas for his part in organising their transfer from India. While in Singapore, he met and married his dear wife **Angela Jensen**. She was in the WRAC and was sent to work for him. Romance blossomed and they married in Singapore Cathedral on 8 June 1949.

Back in the UK in 1950, he assumed command of the Royal Signals Wing at the School of Signals at a time of considerable reorganisation and whilst there was appointed Brevet Lieutenant Colonel. In 1953 came his second staff appointment - AAG, AG5 Mobilisation at the War Office. This was folowed by a third staff job - Colonel GS at the Military College of Science, Shrivenham. A post which he held until 1955 when he was sent out, again, to GHQ FARELF as Colonel A. His last appointment was as Brigadier, CSO Southern Command, which he held until his retirement in 1962.

After his retirement he and his family went to live in Heswall on the Wirral. **Denis** soon became involved with the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, as chief fund raiser. It was a job that was close to his heart as he suffered from malaria from time to time. In 1995 he suffered a series of strokes and thereafter did not enjoy the best of health until his death on 17 August, 2000. He still managed to enjoy a 'wee dram' with friends and family.

He is sorely missed by his much loved family, wife **Angela**, daughter **Sara**, son **Mark**, daughter-in-law **Hilary** and grandson **James**.

He was an honourable man and a true soldier to the end.



Slack - Eric Desmond Slack, aged 62. from Holmwood, Nr. Chesterfield Derby. He enlisted in the Royal Corps of Signals on 27 May 1955. He served in the Suez Campaign - 1956 and left the Corps in 1958. **Eric** was a regular attender at all the Chesterfield Branch activities and was a keen sportsman.

He died on 1 August, 2000. His funeral service was attended by the Chesterfield Branch's Standard Bearer who lead the cortege into church followed by Branch Members and comrades from other ex-service asociations and the Royal British Legion.

Our deepest sympathy goes to his widow Cynthia and all the family for their very sad loss

Britt - Gerald 'Jerry' **Britt** served his National Service in the RMP from 1946-48. He joined the Royal Corps of Signals in 1950 and reached the rank of Sergeant before he left in 1971. He was a Technician by trade and was a part of several installation teams, including RAF Sharjah in 1968. Amongst 'Jerry's' postings were; Iserlohn 1950-55, Malaya 1955-56, Aden 1958-59, plus Catterick and Blandford. He became a Life Member of the Royal Signals Association in 1953. Following his discharge from the Corps, 'Jerry' worked for BT in Norwich. 'Jerry' leaves his widow,**Mary**, to whom the Association offers their sincere condolences.

Lever – Cpl Philip Carr Lever. It is with great sadness that we have to report the untimely death of **Phil Lever**, on Monday 31 July 2000 in a flying accident whilst on a gliding holiday in Spain. **Phil** was born on 28 May 1969, and joined the Royal Signals as an apprentice at Harrogate on 11 August 1986. He left the Corps on 15 September 1995 as a Corporal Radio Technician, in order to attend agricultural college and start a complete career change, finally running the family farm in Iwerne Minster.

During his service he attended and passed 'P Coy', but was unable to subsequently join 216 Sig Sqn owing to a lack of vacancies for his trade. He learnt to sail whilst at Harrogate, and went on to become a mainstay of both Corps and Army sailing, bridging the divide between dinghy and offshore racing. He competed in everything from Laser single-handed dinghies, through Bosuns and Enterprises, to keelboats. These included the J24 'Hitch-Hiker' where he made an enormous input over ten years of sailing, involvement in two Olympic

campaigns, in the Star class with **Stuart Hudson**, and in the Signals sponsored Soling Campaign in 1995. He was also involved in the Army Sigma Campaign prior to his discharge, and had even been know to cruise on a Nic 55 in the Caribbean. To all these disparate disciplines he brought his own brand of humour, which together with his enthusiasm and talent gave any team a key player.
Following his graduation from agricultural college he returned to one of his earlier interests, flying, and went on a three month sabbatical to the USA to gain his PPL. Early in 2000 he bought his own single engined plane, and subsequently passed his instrument rating. In June 2000 he piloted this aircraft from UK to the States in company with a group of other like minded, ambitious pilots, on across to the West Coast, and then returned to UK in early July.
He will be sadly missed by all who knew him, and we extend our deepest sympathy to his parents, **Philip** and **Neel**, and to his girl friend, **Jo Burchill**.

Eager - Walter 'Wally' **Eager** died in June. The funeral was at Eastbourne crematorium. Wally was the personal radio operator for the CRA in 56 Div during the war and was a member of 56 Div (Signals) OCA since 1948.

Humpleby - WO2 Colin Humpleby(Thompson) was a Radio Telegraphist who went on to complete the full 22 years, his last posting being as WO2 (RQMS) of 238 (London) Sig Sqn, Chelsea Barracks, London. From his original surname he was widely known in the Corps as 'The Hump' and was particularly well known for his footballing skills.Sadly **Colin's** life was cut short at the age of only 48 years on Tuesday 22 August, 2000. Many of his friends from the Corps attended his funeral.

Tyler - John 'Jackie' **Tyler** died in July. The funeral was at St Andrew's Church, Ferring. Jackie was one of the original riders in the 56 Div (Signals) motorcycle display team before the war but spent his war service in the RAF. He was a founder member of 56 Div (Signals) OCA. He leaves a widow, **Lesley**.

Overton - Arthur Overton died in July. The funeral was at Beckenham crematorium. **Arthur** served in 56 Div from 1936-1946 (Commissioned in 1940) and was one of the founder members of the 56 Div (Signals) OCA. He was a member of the 56 Div DRs' motorcycle display team from 1937 and appeared at the Royal Tournament in 1987 and 1997. He leaves a widow, **Joan**.

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

263 (HARROGATE) SIGNAL SQUADRON ARMY TECHNICAL FOUNDATION COLLEGE

Sqn Comd **Maj Steven France**
SSM **WO2 (SSM) Adam Yafai**

SCOTT TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt A. D. Shakespeare**
Tp Sgt **Sgt A. Korchel**

FIRST IMPRESIONS - *by AT Kemp*

To say that coming to the Apprentice College was a culture shock is an understatement. After a long summer's break of doing what I wanted, (those were the days) , the change was immense, no more lie-ins, no more TV and no more freedom. The first few days were a 'gentle' introduction to army life. It still meant getting up at 0600hrs (six hours earlier than I was used to) and making the room and toilets sparkle. The food is definitely not 'what mum used to make', but it does come in large amounts. The fried breakfast plays havoc with your digestive system, and people around you do notice. The first week was quite tedious and uneventful, full of administration and paperwork, most of which I had filled in already many times before. Many of the ATs were already getting annoyed about the things that we were doing in the first week and were thinking about leaving. As the second week came by people changed their minds. The second week passed quickly due to the packed timetable of lessons and PT. Many of the ATs got used to the sleeping times, but one or two fell asleep in some of the lessons, and they were woken up sharply as a result. During the first few weeks the strength of the relationships between the ATs got stronger everyday. Everyone began to work as a team. In the accommodation we all have a chat and a joke, but at the same time doing personal administration. One of the main things that ATs have to learn is not to leave things until tomorrow, because the programs can be changed at extremely short notice. At times we think the permanent staff are being unfair and we don't deserve being shouted at, but they have their reasons. I have begun to understand that it is all done for my benefit. As the weeks continue I look forward to the training becoming more military and technical based. I'm especially looking forward to the end of Week 7, when we all get to go home for a week's leave.

RAWSON TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Kate Yardley** AGC (ETS)
Tp Sgt **Sgt Colin Gaul**

Another new term with a different arrangement of staff and 51 fresh faced apprentices ready to sacrifice their teenage freedoms and gain a prosperous career in the Royal Signals. It's up to the Rawson Tp Training Team (**Capt Katie Yardley** AGC (ETS), **Sgt Colin Gaul, Cpl Dave Sawyers, Cpl** 'Clubby' **Clubb, Cpl** 'Dog' **Barker** and **LSgt Kev McDowell** Scots Guards) to bring them up to scratch. They arrived with the initial expected nerves and inevitable homesickness but they are slowly settling into college life, room inspections, press-ups and of course the education. **AT Allerton** has proved to be one of the most eloquent of the Troop so we've left it to him to tell the rest of *The WIRE* readers his initial feelings about abandoning chivvy street and the comfort of home to fend for himself.

ARMY TECHNICAL FOUNDATION COLLEGE
BEFORE AND NOW - *by AT Allerton*

As I slowly opened my heavy sleep filled eyes my brain did not register the true occasion of the day. I had been celebrating the night before as a constant headache persisted in reminding me but for what purpose and more importantly when this 'purpose' would rear its head. I slithered slowly out of my sweat filled bed and made a vague attempt to stand up, when like a bullet reality hit me full force right between the eyes. I an undisciplined lazy boozer had only 18hrs of freedom left. As I dragged my pain-filled body down a never ending flight of stairs my thoughts left my control and decided to scare me with images of a ten foot Para who could shatter windows and a stare that could make you cry. After an exceptionally cold shower that could wake a sleeping hippie my brain stepped up a gear and went beyond any form of control on my part. Images of hate-filled selfish roommates invaded my brain and caused me to break into a cold sweat. At this point my mother who is ever attentive to detail spotted my distressed state and moved in with a full bombardment of coffee, toast and kind words. I managed to slow the express train of thoughts to a point where I could redirect them in a positive direction. This new direction bought me to an interesting question in the form of how to spend these very positive hours. I presently hit on the idea of beer and sex but my hung over body felt as if it was incapable of both. After racking the grey matter, that was still dragging me into as early retirement from life, I was relieved to remember my lover of 11/2 years wasn't at work. Therefore if I could persuade my weak legs to peddle the four miles to her house a few hours could be spent in bliss.

After my fourth cup of coffee the caffeine started to take its effect and with a quick step at the toilet to see it again and an even quicker step to put some presentable clothes on I jumped on unsure wheels and set off. As I rode my misty mind started to move quicker and became more lenient with the torture. I began to believe I could make a soldier and a damn good one. As my tyres kissed the dew damped grass of **Laura's** house my heart sank knowing I would only be able to spend a few hours with her and knowing that the goodbye would be terrible. 'Get out of bed now Sam! I'm not telling you again, either you get out of bed or its iced water treatment for you my lad!' Oh to be woken in this way is always exceptionally annoying but admittedly it worked. Once again I went through the rigmarole that is an early morning only this time it was to be the last time for seven weeks.

The journey down was what was to be expected; the roads full of people in imaginary F1 cars or Sunday drivers. We passed landmarks like the worlds biggest circular carport or the M25 as it's more commonly known. Reading, close now, no time left, no way out and no choice. Upon arrival we were welcomed into a huge hall, full of Corporals, Sergeants and Officers, all with a smile on their face that said to me, ' wait until your mummy and daddy have gone - you're going to want to die!' Because of this I was nervous. Two factors slightly took the edge off my weariness, £60 and then realising that the hall was filled with freshened faces, similar to my own, each complete with a wooden walk. We were shown to our accommodation and the parents were told to go. With a hug and a wave my mother walked away for she had done her job and done it well, now it

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

was up to me. 'That's your room there' pointed a well built corporal with a smile. The door edges open and I was met by a few weak smiles and a few pathetic hello's. Everyone was scared to be here but at the same time excited. I felt the same so after carefully picking my bed I went back outside.

In the days that followed we all bonded into a tightly knit group. I found that I wasn't the only one with the dream of aspiring to the lofty heights of Lieutenant or even higher and the whole room was filled, and still is filled with a feeling of lust for success. Now I have been here for a week, I still feel the uneasiness of 'Have I made the right decision?' For one we have the double edged sword in the form of **Cpl Ayres**, the real live 'Rambo' who hates you but will always be there for help and assistance. I admittedly miss home or more to the point normal life but soon the army will be my life and anywhere I go with the army will be home. To end on I will have to be what I can be and reach as high as I can reach because after all my life is in my own grubby little mitts!

PENNEY TROOP
Tp Comd **Capt Farrimond**
Tp Sgt **Sgt** 'Digger' **Gardiner RGBW**

LEADERSHIP CADRE - *by AT Farquhar*

The Leadership Cadre started off on Monday morning with the CO's opening address that I found interesting as he talked about qualities of a leader. The day progressed with various lectures from the Padre and a command task that was enjoyable. On Tuesday we had the stretcher run and command tasks, the stretcher run I found very hard and very tiring and I was glad to get that out of the way. We then changed and went on to command tasks; these were very enjoyable and at times amusing. Wednesday was a day with no physical training as such, we had lectures from the Padre until we departed on Exercise Penney Lane which was a Survival Exercise. This consisted of killing and eating chickens, building a shelter from wood and night navigating. This was an excellent night. We departed to Minley the following morning where we tackled some command tasks. This was the highlight of the week, excellent experience to build on trust and teamwork. On Friday it was the big day with the Intersection competition. We had to run with ammo boxes, carry stretchers and complete common tasks. This I did not enjoy. It was the most physically exhausting thing I have done so far and I'm glad to get it out the way. Overall I have enjoyed leadership week and hope this can be as much fun for ATs to come.

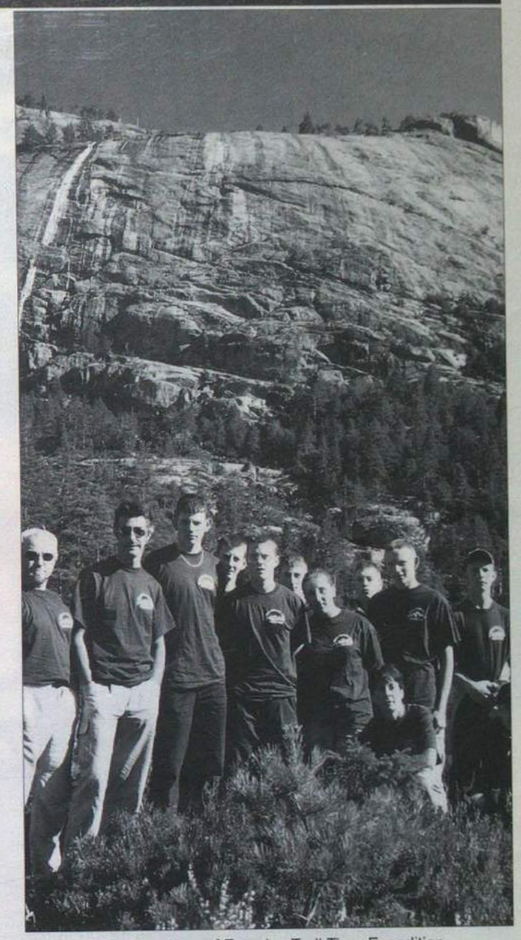
KILLING CHICKENS - *by AT Green*

It was on our Survival Exercise 'Penney Lane' when we were given two chickens and some vegetables, we saw no problems with this, the only drama was the chickens were still alive, a bit different to the 24-hour ration packs we had become used to. I was selected from our section to kill one, in order for our section to eat. I had no major problems with this, as I didn't see the point in joining the Army if I wasn't prepared to kill something, and after all in a real life situation it would become a necessity in order for me to survive. I had a few butterflies and felt nervous but the killing of the chicken was over within a few seconds. I was shocked at how much it continued to flap around even though it was dead, hence the 'headless chicken phrase'. The skinning and the removing of the feathers I had no problems with or the removing of the meat as I had become used to it from my Biology classes at school. The only bad thing was the sickening smell. The chicken made up part of our stew, which we ate once we had finished our night navigation. It tasted quite nice.

EXPEDITION TROLL MOUNTAIN (TIGER), NORWAY 2000
by Sig Cooke

Expedition Troll Mountain (Tiger) was a ten-day rock climbing expedition to Southern Norway where, along with eight other apprentices from the Army Apprentices' College (AAC), we participated in a Rock-Climbing Proficiency course. Having passed out from the AAC on Thursday 17 August the expedition started at 0500hrs on the Friday morning with an early wake-up to get ready to drive off to Newcastle. With **Lt Simon Collyer** driving and **Cpl** 'Seddy' **Byles** navigating, the journey gave the rest of us a chance to get to know each other and it didn't take long before we were all getting on really well. We had to be in Newcastle by 1500hrs and in good army tradition we arrived at 1445hrs, five minutes before five minutes before. Just in time!

The 18 hour ferry to Kristiansand was very entertaining, mainly at the expense of **Sig Gary Beatson** who must have been suffering from seasickness. The rest of us started 'the competition' by entertaining the ladies on the boat. **Cfn Chris Haye** got off to a great start with a slap in the first few hours. We arrived at Kristiansand and only had a 45min drive to the four star campsite in Evje. The campsite was lush, it had a shop, café, a lake to swim in if you didn't mind the cold and a large group of Danish school girls. More targets for the competition. We spent the most of the day making camp and awaiting the arrival of the instructors from the L & IT wing that had already been in country for a week, of course we introduced ourselves to the girls!



The Members of Exercise Troll Tiger Expedition

The first day of climbing was quite wet so it remained basic with some knot tying and confidence building exercises like the 50m abseil. The second day was a little different as we all split down into pairs to climb with. My partner was **Cfn Alan Stapleton** and together we climbed under the instruction of **Mr** 'Crazy Al' **Giles**. We called him 'Crazy Al' because he began every day at 0700hrs with a dip in the lake. You had to be crazy to do that coz it took half an hour to defrost! In the first three days of climbing we completed loads of climbs ranging from 40m to 110m and in differing conditions, but the fourth day was the most memorable. We started at the Silverwall in the Byglandsfjord valley where we completed five very tricky 45m climbs. It was just one big 'slab' and you were lucky if there were more than five hand holds per climb. In the afternoon we went white water rafting which will stay as the most memorable moment of the trip. We finished the climbing with a big finale. A 430m multi-pitch climb to the top of Troll Mountain which really tested your courage and your climbing ability. Our leader was **Mr Hugh Richards** and we all agreed that it was a very hard climb, but it was worth the five-hour effort for the amazing views.

The last day became known as 'mong' day and was spent on the beach in Mandal. We went out for a meal in the evening and all spent the night sleeping on the beach to enable us to make the early ferry. The ferry home gave us time to reflect on what an excellent time we'd had. On behalf of the group I'd like to thank **Lt Simon Collyer** for making the expedition happen, and **Mr Ewan Martin** and his team for giving up their time to make the expedition a memorable one. Thanks.

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

20 ARMOURED BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS AND SIGNAL SQUADRON (200)

Sqn Comd **Maj I. G. Standen**
RSM **WO1 (RSM) S. Lawes**

WELCOME

20th Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn would like to welcome **YofS Roberts** who has joined our team from 1 (UK) Armd Division and Sig Regt.

ALPHA TROOP - *by Sig Weller*
Tp Comd **Lt S. Hughes**
Tp SSgt **SSgt R. D. Burrows**

During a very busy period Alpha Tp were able to fit in a Troop Day out to Heide Park, a theme park in North Germany. We left work at early o clock in order to make the most out the day. The drive was long but fortunately **LCpl Donaghy** and **Sig Hepworth** were in good form and telling jokes all the way. On arrival our first ride was the log flume so we started off soaked! **LCpl Donaghy** was like a big kid and didn't see the sign above and consequently almost knocked himself out. The day was a success, thanks go out to **Sig Kate Jermany** and **Sig Claire Ashdown** who organised the day. After the day out came a well-deserved leave period followed by a very busy exercise period to Poland then Bavaria. The Troop has also got a few new faces. We would like to welcome **LCpl Roscoe** who has joined us from 14 Sig Regt, **LCpl Hall** who has come from 3 Div, **Sig Smith, Sig Ferris** and **Sig Harrison** who have all come from Blandford.

WIVES DAY - *by Lt Sofia Hughes*

Mrs Standen flying through the air whilst on the left Sgt Funshon and on the right LCpl Moss keep a watchful eye

On a warm Saturday in August a few of the wives from 20 Armd Bde and Sig Sqn (200) paraded wearing their husbands' uniform and borrowed boots. Their first activity of the day was a fun shoot on the SAT, before they were allowed to do this **Cpl Thubron** ensured that they zeroed their weapons (after a few moans of how heavy the weapon was they all got into it and shot like demons). After the shooting came a small walk up to the wooded area to learn about survival skills and how to cook in the field. **SSgt Tom Gibbins** and **Sgt Dick Punshon** demonstrated various methods of starting a fire, setting traps and many more survival skills. After this they were issued with a 24-hour ration pack, no cooker and no lighter and were made to put into practice what they had just learnt. After a healthy lunch they went on to the square and were taught how to drive an ASV 436 by **Cpl Dunbar**, a Foden by **LCpl Williams**, a 4 Tonne Vehicle by **LCpl Hall** and a land rover by **Sig Barritt**. After they had all had a go in each vehicle it was time to move on to the assault course. First there was a warm up by **LCpl Moss** some of the wives wanted a rest - not a chance! They completed the warm up and that was almost the end of the day. The final part of the day was a BBQ for the families and all those that assisted in the day. All had a good evening.

BRAVO TROOP
Tp Comd **Lt J. Acton**
Tp SSgt **SSgt T. Gibbins**

Bravo Tp would like to welcome their new Troop Commander, **Lt James Acton** and say goodbye to **Capt Paul Randell**.

EXERCISE PRAIRIE EAGLE - *by Sig Bogart*

I had just arrived in the Unit to be told that I was going to deploy on a seventeen-day exercise, this was to be my first exercise in the Regular Army. It is not like the odd weekend that I have been used to in the TA. I went down to Poland on the train, we loaded the vehicles on and after a small delay we set off. Once we had arrived at the training area it was a case of cam cream on and set up the Headquarters. I instantly got called 'Sick Note' as I had to travel in the back of an armoured vehicle - if you have never experienced this cross-country then you will not understand why! Once we were set up I was on a complex guard duty and refused the Chief of Staff access, as he did not know the password - I was new and didn't know him (Sorry Sir). The funniest things on the exercise included the OC falling into the slops pit and the 2IC having his little motorbike accident (I feel at this stage I should not say anymore). One down and many more to go (Exercises), I had enjoyed being part of a team and I even got the chance to drive a Challenger 2 cross-country.

MINDEN BATTLEFIELD TOUR - *by Lt James Acton*

Battlefield tours usually consist of the heady combination of hangover, fatigue and historical information overload. However, the SNCOs and Officers of 20 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn were spared the aforementioned trials by virtue of the location of the Squadron. Paderborn is a mere half hour minibus ride from the battlefield of Minden, removing the need for long coach and ferry journeys, and their attendant alcoholic evils.

Thus it was a fresh faced and enthusiastic audience who listened to **Maj Iain Standen**, the Officer Commanding, as he described the progress of the battle, moving between the various locations on the battlefield during the day. The duel between the allies (the Prussians and the British) and the dastardly French was vividly brought to life, and the audience were shown the many monuments which still exist today to commemorate the events of 1 August 1759. The destruction and rout of practically all French cavalry by a small number of the British infantry was particularly appreciated. The whole day was rounded off in true historical fashion with a visit to the former 2nd Westfalen Regiment Officers' Mess in Minden, now an excellent (and licensed) restaurant. The officers and seniors would like to thank **Maj Standen** for organising and leading the whole day, including spending what must have been the unit's entire stationery budget on a full colour, bound handout for everyone who attended.

DRIVING COURSE - *by Sig Kean*

On the morning of the 21 August a group of nervous people paraded outside the garages on a cold morning to start their AFV 436 driving course. The instructors were **Cpl Dunbar** and **Cpl Reardon**. The four week long course was broken down into theory and practice. We were soon driving cross-country and we all gained confidence really quickly. As always we can rely on the 436 vehicles to break down - and they did! We were able to put what we had learnt into practice. As our test drew nearer we practiced maneuvering in and out of cones, which represented garages. On the test day we amazed ourselves by passing, we then jumped into our new toys and drove them down to the railhead and loaded them up for Poland.

SUPPORT TROOP
Tp Comd **Maj M. G. P. Bohanon**
Tp SSgt **SSgt H. Capelman**

SUMMER BALL *by LCpl Barnett*

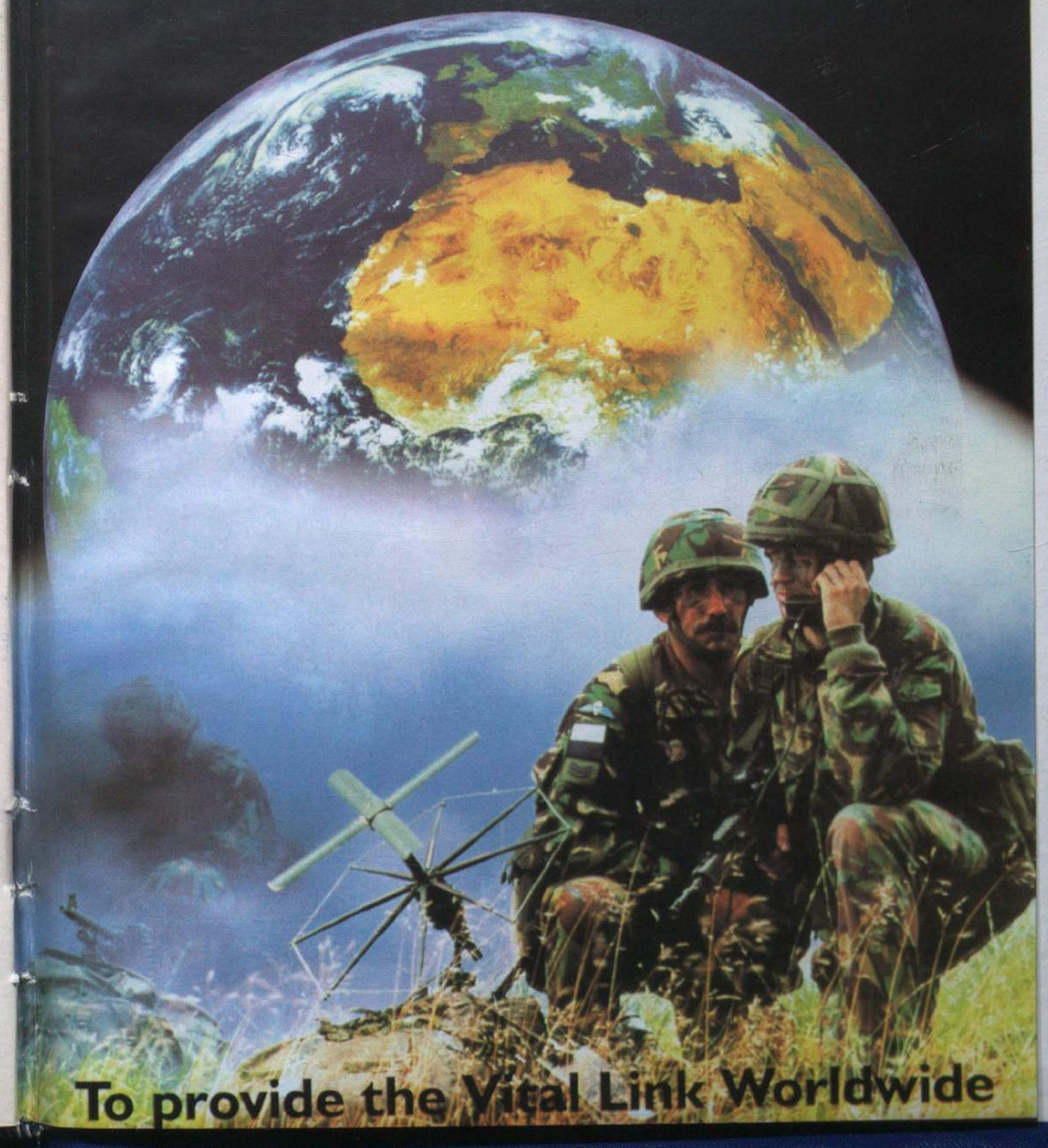
This year's Squadron Summer Ball had a Hawaiian theme and was organised by **SSgt Yates.** The night started off with cocktails and the majority of people came in fancy dress. There were Rasta men (**Cpl Doick**) and Hawaiian tarts (**Cpl Tyrell** and **Cfn Chalmers** who was wearing only a bath towel that kept falling off). The night with a disco, comedians and the blues brothers went well. We cannot wait for the next function.

DON'T SEND US DIGITAL PHOTOS

as most of them are only saved at 72dpi, for publication they must be a minimum of 300-400dpi

LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS.....LATE NEWS

ROYAL SIGNALS Needs You



To provide the Vital Link Worldwide

PREMIER
PREMIER